Pursuant to SB 1008, the Village of Spring Lake will conduct its business via conference call to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Heins called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

II. Roll Call:

Present: Heins – Chair, Dull – Vice Chair, Callen, G. Hanks, Lopez, Sunderlin (7:41 a.m.), Van Leeuwen-Vega, Willison, M. Hanks (Council Liaison)

Absent: None

Staff Present: Chris Burns (Village Manager), Angela Stanford-Butler (DDA Director), Marv Hinga (Clerk/Treasurer), and Maryann Fonkert (Deputy Clerk)

III. Approval of Minutes (2/11/2021) – February 11, 2021 Draft Minutes will be approved at the April 8, 2021 meeting.

IV. Approval of the Agenda

Motion by Van Leeuwen-Vega, second from Callen, to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor, motion carried.

Yes: 8  No: 0

V. Financial Reports – Burns shared the Financial Reports with the Board. Dull asked what was paved with the $5,200 for paving. Hinga explained that was the down payment to MDOT for repaving along M-104 as part of reconstruction.

Motion by M. Hanks, second from Callen, to approve the Finance Report as presented. All in favor, motion carried.

Yes: 8  No: 0

VI. Business

A. Ron Bultje – Open Meetings Act – Burns introduced Attorney Bultje and explained that she had asked him to give an overview of the Open Meetings Act. Attorney Bultje explained the Open Meetings General Requirements and gave the Board things to consider and think about. Chairman Heins said that from what he understood from reading the Open Meetings Act was that it did not apply to subcommittees. Attorney Bultje said that if the committees were appointed by the
DDA and going to report back and make recommendations to the DDA then the public should have access to that meeting. Van Leeuwen-Vega asked if that applied even if the majority of the members were not members of the DDA. Attorney Bultje explained how it would apply to subcommittees, but it would not apply if a consultant was hired to give a recommendation because the public was not included in the deliberations of the consultant who would be making a recommendation. Attorney Bultje and the Board discussed the Open Meetings Act and how it related to subcommittees, emails, talking individually between Board members, virtual meetings and if minutes were required.

DDA Board Member Responsibilities - Attorney Bultje gave a quick overview of duties and explained administration versus management and board versus executive and how those lines can get blurry. The Board discussed the duties/responsibilities of the DDA Director and that of the Board members and how often communications from the DDA Director could be sent.

B. Walker Signage Proposal – Stanford-Butler explained that she and Johnson had met with David Garza, Walker Consultants, to find out what could be done at this time help implement the parking study recommendations. Mr. Garza explained his proposal to provide a plan to improve existing wayfinding and signage and shared examples from other communities. Dull said he thought they were a little ahead of the game right now for what they needed in the downtown. Dull felt they should create an RFP that has all the wayfinding signs along the bike path, kayak launch locations, Central Park entrance sign and east and west entrance signs consistent with branding. M. Hanks asked what the current plan was for signage and what the time frame was. Stanford-Butler said they did not have a current plan; that is why she and Johnson had separated the wayfinding out to keep the implementation portion moving along. Dull said he thought it was time to implement a plan for all of the signage, not just the downtown. The Board discussed the signage plan.

Motion by M. Hanks, second by Lopez, to table the Walker Signage Proposal. All in favor, motion carried.

Yes: 9  No: 0

C. Central Park Murals – Stanford-Butler shared the 4 student murals that Council would be voting on at the next meeting.

D. Tanglefoot Capital Campaign – Stanford-Butler shared the Tanglefoot Park Capital Campaign materials to help raise funds to underwrite the estimated $3,500,000 cost and explained that it would launch on April 1, 2021 and end on December 31, 2021 and the goal was to raise $1,500,000 in donations. Stanford-Butler said that two families have both generously committed to donating $500,000 each, an anonymous donor has committed to the cost to install a splash pad, and the Village has received a $300,000 grant from the MI DNR fund, and they were submitting multiple applications for more grants. Dull said that they had branding dollars in the budget and professional services to do a Capital Campaign and he didn’t think the Board had asked Stanford-Butler or Johnson to do this and he didn’t think this set the bar for what the Village brand needed to be today or moving forward. Dull said he felt like this was presented to them at the last hour and knowing the launch was April 1st, they just had to take it or leave it. It was unfortunate that Stanford-Butler felt that she had to do this in the silo without any
collaborative help or strategic thinking and he wanted to avoid this in the future. **Burns** explained that Stanford-Butler had done this at her direction, based on what the DDA Board had asked for at the last meeting; Stanford-Butler had successfully handled capital campaigns for previous projects and raised thousands of dollars through grant writing on the Village’s behalf. **Dull** said he was not debating the grant writing; he said the DDA had a budget for professional services and that this capital campaign needed the attention of professional design service because of the importance of this project. **Stanford-Butler** said that she was directed with getting this handled for the Board at the last meeting, so she and Johnson followed through. **Dull** said he didn’t remember the Board asking that of her. As a Board, he wanted to be clear on what direction they were providing, and they didn’t even talk about the Capital Campaign at the last meeting. **M. Hanks** said they did talk about it at the last meeting and that **Dull** was the one who brought it up and said the DDA needed a timeline and all of these things that Angela just provided. **Dull** repeated that it was never discussed at a Board meeting. **M. Hanks** said they need to make a decision and if they want to get this capital campaign going, she believes perfection will be the enemy of good and get in the way of progress. **M. Hanks** said we have a strategy to move forward to start the capital campaign on April 1st which is now 3 weeks away. **M. Hanks** said that sometimes it feels like we’re moving at a different pace then what might be optimal, but we have a small staff and a lot on our plate and sometimes it’s just a matter of keeping all of the balls in the air. Chairman **Heins** said he understand that Dull didn’t want to vote on this today. In the future, when we can, we should try to plan a little more. He also understood that the board said they wanted Stanford-Butler to get something going on the campaign and he thought this would be successful. **Van Leeuwen-Vega** said that, as a marketing and branding resource, she would always like to have more time to be able to respond to the language or visual content. **Burns** said that it was not too late for changes so if they have suggestions or input that they would like to offer **Stanford-Butler**, she was sure it could still be incorporated. Lopez said that he felt like they were being rushed. **M. Hanks** and **Van Leeuwen-Vega** said they felt the same way. **M. Hanks** asked what they could do to keep this moving and address some valid concerns from the Board. **Burns** explained the timeline for the capital campaign and why they needed to keep moving. At the end of the day, was spending $10,000 to micromanage the capital campaign going to raise an additional $10,000? **Burns** agreed with **M. Hanks** that perfection was going to be the enemy of good, and to debate the pictures and wording that Stanford-Butler used was not going to affect the giving levels. **M. Hanks** said she did not want to delay, but if there was something that needed to be changed, then how do they do that and keep the project moving. **Burns** said they could just send their suggestions to **Stanford-Butler** and outside of redesigning the capital campaign, Angela can still incorporate suggestions. **Dull** said that Burns mentioned sending out an RFP for the design work, so was she saying that they could not just hire an agency to do the design? **Burns** said that was correct, Dull would not be just given the job, it wouldn’t pass the smell test. **Dull** said so instead of going down that path, we just handle it internally, so we don’t have to do an RFP process. **Burns** said that they were very fortunate that our DDA Director had the skill set to do this. **Dull** said he didn’t want to be asking the DDA Director to be doing design work even if she had the skill set. He did not think that was her role so in the future he thought design jobs should be considered as an RFP. **Dull** said it’s not changing little things; it’s going back to brand guidelines and trying to create something more on brand and a little more compelling and he questioned if it was only Villagers that would be donating; he would think that they would want a strong outreach outside of the Village. **Dull** said that given the timeframe, he didn’t know
if it was worth reversing any direction. Lopez asked Dull if his issue was with the design. Dull said not just the overall design but he thought the push could be different. Dull questioned the whole Facebook page; he said had a lot of questions. Lopez said that if Dull had issues he should share them. Dull said he thought it was all after-the-fact and the way this needs to work is the DDA has a meeting, and they talk about priorities. The capital campaign was one of the priorities and that this was the first time it was mentioned. The last meeting, they saw it but they never discussed the best method of reaching out, or the best platform they can leverage or Lopez’s expertise and then they get presented with it so it’s all after-the-fact. Dull said they talked about committees or executive committees or how this once-a-month meeting thing was not working. Stanford-Butler had a lot on her plate and a lot of responsibilities and there were a lot of moving parts and he thought this could have been outsourced in January so it was not her responsibility so she can focus on other things and let the professionals do the work. Dull said that moving forward, he wished the Board knew that Stanford-Butler was working on this, he didn’t know Stanford-Butler was working on this until he received the PDF.

Motion by M. Hanks, second by Callen, to launch the Capital Campaign on April 1, 2021.

Yes: 8  No: 1 (Dull)

E. Grant Applications – Stanford-Butler reported that they were hoping to receive $75,000 to $125,000 from the impact grant application.

F. 109 S. Jackson St. – Burns reported that Council will be considering an exchange agreement between ARM and the Village for the property on the corner of Exchange and Jackson which included a couple of suggestions from Brown and Wolf that had been incorporated so she expected that to be approved on the Consent Agenda. Burns said they were working on the architectural drawings that they still need to take to the Planning Commission and groundbreaking was expected this year yet.

G. Miscellaneous – Burns reported that one proposal had been received for the redevelopment of 106 S. Buchanan from Geerlings Development for a mixed-use development with the 1st 2 floors commercial or retail and residential on the 3rd floor. Burns said Geerlings was working on getting funds from both the Brownfield Redevelopment Act and MEDC. Burns said Council felt there was a lot of asphalt so there was discussion about a parking study and a possible agreement with the Baptist Church and/or Harvest Bible Church. Callen suggested a discussion for shared parking with Infinity Dental and himself. Burns said that there was certainly some opportunity to do some parking design that would pull the whole thing together. Dull asked if the DDA owned that property. Burns said that it was within the DDA, but the Village bought it, however, any revenue that comes in from the sale would go into the DDA. Dull asked if the chance for that to be a parking lot similar to what progressive had proposed was gone. Burns said that Progressive’s parking lot design was done for a private party and not for the Village; she thought there would be a lot of pushback from both Council and the general public on taking a prime piece of developable property to use as a parking
lot, especially when the parking study indicated that there was not a parking issue within the Village.

VII. **Board Member Comment** –

**Dull** said he wanted to see the $15,000 in Branding Grant money to be dissolved and the money be allocated elsewhere because it never really took off, probably due to a lack of marketing.

**M. Hanks** asked the Board and reminded them that it was their responsibility as Board members and business owners to comment and share other business posts. **M. Hanks** also said that she was appreciative of Stanford-Butler and what she has done and continues to do as the DDA Director. She realizes that there are times they, as a DDA, might think differently, but she wanted to say that there was a lot of work that went into this capital campaign from both Stanford-Butler and Johnson and there’s a lot of work that goes into countless other things that happen every day behind the scenes. **M. Hanks** said she wanted to thank Stanford-Butler and support her as a DDA Board member for all the work that she does for the DDA. **Van Leeuwen-Vega** agreed. Chairman **Heins** also agreed and thanked Stanford-Butler for her hard work and said that they have so much going on and they need to make sure that they act in a more businesslike manner and follow the rules as best they can. Chairman **Heins** said they were all intelligent people, so they needed to give each other time to think and to speak and to build a future that looks super. The DDA wants to do everything they can to get it right and he was thankful for Stanford-Butler doing what she is doing. **Dull** said that Heins had sent a note around asking Board members what they were passionate about. They heard the about the Open Meetings Act, so what was the best way to move forward? What were the DDA Board’s ideas around forming committees and did Heins want to talk about Board member responsibilities. **Stanford-Butler** said that the DDA Board member responsibilities had gone out to the members, but they had not had a chance to discuss them yet. **Dull** said he had read them, and they seemed like ideas or general guidelines, and he agreed with M. Hanks about promoting sharing on social media. He could absolutely do that, but it was tough; he wanted to make a guideline, or at least a general rule, that members should be putting in 4 to 5 hours per week towards the DDA and the Village, but he was a little cautious of how to do that given that we have no committees right now, so he was not sure how to give his time without breaking rules. **Lopez** suggested maybe they consider setting up committees and set up the framework. **Dull** said he would be open to that and going into this meeting he was hoping to have 8 or 10 different committee heads but given the parameters that they have, maybe 3 committees might be ok. **Lopez** said they just have to record it and make it public. **M. Hanks** reminded them that every time he talks about doing forming a committee, we need to consider that involves someone at the Village level because that’s part of their responsibility. **M. Hanks** said they can’t have so many committees because all of the responsibilities will fall on Village staff to administer, there was a reason you don’t see municipalities running their communities by subcommittees. **Lopez** suggested they make a plan for this period between meetings to have Chairman Heins meet with Manager Burns to see what the best route would be to move forward with this idea that would cause the least amount of stress. **M. Hanks** suggested they talk about it at the next meeting and in the meantime, did Burns and Stanford-Butler have enough information to put together a proposal for the best way for the DDA to be more engaged, in particular, planning ahead of time, which is how Council handled it. Chairman **Heins** said when he looked online, the requirement was that information needed to be out 18 hours ahead of the meeting but if they get too far ahead, there would likely be too many changes. **M. Hanks** said the agenda had to be out 18 hours ahead of the meeting and there was a reason that other DDA’s and other municipalities drilling down these things by subcommittees because it still has to be
discussed at a regularly scheduled DDA meeting and she was still going to want time to look at the agenda items. **M. Hanks** said they did have a finance subcommittee for Council but Hinga and Burns schedule and do the agenda for it. **Stanford-Butler** asked the Board if they would be interested in a Work Session, which would give the Board time to discuss each item and what they would like to do. **M. Hanks** explained that the Work Session last 2 to 3 hours and then the regular meeting lasted 30 to 45 minutes, so she thought a Work Session was a great idea. **Dull** agreed that a Work Session was a good idea about 2 weeks after the meeting. **Burns** said that if they decide to do a Work Session 2 weeks in between, that it would give Stanford-Butler a little more time to tackle the direction given by the Board. **M. Hanks** felt that if they were given the information and discussed it at the Work Session then they would be prepared for the regular meeting and suggested they send out a Doodle poll to find a time that would work for the majority of the board. **Stanford-Butler** said she would send out a poll with a few different times to choose from. **Burns** suggested a lunch meeting as an option too.

Motion by **M. Hanks**, second from **Lopez**, to add a Work Session.

Yes: 9  No: 0

**VIII. Public Comment** – There was no public comment.

**IX. Adjournment**

Motion by **M. Hanks**, second from **Van Leeuwen-Vega**, the meeting adjourned at 9:41 a.m. All in favor, motion carried.

Yes: 9  No: 0

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Doug Heins, Chair           Maryann Fonkert, Deputy Clerk