1. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Gary Boren, Russ Collins, Rene Greff, Leah Gunn, Jennifer Hall, Roger Hewitt, John Hieftje, Joan Lowenstein, John Mouat, Keith Orr, Sandi Smith, John Splitt

Absent: None

Staff: Susan Pollay, Joe Morehouse, Joan Lyke, Amber Miller

Audience: Dave Askins/Ann Arbor Chronicle, Ray Detter/Downtown Area Citizens Advisory Council, Heidi Kaplan, Ann Arbor Chamber of Commerce, Nancy Shore/getDowntown

2. **DDA CLOSED SESSION**

Mr. Boren moved to go into closed session to discuss pending litigation and attorney/client privileged communication, seconded by Mr. Orr at 10:10am. At 10:45am the DDA returned to open session.

3. **WELCOME**

Chair Hall thanked the DDA for their time and energy, as DDA Board membership requires dedication. She asked each member to give a brief introductory statement about themselves, including when they were appointed to the DDA, and a little bit about their history related to downtown Ann Arbor.

4. **DDA INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY/”MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL” POWER POINT**

Ms. Greff gave a power point presentation on the DDA from 1982 to the present. She provided an overview of the “Big Questions,” including why the DDA Act was approved by the State in 1975, why the Ann Arbor DDA was created in 1982, what the A2 DDA has accomplished since its creation, and what the DDA/City parking agreement covers, including the financial arrangement.

She noted that the City/DDA agreement includes the following: “It is understood that the DDA shall retain these [surplus] earnings and direct their use to the purpose that best promotes the underlying Agreement, which is to provide for a healthy downtown which is dependent on a municipal parking system which is user-friendly, efficient, economical, and self-supporting.”

Ms. Greff said the City drew down the full $10 million out of the 2005-2015 parking agreement and now is asking for additional funds. The early draw had caused the parking system to operate in the red for the several years and was not sustainable. She said that the DDA Mutually Beneficial ad hoc committee framed the following conclusions regarding the City’s request:

- Using the parking agreement as a vehicle to provide the City’s general fund with $1 million/year was a mistake and is inconsistent with the DDA’s standard of transparent management and operation of the parking fund.
- Overcharging for parking in order to generate funds for the City’s general fund places an undue burden and hidden tax on the residents, business owners and customers who use downtown.
- The DDA is responsible to ensure that the tax dollars contractually committed by the taxing authorities are used to fund the capital investments and programs needed to ensure the viability of the downtown. The DDA was not created to serve as a source of funds for one taxing authority.

5. **RETREAT DISCUSSION**

Ms. Hall led the Board in a discussion on the following issues listed in the power point:
Is it fiscally responsible for the DDA to double the rent agreed upon in the current City/DDA parking agreement (which lasts until 2015)?

- The DDA took over the parking system to ensure that parking revenues were reinvested back into the downtown parking/transportation system. How do we continue to ensure this guarantee if substantial dollars are diverted out of our control?

- Does overcharging for parking to generate revenues for the City’s general fund run counter to our mission to strengthen the downtown? If so, how do we address this issue?

- How can the DDA continue to be a good partner to the City without writing blank checks?

Ms. Gunn opened the discussion by stating she rejected the phrase “over charging” for parking, and that if the City is to sustain human services the city must find revenues. Ms. Hall asked how to get the City to meet with the DDA to discuss the Mutually-Beneficial request. She also asked if it would be possible to discuss parking enforcement since the City budget eliminates 8 of 12 community standards positions; Mr. Hieftje said this latter discussion couldn’t take place without union representatives at the table. Ms. Greff said that until the City appoints its ad hoc committee there was nothing further the DDA could do. She said she didn’t expect to be reappointed to the DDA, and she believes Council is waiting for her term to expire before it seats its ad hoc committee. Mr. Hieftje said he wasn’t aware that Ms. Greff was willing to be reappointed, and that yes, there were Council members who were unwilling to meet with the committee in its current form. Mr. Mouat asked if the DDA should consider changing its committee membership. Mr. Orr said that he was and is a union member and there are appropriate ways to discuss issues like this.

Ms. Greff asked the Mayor to relay the message that the DDA was eager to work with the City to find a “mutually beneficial” arrangement per its resolution, but it was not willing to write a blank check. Ms. Gunn said she disagreed with the term “blank check” and said the DDA should have faith and confidence that the elected officials will make the right decisions. Several commented on the agreement and the City’s fund request. Ms. Hall brought the discussion to a close, saying that the DDA ad hoc committee eagerly looks forward to working with the City committee when it is appointed.

6. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Splitt said that the Capital Improvements Committee had reviewed the bids recently received for the wayfinding project and made a motion for the following resolution; Mr. Hewitt seconded:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SELECTION OF FAIRMONT SIGN COMPANY AS CONTRACTOR FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A WAYFINDING PROGRAM FOR DOWNTOWN ANN ARBOR

Whereas, The DDA 2003 Renewal Plan reaffirmed the DDA mission and set forward key strategies the DDA would follow including projects that showcased downtown’s unique identity and fostered improved downtown accessibility through enhanced transportation options;

Whereas, In December 2006 the DDA selected Corbin Design as its consultant to develop a visitor wayfinding system and in June 2008 the DDA approved the final plan and sign design;

Whereas, As part of this wayfinding plan approval the DDA voted to approve a project budget in the amount of $1,650,000;

Whereas, In April 2009 Corbin distributed bid documents and four responses were received on May 8, 2009 and evaluated by the DDA Capital Improvements Committee on May 13, 2009 who deemed Fairmont Sign Company to be the lowest responsible bidder;
Whereas, The DDA Capital Improvements Committee recommends approval of a contract with Fairmont Signs in the amount of $923,155 which includes $782,335 for shop drawings, fabrication, site visits, and installation, and an 18% contingency amount which would cover costs for city permits and necessary additions such as spread footers;

RESOLVED, The DDA approves a contract in the not to exceed amount of $923,155 with Fairmont Sign Company for the fabrication and installation of signs as included in the Corbin wayfinding plan for Ann Arbor;

RESOLVED, The DDA Capital Improvements Committee Chair and Executive Director are authorized to sign said contract and take the necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.

Mr. Splitt said that bids came in very favorably. The highest quality design submittal was fortunately also the low bidder.

A vote on the motion to approve the resolution showed:
AYES: Boren, Collins, Greff, Gunn, Hall, Hewitt, Hiefjte, Lowenstein, Mouat, Orr, Smith, Splitt
NAYS: None
Absent: None
The motion carried.
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7. FABULOUS IDEAS WORTH STEALING
Ms. Miller presented a power-point of pictures of ideas seen by DDA members in other downtowns. The Board discussed ideas they liked, including creative and green roofed bus stops. It was noted that several slides showed public art and the DDA would meet the next week with the City’s Public Art Commission, and could discuss how more public art could be installed in downtown Ann Arbor.

Ms. Smith asked if the DDA could explore adding a new committee, or bringing back the ROC committee, to handle some of these new ideas.

9. ADJOURNMENT
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Pollay, Executive Director