



CITY OF HART

407 S. STATE ST.

HART, MI 49420

Hart Economic and Redevelopment Team (H.E.A.R.T.)

JANUARY 20, 2021

MINUTES – APPROVED

1) Call to Order

President Splane called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. Rollcall was then taken.

2) Roll Call

Members present via Zoom: Rob Splane, Scott Beal, Vicki Platt, Brandon Bruce, Jake Tufts and Tracey Lipps

Members absent: Brandi Bruch, Braxton Platt

Others present: Economic Development Director Nichole Steel

3) Public Comments

None

4) Action Items

a) Approval of the Consent Agenda

- i) January, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes
- ii) December Financials
- iii) Executive Director's Report
- iv) 2020 Recap

Tufts moved to approve the minutes as written, supported by Bruce, all ayes, motion carried.

b) HEART Board of Director Application - Russell

Steel shared Russell's application and background and that Bruch verbally resigned from the board. Motion by Lipps, supported by Tufts to accept Nicole Russell's application for the HEART Board of Directors

5) Updates/Discussion Items

a) Economic Development Committee Updates –

- i) **Education** – Brandon reported on a meeting held Jan 7th with area superintendents, the ESD, MEDC and West Shore Community College about developing a presence in Oceana County with a college extension location to include partners like Michigan works, United Way possibly a daycare and other non-profit resource organization. The group was looking at the current IGA building but it was learned after that a sale is pending. The college and others involved are very interested in this project. A small local team will reconvene in January to keep this conversation going and discuss alternate locations. Marc Platt is very interested in passing a millage so our students can benefit from in-county tuition.
- ii) **Infrastructure** – Steel reported that the Infrastructure committee met for the first time in January. Included were the Superintendent of the Energy Department, Department of Public works, wastewater treatment plant, TIFA chair and Nichole. top action items from this meeting were starting to remove trees in the downtown, the broadband feasibility study, the EDC grant for wastewater infrastructure improvements and generally sharing Department updates.
- iii) **Regional Collaboration** – Steel shared a chart of all the resources in Hart compared to other communities in the County. Tufts suggested breaking the chart down further by showing what each organization is responsible for. Splain added that he'd like to see more out of the downtown Business Association.

- iv) **Industry Activities** – Tufts reported that this committee had not met yet but their goals have been identified in the strategic plan. The committee will hold its first meeting in February.
 - v) **Destination and Marketing** – Beal reported that marketing focus is building an inventory of materials so we are ready for developers and entrepreneurs with available properties, incentives, etc. Specifically, thru the new website, printed material and digital handouts. Beal also shared that tourism dollars spent in Oceana County are higher than Mason County and this committee is working on ways to capture that market. Also discussed was updating signage so tourists coming off Hwy turn East. MDOT will be installing historical signage soon and this committee is talking about investing in wayfinding signage to direct tourists to our attractions. Lastly, increasing the quality of events and considering an event coordinator is an area of focus.
- 6) Development Leads** – Splain talked to Martin Hall who is the Ceres manager for the State of Michigan who explained that they will be tearing down the southwest corner, using the 2 building closest to Hart pizza for storage, and the retail building will be vacant/available for sale or rent. Splane asked him for time to consider what that space could look like before they engage with a realtor. Ideas for use of that block are housing, condos/apartments and possibly the college extension location. A condo group out of Pentwater, a few years back inquired about developing in The Creeks, they may be interested in developing.

Nicole updated the board on the three open grants available for businesses and employees and also provided an update from the TIFA board. They approved a \$20,000 exterior improvement grant for lakeside fitness to install new Windows and paint the building.

- 7) February Snowmobile Show** – Kevin Hallack joined the call and reported that they are in the beginning stages of planning a vintage snowmobile show at the fairgrounds on February 6th. he is working with Paul Erickson & will seek approval from City Council. Hallack wanted to make the board aware since this show historically was in the downtown, plans to move to fairgrounds are in an effort to comply with distancing requirements.
- 8) Music on Commons** – Lipps reported that we met the deadline to submit for the MCACA grant. In addition, the 2021 performance lineup has been set. There will be a performance every Thursday from June 24th until the end of August this year.
- 9) Board Member Comments** – none
- 10) Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 5:07 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Economic & Community Development Director
City of Hart