

**Downtown Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
December 18, 2024**

Present

Michael Corbin
Mario Chavez
Drayden Dunn (arrived 3:38)
Chelette Holden
Kathy Malone
Ed Taylor

Absent

Terry Moore

Staff

Janie Landry
Stacie Leng
Lauren Davidson
Peggy Hellyer
Lorenzo Lee

Others Present

Lt. David Heaser

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 pm by Chair Michael Corbin. A quorum was present.

II. ROLL CALL

Terry Moore was absent.

III. AMEND AGENDA

The agenda was not amended.

IV. WELCOME / INTRODUCTIONS/ PRESENTATIONS

There were no introductions or presentations.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Agenda Items)

There were no public comments.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes

Mr. Corbin asked for approval of the November 13, 2024, regular meeting minutes.

A motion was made by Kathy Malone to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2024, regular meeting minutes. Chelette Holden seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

B. November 2024 Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement

Ms. Landry reviewed the November 2024 Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement which had been sent to the board for review prior to the meeting. The Parking contract was paid through the end of the year. Legal expenses are over the budgeted amount primarily because DDA has been incorrectly named in a trip and fall lawsuit, and legal counsel Jerry Jones has had to devote some time to the case. The event sponsorship line item is over the budgeted amount since the board agreed to provide the \$10,000 PrizeFest sponsorship. All other expenses and income are as expected.

A motion was made by Mario Chavez to approve the November 2024 Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement as presented. Drayden Dunn seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

VII. REPORTS

A. Director's Report

1. Met with LADOTD Regional Administrator to address Blind Tiger's bollard installation request.

Specifically looking to parallel the process that led to the bollard installation around the Visit Shreveport-Bossier offices.

2. Assisted Broadmoor LLC, Construction Manager at Risk for the new state building in hosting the kick-off of Phase Two for the construction process.
3. Assisted with restart of the historic assessment process for the Johnson and Slattery buildings. Expectations are for paperwork to be filed before year's end.
4. Conferred with team from G-Unit Studios regarding any issues that needed to be addressed or resolved prior to year's end. Discussion resulted in facilitating Mr. Jackson's high-profile participation in the auction at SRAC's Christmas in the Sky event. Jackson's package raised \$14,000 for the fundraiser.
5. Mr. Glover said that he initiated a continuing dialogue with SPD's new downtown-headquartered Community Policing Division regarding an elevated safety perception and reality strategy. Has met with Chief Smith and Sheriff Whitehorn regarding the potential program to address loitering in early morning and evening travel times for a heightened presence of law enforcement in downtown. Mr. Glover said that he may want to acquire side-by-side vehicles for use in this division. With the board's permission, he would like to pursue this idea further.

Michael Corbin stated that the next opportunity to hear criticism of downtown will be when the Independence Bowl is held, and he thinks this is a great idea.

Drayden Dunn inquired regarding the cost of a side-by-side vehicle. Mr. Glover reported that the cost ranges between \$12k - \$18k for a vehicle similar to the DDA gator. The cost is likely more if the vehicle is enclosed or has the capability to carry more passengers, etc. Top end cost is probably \$30k.

Lt. Heaser stated he would prefer bicycles instead of the side-by-sides.

Mr. Dunn asked if the DDA could program something for the iBowl teams? Mr. Corbin said that the teams themselves provide activities for the teams. He said that an issue is that some players are under the age of 21. Mr. Corbin added that DDA could certainly work on this for next year.

Mario Chavez said that regarding the side-by-sides, local groups might be willing to help fund them. Mr. Glover will continue the conversation regarding this potential program.

Mr. Corbin checked the iBowl schedule and said that the events are taking place in Bossier this year. This needs to be addressed with the iBowl committee next year.

6. Brought in other local stakeholders to help further advance the Petroleum Tower Lofts project. Effort is gaining traction.
7. Based on a developer's query and staff initiative, the north side of the 400 block of Crockett Street will be restored to curbside parking for the first time since 1982. For over 40 years it has been designated as a left-turn lane in front of the former SporTran terminal. The developer asked Lorenzo Lee why there was no parking on that side since the bus station is long gone. Robert Thomas, city Traffic Engineering, stated the area does not have to remain a no-parking area any longer since SporTran has moved.

8. Addressed the Shreveport Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors for the first time since being named Executive Director of the Downtown Development Authority.
9. Attended the first gathering of Mayor Arceneaux's team the Mayor selected to join him in participating in the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative.
10. Holiday Activities Update: The Holiday Window Display Contest has received 450 votes so far, and the 12-Day Giveaway has gathered 153 entries.
11. Online Numbers: Facebook impressions increased by 47.4%, Instagram views are up 99.2%, and the website received 48,000 impressions with a 59.79% engagement rate (top 10 pages).

Kathy Malone reported that she came downtown to On Time Fashion recently on a Saturday and downtown was very busy.

Ed Taylor asked about the status of the Johnson and Slattery buildings. Mr. Glover said there has been some traction recently from the owner (Eddie Hakim) to improve his family's relationships with downtown. The Hakim's are now considering making improvements at their downtown properties, potentially converting to residential, and applying for the state Historic Tax Credits. They had applied for the credits for the Johnson building years ago but because some demolition work was done prior to approval, they were not eligible for the credits. They had also previously asked if the SporTran lot could be used for parking and was incorrectly told that would not be an option. Mr. Glover says this is not the case, and the conversation about that possibility will be re-opened. Parking developed on the location would need to be a multi-level parking garage and not surface parking.

Mr. Glover also said that during the Christmas holidays a 5k run was held downtown and no one knew about it. He will coordinate with one comprehensive effort for the next holiday season.

Mr. Dunn said that the drone show held during the Rockets Over the Red event was incredible. Mr. Glover is working with Terri Matthews at DSU to incorporate this for next year.

B. Parking Report

Lorenzo Lee reported that revenue was continuing at a slower pace and was down somewhat due to the holidays. He had a meeting with the head of Traffic Engineering to discuss the turning lane on Crockett Street as stated previously in the meeting. The city will convert the turn lane that is no longer needed by the former SporTran facility to available parking. He is finalizing the purchase of new meters before the end of the year and will seek reimbursement from the city at just under \$25k.

Ms. Landry reported that the city has agreed to the same amount for 2025.

Mr. Corbin said he was asked at a recent Chamber meeting about a meter that would not accept coins. Mr. Lee replied that he would have to know the specific meter to be able to answer the question. Mr. Glover spoke to the patroller and there are meters on the repair list but the patroller who makes the repairs is on vacation over the holidays. Mr. Glover also tasked Mr. Lee and Ms. Davidson with producing content on the history of parking, and decoding parking downtown to help people understand better. Mr. Dunn said the city has a podcast as well and Ms. Landry reported that parking has been addressed every few weeks in the eblast as well.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Downtown Security and Homeless

Lt. Heaser reported that homeless outreach is underway, and 175 homeless individuals have been contacted so far to understand their needs. Mr. Corbin reported there is a new encampment at Marshall and Ford streets just past 1200 Marshall Street. Ms. Landry reported that M.L. Bath had a person residing in the entrance way who had placed his own lock on the entrance. The lock has been removed and the area cleaned up.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. DDA / DSDC 2025 Management Agreement

Mr. Dunn asked if timekeeping measures could be implemented going forward to find how much time staff spends on DSDC work. He also asked how the revolving loan program is marketed. Ms. Landry reported that staff informs anyone who calls about downtown space about the loan program and other downtown incentives. Information about the loan program, including the application and all requirements, is on the website. She stated that loan funds must be used for renovation and restaurants are not eligible. DSDC has a loan committee and those committee members, who are also bankers, and DDS/DSDC staff review the applications. The loans are typically capped at \$100,000 at a 5% interest rate for 10 years.

Mr. Dunn asked if a tenant could use loan proceeds for renovation. Ms. Landry said it would require the property owner's approval as the loan requires collateral and the property being renovated is generally pledged. Mr. Dunn also asked when DDA will own 416 Cotton Street. Ms. Landry responded that according to the agreement, DDA will finish paying DSDC in 2027 and will own the property at that time.

Mr. Corbin said that Dripp Donuts took an inordinate amount of staff time on DSDC in 2024. Ms. Landry reported that DSDC work is almost daily, including managing of the FMC parking lots and accounting, etc. She stated that there had not been an increase in the DSDC Management Agreement for years.

Mr. Glover suggested that there was a need to upgrade the parking options at the lots. Ms. Landry said the contract with the church needs to be reviewed and potentially changed as well since DSDC bears all the expense under the current contract.

Kathy Malone stated her opinion that if management of the parking lots requires too much staff time, it might not be worth renewing the contract with First Methodist.

A motion was made by Ed Taylor to approve the 2025 DDA/DSDC Management Agreement. The motion was seconded by Drayden Dunn and passed unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Mr. Corbin said he wanted to thank the staff for everyone's efforts and for stepping up to the tasks during the unusual year. He also thanked the board members for their hard work and said he appreciated everyone for attending all the extra meetings regarding filling the Executive Director position. He stated his opinion that good relationships are being formed and he believes 2025 will be a good year. He said he is proud to be part of this organization.

Mr. Corbin also asked Ms. Landry for an updated list of board members' terms so that information can be reviewed with the nominating organizations. It was noted that Mr. Moore's nominating organization was the State Senators that once were defined as District 37 and District 39 and the State Representative district defined as District 4. Due to redistricting, District 37, which was once represented by former Senator Barrow Peacock, is now in south Louisiana. This will require legislation be changed to identify the correct District which is now District 38.

Mr. Dunn also thanked Mr. Corbin for leading the board through a difficult year. He also thanked Ms. Davidson for stepping up to the plate, Ms. Hellyer for her inspirational medical story and Ms. Landry for leading the organization for most of the year.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS (NON-AGENDA ITEMS)

There were no public comments on non-agenda items.

X. ADJOURN

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Michael Corbin, Chair