

PROCEEDINGS OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TAKEN AT A
REGULAR MEETING ON THURSDAY, May 10, 2018.

Those present: Pat Trahan, Miles Matt, Gus Rezende, Greg Walls and Donald Broussard.

Those absent: Lisa Thomas and Bryant Poche.

Staff present: Geoff Dyer and Jolene Harris.

Others present: Carlee AlmLabar, Mike Delcambre, Pat Lewis, Bruce Conque, James Proctor and Captain Brad Ridge/Precinct 5.

The meeting was called to order by Trahan.

Public comment cards were available on table in the back of room for anyone who wished to speak in regards to items on the agenda.

Administrative Approvals/Reports

April Minutes – The April Minutes were presented for approval. Matt motioned to approve the April Minutes as presented, Broussard seconded, all voted in favor.

March Financial Statements – The March Financials were presented for approval. Broussard motioned to approve the March Financial Statements as presented, Matt seconded, all voted in favor.

Financial Disclosure – Trahan noted that Financial Disclosures were due by May 15 and all board members needed to notify Harris once they had completed filing.

Reports/Updates

Initiative Updates

Downtown Urban Retail Initiative – Dyer noted that Urban Retail Expert, Bob Gibbs was in town. A dinner was held for him on Tuesday evening at Trahan's home and Wednesday morning he attended the LEDA RCA Breakfast series that was held for the commercial realtors and other real estate professionals, held at the LITE center which was well attended. Gibbs delivered his preliminary retail analysis at the RCA Breakfast where he noted that the downtown should be able to accommodate another 160,000 sq. ft. of commercial and somewhere in the neighborhood of 8 to 10 new restaurants. Gibbs had also discussed how much retail leakage was occurring, which was money being spent elsewhere that could be spent in the downtown. Gibbs also made note that certain things needed to be done right in operating the downtown at national standards which was not being done, and a power-point presentation was viewed on what needed to be done in order to attract some of the demand. A presentation was also shown at the Aca Wednesday evening but had low attendance. It was further noted that once the Commercial Retail Study report was completed, it would be distributed out to all parties. It was further noted that following the DDA meeting, Gibbs would be walking up and down Jefferson Street making notes on specifics that needed to be done to bring the downtown up to standards, following an afternoon session being set up in the Omni Center as a workshop for property owners to come in and get advice on what they needed to do to bring their businesses up to standards. Discussions followed. Dyer further noted that there were simple items Gibbs had discussed that could benefit the downtown immediately such as painting the parking meter poles, placing potted plants in

various places, pressure washing the sidewalk areas on Jefferson St – a basic beautification for Jefferson St. Further discussions evolved on approving an initial amount of funding for Dyer and Hebert to begin making improvements to Jefferson Street. Matt moved to authorize the DDA to spend up to \$20k in a Streetscape maintenance/beautification project consistent with the recommendations of Urban Retail Expert, Bob Gibbs, Broussard seconded, all voted in favor.

Parklet//Dining Ordinance – Dyer noted that the Parklet/Dining Ordinance would be going before the City Council on Tuesday, May 15. Alm-Labar noted that this item was up for final adoption and was listed as the last item to be discussed on Tuesday. Alm-Labar further noted that over the last few months she had tried to address any questions from any council members but had not received any feedback and felt that it would be beneficial for DDA Board members to be present for a strong show of support since it was exclusive to the downtown zoning district being that this ordinance was an amended ordinance on the books that was already exclusive to the downtown district and also, downtown was the only place within the city that had the public sidewalk areas that this type of ordinance would apply to. It was further noted that this ordinance would also create the Downtown Management Committee which was transitioned from the Sidewalk Vendor Committee, and this committee would be the authority to look at parklet locations currently but moving forward it could transition into the committee to help manage downtown issues. The committee would consist of public officials as well as adding 3 citizens. Discussions followed with several members agreeing to be present at the City Council to show support for this ordinance.

Old Federal Courthouse – Dyer noted that there were interviews on Friday, May 4 and there had been concerns on the DDA being involved in the process because DDA was ultimately a State sub-division in LCG's redevelopment tool but the city decided that Dyer could sit in and be a part of the team to review the various proposals and ask questions. Dyer further noted that everyone who had submitted a proposal had concepts but those were less of a concern than the differences and opinions on timing and the use of varying tax incentives which were very inconsistent across the board. Dyer believed that the mayor would be taking a deeper look at trying to understand which team would be the most capable to deliver the right concept and which was the closest to making this move forward. Ultimately, the Mayor would bring a complete package and present a proposal to the City Council who would make the final decision on moving forward. Discussions followed.

Ambassador Program – Dyer noted that staff had been in discussion with DDA's insurance company and understood that there was a \$1 million dollar policy and also an additional umbrella policy which brought the overall coverage to \$2 million. In looking at a 16 week pilot program, there could be some risk but very limited. Dyer had also reached out to other downtowns with Ambassador Programs who felt that there were very minor risks if operated correctly. It was discovered to be very clear in training and the signed contracts with the ambassadors that they were not to engage in any crime but to train them on what to do in the event there was some type of event/violence, etc. Other organizations had this as standard policy. Dyer noted that he would be hiring contract, part-time employees that would sign off on their procedures and standards and that they would also be covered under DDA's Worker's Compensation which would be about 5% of their compensation. Dyer further noted that there were still areas that needed to be massaged but he was ready to begin the process of hiring and needed approval to begin the 16 week pilot program. Discussions followed. It was further noted that an application was made through LCVC for a grant through their Enterprise Fund that would cover a lot of the start-up costs such as the phones, uniforms, lockers, tire pumps, etc. It was

further noted that a permanent space had been offered by the Poche Group which would be next to the temporary precinct on Vermilion Street that the Ambassadors could operate out of. Broussard motioned to approve to move forward with the 16 week pilot program for the Downtown Ambassador Program, Walls seconded, all voted in favor.

Capital Improvements

Parking Garage Renovations – Dyer noted that he continued to push forward with the parking garage precinct, bathrooms, retail space/potential market but that this would be a long process. Currently DDA access to funds was limited and also the ability to get dollars from the general fund for downtown. In pushing forward, Dyer identified two projects that needed to be delivered to the City Council during their budget process in the fall. Those projects consisted of multi-use sidewalk improvements with a very lean costs of an 8' sidewalk to include streetlights, benches, trees, etc. on critical routes to connect two areas with the downtown. One of those routes was from the LPTFA campus along Cypress to Jefferson St. to improve that connection to downtown and the second route was to connect the 19,000 students to downtown from the University to Jefferson St. The preliminary budget numbers for the Cypress connection would be about \$700k and the University about \$400k for a total of \$1.1 million. It was suggested that the DDA Board make a resolution stating their interest in putting this on the Capital Improvement list and Almlabar had agreed to assist getting it on the City Council agenda. Conque noted that the Public Works budget review would be on August 21. Discussions followed. Broussard motioned to request for \$1.1 million critical route sidewalk improvement to be added to the Capital Improvement Projects with Public Works, Matt seconded, all voted in favor.

By-Laws – Matt noted that he had spoken with John Chappuis on the issue with adding the non-voting members to the DDA By-Laws which Chappuis declined to assist due to conflicts and Matt also felt that he could not give the opinion but could contact another attorney to get a cost on what they would charge to research this further and give an opinion. Discussions followed. It was decided for Matt and Thomas to make the decision if they felt that anything further needed to be done and if not, it would be implemented in the by-laws as voted upon at a previous meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.