

**Final**  
**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE**  
**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**Tuesday, July 16, 2024**  
**Commerce Township Hall**  
**2009 Township Drive**  
**Commerce Township, MI 48390**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Matta at 12:00pm.

**Downtown Development Authority:**

**Present:** Debbie Watson, DDA Director  
Steve Matta, Chairperson  
Tim Hoy, Vice Chairperson  
Larry Gray, Township Supervisor  
Jose Mirkin, Member  
David Smith, Member  
Brian Winkler, Member  
Derek Tuck, Member (arrived 12:03)  
Susan Spelker, Member  
Spencer Schafer, Member

**Absent:** Dave Campbell, Township Planning Director  
Molly Phillips, DDA Treasurer

**Also Present:** Melissa Creech, DDA Secretary  
Sandy Allard, DDA Assistant  
Chris Martella, Dawda Mann, DDA Attorney  
Randy Thomas, Insite Commercial (exited 12:42pm)  
Lt. Wendy Reyes, OCSO Substation Commander  
Sgt. Matt Leggat, Oakland County Sheriff

**Item 1: Welcome Back Susan Spelker & Welcome Spencer Schafer**  
Chairperson Matta – Welcome back Susan! How was your vacation?

Susan Spelker – I will tell you all about it during other matters.

Chairperson Matta – Sounds good. We will also welcome Spencer Schafer, our newest member here.

Discussion took place regarding Bob Sackleh’s resignation. Chairperson Matta wished him well.

Chairperson Matta – Before we move on, I just want to say a couple things. Last week Friday was a service for Jim Gotts, and I want to thank Tim Hoy for hosting everybody at the reception afterwards. It was really wonderful. It was a very nice service and reception, and a great celebration of Jim’s life. I saw some of you there. We will miss Jim a lot, every day I'm sure.

**Item 2: Approval of Minutes**

Director Watson – I have one edit; Jason Mayer needs to be added under Also Present.

**MOTION** by Mirkin, seconded by Hoy, to approve the DDA Meeting Minutes of June 18, 2024, with the addition of Jason Mayer under Also Present.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Item 3: Public Comments**

Steve Mifsud, 5298 Baronette, Commerce Township – I'm curious about what you guys are doing. You talked about a downtown years ago. I don't see a downtown. I see you guys putting in subdivisions. That's not what you guys brought to the residents of Commerce Township. That's why I'm here.

Chairperson Matta – Okay. Anything else?

Steve Mifsud – That's it.

David Smith – Pretty much to the point.

Chairperson Matta – I appreciate your candor. Thank you for that.

**Item 4: OCSO Update**

Chairperson Matta – We have two officers with us today.

Lt. Reyes – Yes, this is Sgt. Matt Leggat. I have a couple things. One, I wanted to let you know we have a traffic car back now. We have not had one since covid. We have a traffic officer that works days and handles all accidents and hits the hot spots. Larry and I get a lot of complaints about people speeding, et cetera. We are able to address them quickly. You've probably seen the smart cart out there with the speed limit sign. If you have any issues you want addressed, let me know. It's working out really well. Sgt. Leggat, do you want to make the announcement?

Sgt. Leggat – The Open House is set for this Saturday. I have a flyer here for anyone who wants one. A lot of the Sheriff's Department will attend; a lot of our resources that people hear about and don't get to see, such as our search and rescue or dive units. It will be kid-oriented with a bounce house, face painting, balloon animals, food trucks, the whole nine yards. We're really looking forward to it.

Discussion continued regarding the events planned for the Open House.

Lt. Reyes also announced that she became a grandmother earlier this month, and Sgt. Leggat became a grandfather on the same day. The Board congratulated them both.

**Item 5: Insite Commercial Report**

Randy Thomas provided an overview of the Insite report submitted in the DDA Board's packet.

Randy Thomas – I don't have much new to report.

- Parcel B1, Phase I – Aikens, Five & Main; Last month, Continental closed on the property. The silt fence is out. It looks like they have the first levels of land balancing going on. The staging area looked pretty big.

Chairperson Matta – Have you talked to them at all in terms of how the underground is going to go and when they think that will all be in?

Randy Thomas – I don't have the details. I think Jason probably knows more than I do.

Director Watson – I can circulate the pre-con meeting minutes.

Randy Thomas – I do know their primary objective is to get the deep sewer in the ground before winter.

Director Watson – And they planned on paving their roads prior to the closing of the plants in the fall, as late as early November I believe.

- Parcel B1, Phase II – Aikens, Five & Main; Nothing new to report.
- Parcel F – The 3.9 acres in front of the Township Hall; Nothing new to report.
- Parcel J1 – 2.38 acres on the hard corner of Oakley and Haggerty; Just the usual; we had three gas station operators approach. Liquor, beer and wine seemed to be paramount to most uses, and we don't have much discussion after I let them know that's not permitted.
- Parcels M&N – These are the retail outlots that the DDA retains within the Five & Main development.
- We invited Bruce to next month's meeting on August 20<sup>th</sup> to give an update along with his timing of starting the center.

Chairperson Matta – Okay, and obviously the underground going in there that he will tap into is significant.

Randy Thomas – It makes it more real.

Vice Chairperson Hoy – Randy, might you answer that gentleman's question about what's going on?

Randy Thomas – Sure, I can tell you what I know. Generally, in a larger development like this, the residential components go up first.

Chairperson Matta – And there was always a residential component planned, just so you know.

Randy Thomas – Yes, everything you see was designated and planned. Having the residential close is great for retail and that's what is going on now. The anticipation of this first phase of the project going on, which is the multi-family, will be about 270 units. And the infrastructure is being put in, not only for that, but also for the retail development.

Steve Mifsud – Where is the retail development going to be?

*Director Watson provided Mr. Mifsud with the Insite Commercial map showing the Commerce Towne Place development plan.*

Randy Thomas – Do you know where the Library was?

Steve Mifsud – Yes.

Randy Thomas – It's going to surround that area, that's Phase I; so, Library Drive and everything to Pontiac Trail. You have a good idea right now, if you see where the line is cut, where they're doing the land balancing. That's where the apartments are, and where the area is fairly clear from there to Martin Parkway is where the retail center is going to be. It will more than likely be in two phases. The second phase will go north of Library Drive. As for timing, I'd like to say that the retail portion is going up next year, but that remains to be seen. With the infrastructure going in the ground, the developer is spending money to put in the sewer, water and everything they

need to develop. Generally, that takes time and it's happening now. When he will go vertical is a big question; it could be next year or the following.

Chairperson Matta – Any questions for Randy?

Brian Winkler – Has Bruce or Continental hired a construction manager or general contractor?

Randy Thomas – I don't know who they are.

Director Watson – I do. It's Wieland Construction. Jeff Hart is their Superintendent. He has touched base with me, and Jason and Jay. He's in regular contact. He seems to be excellent to work with. For example, we had a minor issue on the trails with the silt fencing. We notified him and he had it fixed within two hours yesterday. I think he's doing a great job out there. I believe Wieland is the general contractor, and they've contracted the excavation to Leavitt & Starck, who is out of the Lansing area.

Brian Winkler – They may have done Barrington.

Director Watson – Barrington was actually Mark Rousseaux.

Spencer Schafer – Randy, you mentioned last meeting, isn't there a grocery user and some other type of entertainment user that was interested?

Randy Thomas – Yes, there is an entertainment user. They're coming into town to fly the market and drive around. They have other assets in the market and they're familiar.

Spencer Schafer – It was like 35,000 or 50,000 square feet.

Randy Thomas – 50,000.

Spencer Schafer – Okay.

**Item 6: Attorney's Report –**

Attorney Martella – We closed. The only other thing I have to report is regarding the two easements that were pending. As to the AT&T easement, we asked for them to deal with a collapsing or tilting pole in the same area of the requested easement. They finally agreed to fix that at the same time as their other work. I followed up with them twice. They are amending their work order. I let them know that we are ready to sign the final easement once it's ready. As far as the RCOC is concerned, they have a copy of our signed easement and they are ready to rock and roll. They will be mobilizing and coordinating. They are very sensitive regarding timing on that project; they want to get it done before school starts.

David Smith – It's full closure.

Attorney Martella – It is full closure and everyone was very clear regarding scheduling.

Chairperson Matta – So there's no access going south to get to Glengary, it will be closed at Commerce there. What about Glengary, heading east, can you take a right to go south onto Commerce?

Attorney Martella – Yes. North is the issue there, you can't go north on Commerce from Glengary.

**Item 7: Director's Report**

Director Watson noted that everything was included in the report submitted in the Board's packet, which is included below along with updates.

- *Robert Sackleh recently resigned from his position on the DDA Board. He will be missed.*
- *On July 9<sup>th</sup> at the Township Board meeting, Spencer Schafer was appointed, and Susan Spelker was reappointed to the DDA Board.*
- *No Marketing Committee meeting on July 16<sup>th</sup>.*

**I. Updates on Developments – Please refer to the Insite Report and the Planning Director's Report for additional information.**

- *Five & Main –*
  - *Bruce Aikens is scheduled to attend and provide an update at the August DDA meeting.*
  - *Both anticipated property closings took place on June 20<sup>th</sup>; one for the .44-acre parcel to Bruce Aikens, and the second for Continental's purchase of the residential portion of Five & Main.*
  - *The License Agreement was executed for Continental to stage soil and equipment on Unit 14 during construction.*
  - *Continental has silt fencing in place. They are mobilizing and breaking ground. They have established an escrow fund to provide for staking of CTP private utilities when Miss Dig tickets are issued.*
  - *As Randy Thomas reported at our June 18<sup>th</sup> DDA meeting, there is interest in the Five & Main commercial site from an entertainment company looking to do a 50,000 square foot project. They are a credit-worthy company. The deal is in the early stages, so more information will follow when available.*
- *Merrill Park – Nothing new to report.*
- *The Avalon of Commerce Twp. – On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, a large dead tree was removed from the conservation easement area behind Avalon.*
- *Barrington – Nothing new to report.*
- *Wyncliff – Nothing new to report.*
- *Public Storage – Nothing new to report.*
- *The Space Shop, Self-Storage – Nothing new to report.*
- *Higher Ground, Guidepost Montessori – Nothing new to report.*
- *Lafontaine Automotive Group Dealerships (LAG) – They are working on the former Dick Morris site. If all goes well, Genesis anticipates occupying that location until the new buildings are constructed at the corner of Pontiac Trail and Haggerty.*
- *Parcel F / Unit 7, in front of the Township Hall – Nothing new to report.*
- *Parcel J1, Haggerty & Oakley Park – Nothing new to report.*
- *Parcels M & N – Nothing new to report.*

**II. MTT Judgments – As updates are available, reports are given at the DDA meeting.**

**III. Commerce Towne Place HOA Items –**

- A. **Budget** – Nothing new to report.

- B. **Dues** – All dues are current, and quarterly dues invoices were sent out last week.
- C. **Tax Forms & Reports** – Nothing new to report.
- D. **Lighting/Electrical** – **Shaw Elec., Eric Peterson, Adam Dornton**
  - Court ordered monthly restitution payments have begun to arrive for one damage claim from December.
- E. **Landscaping & Maintenance** – **United Lawnscape, Jose Medina; Bob Rousseaux's Excavating, Mark Rousseaux**
  - United has been working hard to maintain the site, with only a few issues arising which they have promptly addressed.
  - Shrubs in the Martin Parkway median have been trimmed.
  - Rousseaux's crew performed maintenance tasks on the CTP trails last week.
  - As mentioned above, the large dead tree behind Avalon was safely removed last week. The project was subcontracted through Rousseaux due to the tree size and the challenging environment surrounding it.
  - We had issues on the trailhead behind Walmart with a contractor dumping their concrete wash out on our trail, in a protected wetland area. After we followed up, the contractor came back and cleaned up the mess. Millings were replaced.
  - Continental was quick to resolve an issue on the trail with the silt fence.
- F. **Irrigation** – **Michigan Automatic Sprinkler, Mike Rennie & Mike Toro**
  - A mid-season inspection was conducted on July 12<sup>th</sup>.
  - We need the controller replaced which is \$3000. It was infested with ants and the wiring was destroyed. I authorized the repairs and asked them to protect the controller somehow going forward.

**IV. Other –**

- We will be working on the 2025 DDA budget and bringing it to the Board next month.
- Attorney Martella discussed the status of the easements.
- We are communicating with the Outrun Hunger team regarding an alternate route for their 5K race this year.
- Recent media coverage regarding the Five & Main development for reference:
  - <https://www.dbusiness.com/daily-news/major-lifestyle-center-and-housing-development-starts-in-commerce-township/>
  - <https://www.wxyz.com/news/voices/residents-speak-out-as-work-begins-at-new-commerce-township-development>

**Township Board Report**

Supervisor Gray – Highlights of the July 9<sup>th</sup> Township Board meeting:

- We had a resolution for Jim Gotts and we gave that to his wife, Patty.
- We had OHM Advisors come in to look at what we feel are the most congested intersections in Commerce Township, which are:
  - Oakley Park & S. Commerce (east and west)
  - Richardson & Oakley Park Road
  - Richardson & Martin
  - Richardson & Union Lake
  - Glengary & Commerce

- W. Commerce & N. Commerce & Sleeth Road – The RCOC is going to look at this one on their own, so we won't be paying for that one.
- We also had the auditor come in and they gave Molly and her team great results on the financial statements this year.
- We appointed Spencer and reappointed Susan to the DDA.
- The transfer of a liquor license from Andale Mexican Grill; it's going to the Blue Cactus Cantina at 4835 Carroll Lake Road.
- We amended the Township Library budget for \$15,000. For those who use digital download for books, that seems to be getting more popular, so we expanded the library there.
- We approved \$9,200 to update the Byers Homestead House electrical.

Chairperson Matta – Any questions for Larry or Deb?

Susan Spelker – I know that I don't have my previous capacity, but on the subject of budget, I wanted to say that I think it deserves a little bit more attention that Plante Moran gave a glowing report on the financials. The comments were very positive. I don't think that I've ever seen an audit come back quite that clean. It was really impressive and I'm sorry that Molly is not here for me to give her a pat on the back, but she is doing a stupendous job. Assuming Plante Moran is correct, she's amazing.

Director Watson – Yes, we're very lucky to have her. Thank you, Susan.

### **Item 8: Engineer's Report**

Director Watson – Jason submitted a brief report.

- LaFontaine Automotive Group wants to start as soon as their permits are approved. Their water main is at EGLE and the Fire Marshal required some revisions, so they did have to resubmit the permit application. They expect that in about a month.
- Continental is starting the underground. The foreman called him last week.

Attorney Martella inquired about the Walmart wall that borders the LaFontaine property. He heard that great progress was made in contacting Walmart. Director Watson noted that she drove by the site recently and saw the word "DEMO" in large letters spray painted on that portion of the Walmart wall.

### **Item 9: Planning Director's Report**

Dave Campbell had submitted his thorough report in the DDA Board's packet.

### **Item 10: Committee Reports**

#### **A. Finance Committee –**

Chairperson Matta – Where do we stand with this now?

Director Watson – In a discussion recently with Molly, she said it might not be absolutely necessary for us to have a Finance Chair. She handles all of the financials, and I work with her directly on the budget. At this time, we don't necessarily have to burden Susan with that hat.

Chairperson Matta – I have a position on that. I would like to see Susan as Chair. I think she contributes quite a bit, and two sets of eyes is better than one.

Susan Spelker – Part of the reason to have a Finance Chair is because you do have the second set of eyes, however because Debbie is so involved in it, she does fulfill that requirement. But, if people feel that ...

**MOTION** by Smith, supported by Hoy, to appoint Susan Spelker as DDA Finance Chair. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Director Watson – Susan, you are once again our Finance Chair.

Susan Spelker – All right, I guess I just stepped right back into that one, and my previous comments stand as the Finance Committee report.

- B. Public Relations Committee – Jose Mirkin – I got an email from the DIA. There is a new community engagement manager working on the Inside/Out Program, and the message is clear: *The application for 2025 is now open, but unfortunately, we won't be able to return to Commerce Township quite yet because we were just there in 2023. We typically like to wait about 3 years before returning. It's possible you might be a contender for 2026.* Michigan has 1,773 municipalities, 276 cities, 257 villages, and 1,240 townships. These communities didn't have the chance to have the Program yet, so we will wait until 2026.

In the same letter, he is telling me about other programs. Another program we might be interested in is Partners in Public Art, PIPA. This is a newer program and we could apply for the 2025 season. I will be talking with Alyson at the Library, and with Emily at the Richardson Community Center to see if they want murals at their locations. I will also meet with Larry regarding the Township Hall. The murals are done by local artists and reflect what is important in the community. At no charge, the DIA would create the wooden frame.

Director Watson and Susan Spelker also discussed the tunnel under the Martin Parkway bridge. Back when the graffiti was cleaned up, a mural painting was also considered at that time. Discussion continued regarding anti-graffiti paint.

Supervisor Gray – Jose, is that something they would do every year? Somebody new would come out to paint the mural?

Jose Mirkin – Yes, that's the idea. Right now, Oakland County has not participated yet. There are beautiful pictures in Wayne and Macomb Counties. We can do something in the future.

Vice Chairperson Hoy – Is there a performance area in the Library for musicians?

Jose Mirkin – Well, they have a huge room. We had the DIA exhibition there, after the Inside/Out program, and an art expert came in to give a presentation. It's a matter of asking Alyson.

The other thing that I almost forgot is that they have a program where they send a shuttle to the Senior Center and transport all of the seniors to the DIA for a tour and presentation by an expert.



Vice Chairperson Hoy – I have some really good programs that we could do outside the building that we can talk about.

Jose Mirkin – We have an excellent Library Director. She is young, aggressive and creative. We can do a lot of things there.

Supervisor Gray – Tim, there is a pavilion there, and the White Pine room is probably three times the size of this room.

Susan Spelker – Also, if you have a small group or an individual, there's room down by the fireplace.

Vice Chairperson Hoy – We do children's programs and all kinds of stuff. It's just another way to bring people out to appreciate the value of music.

Chairperson Matta – These are all great things. Thank you very much.

- C. Marketing Committee – David Smith – Jose, we need to get you a Township position, managing social art and etiquette. I think that's fabulous. As far as marketing, nothing to be disclosed right now. Everything is moving ahead.

Chairperson Matta – Moving dirt is a good thing.

David Smith – If there are any questions, I'll defer to Randy and we will get it taken care of.

**Item 11: Approval of Warrants and/or Carryovers, Add-ons, Revenue & Expenditure**

Director Watson – I would just make a comment that two of the attorney's invoices are being reimbursed by the developer for the closing. That condition was part of the original purchase agreement.

Discussion continued regarding the closing process.

**MOTION** by Mirkin, seconded by Spelker, to approve the Warrants and/or Carryovers, Add-ons and the Revenue & Expenditure Report. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Item 12: Other Matters**

Director Watson – A copy of Jim's resolution was provided for your review. We don't need action from this Board as it was approved at the last Township Board meeting. I just wanted to share it with the DDA Board members. We had Patricia and also Jim's son, Jimmy, at the Township Board meeting to receive the plaque. I attended both services for Jim and thank you, Tim, for that beautiful gathering.

Chairperson Matta – It was very nice, and the resolution is outstanding.

Susan Spelker – I have another matter.

Chairperson Matta – Okay.

Susan Spelker - Not only did I get my dad situated, but also took a job. I'm a Boy Scout now. Because I took a job, I had to clear it with my director before coming back to the DDA Board. I got the appropriate clearances to be here, but there was one caveat, which is that I promised that at one point, and only one point, I would share the Boy Scout spiel.

Boy Scouts in your community have been here since 1916 in America, we are the only group in America who teaches the Boy Scouts' values; honesty, integrity, perseverance. They're the only ones who do that, while having fun. A judge recently said to me, we need more Boy Scouts. We do, but every dollar has to be raised. And therefore, I will make the ask today.

Susan distributed Boy Scouts' informational brochures and continued her discussion of the organization. The Scouts do thousands of hours of community service in the community every single year and they have fun while they do it. As a 25-year volunteer said, "If the kids stay with Scouts, they don't go astray, or *if they stay, they don't stray.*"

Susan Spelker – I would question how many Eagle Scouts you arrest in a year.

Lt. Reyes – Zero.

Susan Spelker – There it is. I've done my part contractually and ethically.

Director Watson – Thank you, Susan. And I would point out that when we did paint over the graffiti in the tunnel, a team of Scouts came out and helped us with that. It was such a wonderful project. It went by so quickly because we had so many volunteers show up. It was fantastic. That was Troop 308.

Susan Spelker – I started June 1<sup>st</sup>, and the deeper I get into it, the more impressed I am with the organization and with the individuals.

Discussion continued regarding volunteerism and youth protection within the Boy Scouts organization.

Jose Mirkin – I have one more item. Congratulations to whomever wrote Jim's resolution. I don't know who wrote it, but they did a super great job.

Susan Spelker – That would be Deb.

Director Watson – Thank you, Jose. Jim was really a mentor when it came to his vocabulary. Randy said to me the other day that it sounded like Jim wrote it.

**The next regularly scheduled DDA meeting is Tuesday, August 20, 2024, at 12:00pm.**

**Item 13: Adjournment**

**MOTION** by Mirkin, seconded by Hoy, to adjourn the meeting at 12:46pm.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**



Melissa Creech  
DDA Secretary

**INVOICE APPROVAL (BY INVOICE) FOR COMMERCE CHARTER TOWNSHIP**

EXP CHECK RUN DATES 07/16/2024 - 07/16/2024

POSTED AND UNPOSTED OPEN AND PAID

BANK ACCOUNTS: DDA

Invoice Number	Bank Account	Description	Amount
<b>DAWDA DAWDA MANN COUNSELORS AT LAW</b>			
599890	DDA	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES THROUGH 5/31/2024	2,732.00
599891	DDA	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES THROUGH 5/31/2024	2,421.00
601113	DDA	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES THROUGH 6-30-24	16,355.59
601114	DDA	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES THROUGH 6-30-24	7,434.76
Total For: DAWDA MANN COUNSELORS AT LAW			<u>28,943.35</u>
<b>WATSON DEBORAH WATSON</b>			
JUNE/JULY 2024	DDA	DDA DIRECTOR 6-13-24 - 7-10-24	5,332.50
Total For: DEBORAH WATSON			<u>5,332.50</u>
<b>MISC JOSE MIRKIN</b>			
K-12 ART EXHIBIT	DDA	GIFT CERT REIMB	100.00
Total For: JOSE MIRKIN			<u>100.00</u>
<b>SANDYB SANDY ALLARD</b>			
JUNE/JULY 2024	DDA	DDA ASSISTANT 6-13-24 THROUGH 7-10-24	918.00
Total For: SANDY ALLARD			<u>918.00</u>
Report Total:			<u>35,293.85</u>

**INVOICE APPROVAL (BY INVOICE) FOR COMMERCE CHARTER TOWNSHIP**

INVOICE ENTRY DATES 07/16/2024 - 07/16/2024

POSTED AND UNPOSTED OPEN AND PAID

BANK ACCOUNTS: DDA

Invoice Number	Bank Account	Description	Amount
<b>DTE DETROIT EDISON</b>			
08/06 2579 LIBRARY	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1100 5	50.00
08/06 2581 LIBRARY	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1086 6	705.76
08/06 2660 E OAKLEY	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1065 0	93.94
08/06 3106 MARTIN	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1076 7	118.00
Total For: DETROIT EDISON			<u>967.70</u>
Report Total:			<u>967.70</u>