

**CITY OF INKSTER
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
(DDA)
NOTES**

An annual meeting of the Inkster Downtown Development Authority was held on **Wednesday, January 18, 2017**, in the Inkster City Council Chamber, located at 26215 Trowbridge, Inkster, Michigan.

No quorum was reached. Chairman Akinyemi called the meeting to order at 6:22 pm.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Akinyemi, Vice Chair Wade, Secretary Onomake and Directors Abiolu and Theis.

Absent: Treasurer Cimeot and Directors Adams, Ndubisi, Nolen and Ogbonnya

Others in Attendance: Nate Ford, Economic Development Director
M. Jeannie Fields, Director of Special Projects

Public in Attendance: Councilman Steven Chisolm, Ade Abowale, Lawrence King and Aj Ajabe (Zuvan Technologies)

Councilman Steven Chisolm from Inkster's 4th District, Nate Ford - Economic Development Director for the City of Inkster and Lawrence King from Detroitkicks.com were all introduced to the board.

OLD BUSINESS

A. TCD Building/Business Inventory

Chairman Akinyemi states that DDA is trying to take inventory of businesses within DDA and will deliver the list by Friday January 20th. Akinyemi mentioned that in his conversations with local business owners, many have expressed interest in the façade improvement program. He informed the owners that the DDA is working on funding to provide the program again.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Michigan Main Street Program Updates

Chairman Akinyemi explained the Michigan Main Street program to Councilman Chisolm and how it can and has transformed various downtowns throughout the state. Chairman Akinyemi stressed the importance of the City of Inkster obtaining a Main Street Manager, which is imperative to the city advancing from the associate level to the select level. Akinyemi explained the challenge of locating the necessary funding to facilitate hiring such an individual. Director Abiolu added that the DDA's 501c3 will be used as an instrument to pursue grant funding and in turn secure said funding to advance to the select level. In closing Chairman Akinyemi added the need for community involvement by way of steering committees and asked for Councilman Chisolm assistance in tapping into his networks to identify and locate prospective volunteers. Jeanine Fields presented the Main Street in practice training dates to the board for participation (July 15th and 16th) at which time commitments were confirmed for the two trainings.

B. Inkster Farmers Market

Akinyemi explained to Ford the work that has been completed to lay the foundation to establish a farmer's market in the city. Given that a location has been established, the next issue is finalizing dates (from June through September) and vendors. Akinyemi mentioned Mayor Nolen's interest in establishing an Inkster Farmer's Market and his interest in using the former ice arena in the Civic Area as a possible location. Akinyemi explained his thoughts regarding the location being easily accessible and near bus lines. Director Abiolu, mentioned that the focus at this point needs to be solidifying vendors which requires the creation of an application. As previously discussed, a weekday would work best given that most vendors work weekends at Eastern Market. Ford asked if a weekday would be supported and the board concurred that it would be if the supports are in place. Director Theis inquired about the mayor collaborating with the DDA to work towards the farmer's market as one

C. Inkster Summer Fest

Akinyemi mentioned that in meeting he had with the Mayor, Mayor Nolen expressed a desire for expeditious movement in securing funding for the festival. Akinyemi asked Theis if she could approach the Chambers of Commerce to solicit sponsorships from its members. Wade inquired whether there is a set date, whether one specific body has been charged with organizing, if the DDA as a board has discussed its role, if there is an established budget, and above all else, if the DDA has agreed collectively that it intends to officially take a role at all. Akinyemi agreed that he will return with responses to Wade's questions.

Akinyemi publicly thanked Paul Carr for his work in the creation of a potential cultural arts district from an input, information and courting of the arts community aspect.

D. Detroit Kicks

Lawrence King owner and operator of Detroit Kicks and Detroitkicks.com spoke before the board about his business and vision for his role in contributing towards the growth and improvement of the city of Inkster. Detroit Kicks is an independent distributor of all the major athletic footwear brands i.e.: Nike, Adidas, Jordan, Puma etc. The business is 2 years old and currently operates wholly online. King is interested in opening his first brick and mortar location in the city of Inkster by August of 2017. He sees this move as an opportunity to engage face to face with his target market and create a relationship that will allow the business to serve, actively contribute and give back to its base. Theis asked what Inkster can do help Detroit Kicks to move into the community and King stated supply support.

MISCELLANEOUS

- A. Abiolu spoke about the Ford Foundation Capital grant fund and application for the program under the 501c3 to obtain funding for making the business incubator come to life and further attract business to the city of Inkster. Her request was for estimate of cost of repairs for the bldg. which Wade has agreed to contribute for incubation use. Abiolu spoke with the CEO and President of Hantz Bank who is interested in partnering with the Small Business Empowerment Program. They would hold workshops focused around identity theft, cybersecurity, and small business loans for qualified borrowers. Details are being finalized.
- B. Wade requested concrete details on Summerfest and expressed willingness to provide records of his own from previous years of the festival.

ADJOURNMENT – 7:18pm