DOWNTOWN LUDINGTON BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – April 14, 2008

Mayor John Henderson called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. in the City Municipal Building Community Room.

(Circle or highlight those present)
Members present: Gail Lyons, Julie Payment, Wayne Brown, Terry Murphy, Kathy Maclean, Darla Keillor, Aleksy Urich, Andy Thomas, Les Johnson and Nick Tykoski. Also present were City Manager John Shay, Planning Commission Representative Kaye Holman, Community Development Director Heather L.V. Loney, MCGA Director Julie VanDyke.

Excused: Chris Pontz, CVB Representative Sara Kroenlien

Absent: Jim Lindsey, Chamber Director Becca Martin,

Approval of Agenda
Moved by Brown, seconded by Thomas to approve the agenda. Motion carried

Minutes
Moved by Payment, seconded by Maclean to approve the February, 2008 minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Public Comments
None

Financial Report
Maclean stated that only normal monthly expenditures have been incurred.
Motion by Thomas, second by Brown to accept the financial report. Motion Carried.

Committee Reports

A. Business Recruiting/Retention/Marketing

Maclean stated that the proposed changes to the sign guidelines are outline din the agenda packet. These guidelines will be referred to Building & Licensing committee if there are no objections or changes. Shay questioned #8 and asked that it be clarified. #9 is at the discretion of the City Manager.
Maclean also mentioned that a presentation was made to the garden club regarding flower at the new welcome sign. There is no response form them at this time.
Maclean also mentioned that the committee has been working on a new information guide brochure for downtown businesses.
Thomas discussed the recruitment folder idea and the committee's work on that.

B. Special Events/Promotions/Activities

Lyons reported that the flower baskets will be ready in May. There have been a few changes to the baskets but the money we budgeted should adequately address those increases.

Lyons updated the board on Movies in the Park.

Lyons reported that the date for Oktoberfest has been set for October 4th this year. There will be day activities on Ludington Avenue as well as evening pub crawl activities. We will be doing shirts again, however those shorts will all be available for purchase at AJ's Party

Port. There will be one central location this year.

C. Building and Grounds

Holman reported that the committee has met twice and that those minutes are in your packets. They have discussed and are coming up with plans for signage & trees in order to promote consistency downtown. They are looking into a kiosk and studying that. They are looking into the signage guidelines for downtown and how we can address possible change to obtain the look and continuity of the downtown area. The committee is getting information on the street-washing program in Scottville. They are also looking into how to move dumpsters to a central location on South Ludington Avenue. Other items the committee is working on include: a map of the DDA area, trees, benches & garbage cans, closing of the first ½ block of N James, cross merchandizing,.

D. Friday Night Live/Christmas Parade

Payment reported that the FNL dates are set. Entertainment is filling in. That committee will be meeting later in the day to discuss the events.

E. Communications

Loney reported that the communications committee is working on developing an advertising plan. One of the proposals is included. The Committee will be gathering other proposals from different media entities and putting together an advertising plan for the year. The committee is holding a block captain meeting to talk about communications with downtown businesses. The committee will also be putting together a computer clinic time fro businesses who do not know how or have the skills to register with the google group, downtown Ludington now or Michigan.org. Urick stated that he was denied from Michigan.org.

Ex-Officio Reports

City Manager Report

Shay reported that he Library demolished a house behind them for expansion. He also informed the committee that the proposed boulevard revisions were in progress and the City is waiting for those plans. MDOT is looking at their budget to see if they can help with the boulevard construction.

Chamber of Commerce Report

Maclean reported that at 10:30 on Thursday there would be a presentation of the Cultural Tourism Analysis. Maclean also reported that Friday at Stearns Hotel there will be a seminar on the Great lakes Cruising Industry.

Planning Commission

Holman directed board members to the packet she distributed. The planning commission is looking into placing bike racks downtown & possibly placing bikes for use by residents there that have been confiscated by the police department over the year. The planning commission will need people help for their tasks for downtown, such as painting garbage cans, benches, etc. The panning commission is also looking into holding a farmers market on N James street.

Convention and Visitors Bureau See chamber report

Mason County Growth Alliance

VanDyke reported on Ron Steiner's starting block –business start up program. She explained the opportunity to hold a session focused on the needs of downtown businesses. VanDyke also reported on the Neal Study. The study concluded that with a water park the hotel would be a viable option & without the park the study was not to favorable towards a new downtown hotel. The study did however report above state levels for occupancy.

Old Business:

- TIF plans need to be completed by each committee and given to heather by April 30th in order to bring to City Council for implementation for this year.
- Chief Barnett discussed the downtown watch program. He is looking for the board to approved & encouraged participation in this program. Watch notices would be sent out via email.
- .A presentation of the rendering for North James street was presented by Bill Roy & Bill Roy Jr. The firm cannot do a cost analysis at this time without defining the scope. This would be something the Downtown Ludington Board would have to hire done. Maclean inquired about the moving of the Clock tower. Keillor commented on the exceptional job. Jill Snyder inquired about how they could move forward with the changes to their building amidst the new N James idea.

New Business:

- Maclean mentioned a possible 50/50 free throw contest downtown during the Friday Night of Gus Macker. The money could go to a charity possibly the Downtown Board. The idea would be to hold it on the N James Block. Thomas inquired if the contest would be open to everyone.
- Heather asked the Board to consider changing the amount of contributions to the façade participants to include final engineering costs. The program has been changed by MSHDA and we will no longer need architectural rendering up front. The amendment was to increase from 500 to 1000 per participant. A motion was made by Thomas seconded by Henderson to approve. Motion carried. An Amendment to the previous motion was made to give 50% up to $1000 to a property owner for final engineered drawings. A motion was made by Thomas seconded by Urick to approve. Motion carried.
- Payment inquired of there was any additional information regarding the micro brew festival. Thomas stated that there has been talk with the MI Brewers Guild. They are still looking at August.

Motion by Urick second by Tykoski to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned by Mayor Henderson at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Heather L. Venzke Loney