

A regular meeting of the Alma Downtown Development Authority (ADDA) was called to order at 6:34 p.m. at the Alma Municipal Building.

Authority members present: Stacey Ensz, Carol Freed, Nancy Gallagher, Donna Kolar, Brent Moeggenborg, Canyon Platt, Ken Solomon, and Katie Tobias.
Authority members absent: Joe Ahern, Ken Kline, Andy Shafley, and Jim Wheeler.
Also present: Greg Mapes, Aeric Ripley, and Sara Anderson.

Motion by Freed, seconded by Gallagher, to approve the minutes of August 12, 2021, as presented. Motion carried with voice vote.

Yes: Ensz, Freed, Gallagher, Kolar, Moeggenborg, Platt, Solomon, and Tobias.
No: none.
Absent: Ahern, Kline, Shafley, and Wheeler.

DDA Director Aeric Ripley briefly reviewed financials, noting fund balance at the end of September 2020 was \$98,546.87 and at the end of September 2021 was up to \$113,821.92. He explained revenue comes from a two-mil levy that generates approximately \$21,000 each year.

Ripley said there are still downtown streetlights that need to be upgraded from sodium to LED. He is hoping to add that to the budget in the upcoming year. Ripley answered questions from Authority members saying approximate cost per light is \$3500 for a single light, \$5800 for a double, with expected energy costs savings of 25-30%, and the LED lights last ten to fifteen years as opposed to five for sodium. Discussion followed about approaching the city for help with costs of replacement, as the city will reap the energy costs savings.

Ripley reviewed tree study proposals: Giffels-Webster \$9,600 plus allowance NTE \$1,000 for reimbursable expenses, OHM Advisors \$19,040, broken out into 4 tasks, and Rowe Professional Services \$10,500 lump sum fee. Ripley also provided history on the current streetscape in the downtown area, together with a description of past proposals, including one in 2004 that was expected to cost over \$6,000,000. To date, no unanimous support or funding has been available for the proposals. While there had been concerns that the request for a tree study was not broad enough, Ripley explained it may be necessary to work in financially manageable phases and consider long-term funding for maintenance of any improvements. Parking lots and storm drains will need to be a priority. Ripley explained it will be important to spend money on engineering in front of the project to help prevent additional unforeseen problems at completion of projects.

Discussion followed about details in the tree proposals and reasons for the wide variance in prices. Members also expressed concern about replacement of downtown trash receptacles. Kolar asked for the average cost of a replacement trash can, and Ripley said average was about \$3,500. Platt asked if consideration could be made for bicycle racks in the tree wells that would not be used for trees. Members agreed racks would be a great addition to the streetscape.

Freed asked about property taxes and assessing business owners for municipal parking lot maintenance. Additional discussion followed and turned to water issues in the rear parking lot of the Opera House block. Ripley explained that flooding has worsened since the parking lot was renewed and expressed his concerns about repairing other parking lots without first seeking an engineer's opinion.

Solomon asked if Ripley knew the cost of taking down a tree. Ripley approximated \$5,000 per tree, but other members indicated the price was likely much higher now. Discussion followed about current costs and total costs of the tree removal project.

Freed asked about developing a list of priorities for the Authority to keep in mind moving forward.

Lengthy discussion followed about increasing foot traffic in the downtown area and ways to get more people to frequent the downtown area.

Ripley reviewed upcoming events:

20th Annual Come Home to Alma for the Holidays Celebration December 10, 2021

10th Annual Jingle Bell run Walk December 11, 2021

Back to the Bricks Tour (overnight stop) June 3, 2022

2022 CEC Conference September 14 & 15, 2022

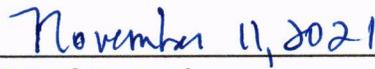
Discussion followed and returned to the subject of trash receptacles. Mapes suggested contacting local fabricators, or maybe choosing simple barrels and asking students to paint them. Gallagher asked how to encourage people to be more deliberate about choosing downtown Alma. Members agreed good progress is being made now, and continued improvements on infrastructure will definitely help.

Ripley asked members to consider the tree proposals before the next meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for November 11, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. in the municipal building.

The meeting recessed at 7:55 p.m.



Sara Anderson, Alma City Clerk



Date of Approval