

**Downtown Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
Virtual Conference*
July 22, 2020**

Present

Candice Battiste
Lloyd Brown
John Hubbard
Terry Moore
Logan Schroeder
Stanley Varner

Absent

Tim Huck

Staff

Liz Swaine
Janie Landry
Stacie Leng
Lorenzo Lee

Others Present

Jerry Jones, *DDA Attorney*
Travis Morehart, Cook &
Morehart

****CERTIFICATION OF INABILITY TO OPERATE DUE TO LACK OF QUORUM***

In accordance with Executive Proclamations JBE 2020-30 and 2020-33, issued by Governor John Bel Edwards on March 16, 2020 and March 22, 2020, respectively, this notice shall serve as a certification of the Downtown Development Authority's inability to otherwise operate in accordance with the Louisiana Open Meetings Law due to a lack of a quorum as a result of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. Pursuant to Section 4 of JBE 2020-30, the DDA of Shreveport will provide for attendance at its next meeting, which is an essential governmental meeting, on June 24, 2020, via video/telephone conference.

Considering the foregoing, and in accordance with Proclamation Numbers JBE 2020-30 and JBE 2020-33, the DDA will allow input by members of the public, as set forth in this Notice via email comments based on agenda items and other concerns received prior to noon on June 24.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:45 pm; a quorum was present.

II. ROLL CALL

Stacie Leng checked the virtual list of attendance for the roll. Members present were Candice Battiste, Lloyd Brown, John Hubbard, Terry Moore (joined meeting at 3:50 pm), Logan Schroeder, and Stanley Varner.

III. APPROVAL OF ABSENCES

John Hubbard made a motion to approve the absence of Terry Moore (joined meeting at 3:50 pm) and Tim Huck. Candice Battiste seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

IV. AMEND AGENDA

Ms. Swaine responded that the agenda needed to be amended to add the July 8 Special Call Meeting Minutes.

John Hubbard made a motion to amend the agenda to add the July 8 Special Call Meeting Minutes. Lloyd Brown seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

V. WELCOME / INTRODUCTIONS/ PRESENTATIONS

Ms. Swaine introduced Travis Morehart of Cook & Morehart (DDA Auditor). Mr. Morehart presented the results of the 2019 DDA Audit.

Mr. Morehart noted that the audit was good and much of the work by the auditors had been completed before the COVID19 shutdown, so they were able to be in the DDA office to perform the audit. He noted that there had been a prior year (2018) finding relative to bank collections not being secured. He stated that Louisiana requires cash balances, at every bank that an entity has deposits, to be collateralized. In 2018 one of DDA's accounts was only collateralized in the amount of \$24,000 which is less than required. Mr. Morehart noted that this finding had not re-occurred in 2019. The 2019 audit did have one finding that Mr. Morehart said was very minor but had to be noted. The Notice of Public Hearing has to be published 10 days prior to the meeting. Staff sent the notice to the official journal (The Times) in time to meet the requirement, but the newspaper confused the DDA's account with another entity and did not publish the ad within the 10-day requirement period and did not notify DDA that the ad had not been published. Mr. Morehart said that this finding is minor and reiterated that the audit was a good one overall. He briefly reviewed a few new disclosures not previously required by the state. One disclosure now required is the reporting of any real estate abatements, such as Restoration Tax Abatements (RTA) that result in less revenue for DDA. DDA did not receive \$23,198 in tax revenue as a result of the RTA abatement. Mr. Morehart stated that DDA revenues were consistent with the last few years and that expenses were down.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes

Ms. Swaine asked for a review of the June 24, 2020 regular meeting minutes and the July 8, 2020 Special Call meeting minutes for any amendments or revisions. There were none.

Lloyd Brown made a motion to approve the June 24, 2020 regular meeting minutes and the July 8, 2020 Special Call meeting minutes as submitted. John Hubbard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement

Ms. Swaine asked the board to review the June 2020 Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement. She noted that finances are as expected so far this year. She stated that June payments from the city for both Streetscape and Parking have been received, and another check for additional tax revenue collected is expected before the end of the year. Ms. Swaine said that staff has spoken with both the Caddo and Bossier Tax Assessors regarding the re-assessment for 2019 and the anticipated impact the pandemic will have on 2020 collections to be received in 2021. The Assessors are unsure of the numbers but are working to complete projections to submit to the Legislative Auditor's office soon. That information will determine the ad valorem rate the Legislative Auditor's office will assign for DDA to maintain the tax revenue amount for the 2020 taxes and will give an indication of the effect the pandemic may have on assessment and collection. Ms. Swaine stated that it is good that there may be some savings at the end of the year

because of the uncertainty of next year. Staff is continuing to work to prepare the proposed 2021 DDA budget.

Candice Battiste made a motion to accept the June 2020 Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement as presented. John Hubbard seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

VIII. REPORTS

A. Director's Report

1. COVID Reopening
 - Still in Phase 2 until at least July 25th
 - Hopeful the mandatory mask order will help slow the spread
 - Bars still shut down until 8/7; bar owners are concerned because of no smoking ban and pandemic closure
2. Historic Tax Credits
 - HTC legislation passed by the Senate and signed by the Governor
 - Continued fear that the credit will be discontinued/seriously curtailed
 - Excellent support for the program from property owners, business owners, etc.
3. Address Art & Entrepreneur Center
 - Renovation underway; going well
4. Uneeda Lofts
 - Construction work moving ahead
 - 34 apartments – mixed market rate and affordable
 - Opening 2021
5. 619 Texas
 - Sleep is for the Rich Clothing Store recently opened
 - Nicki Daniels, Jr. – owner
 - Clothing, book club, photo services
6. Red River District
 - Appli-Ks closing; relocating to Lofts @624 Texas
 - Not good news for Red River District – occupancy down to 3 spaces only
 - Cohab
 - Nicky's Mexican Restaurant
 - Fatty Arbuckles
7. Threebestrated.com
 - 2 out of the 3 best rated bars are located in downtown
 - Josh Lounge
 - Central Station
8. Red River Revel
 - Cancelled for this year
 - Not sure if Louisiana Film Prize event will occur

B. Parking Report

COVID has impacted numbers relative to tickets. Meter revenue has seen a slight increase recently. The increase may be attributed to collection notices that have been sent. Credit card revenue – online payments – this data supports theory that notices have helped increase payments.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

A. LPSC/AEP SWEPCO – Downtown Lighting Grant

Ms. Swaine reported the project is in the bid stage now. Bid opening is scheduled for 3 pm on 8/7/20. Ms. Landry stated that the electronic bid requirement is being provided through Eauctionservices.com. The manager is Paul Holmes, a former state purchasing agent for Louisiana. The state requires the option of an electronic bid service. Cost is generally 1% of the lowest price bid or \$800 whichever is less. The charge is applicable only if the bid is successful and a contractor selected. The electronic bid fee is a direct cost of the IFB and as such is payable from the grant. Addendum #1 is being drafted to clarify questions from contractors and to make a few corrections to the technical specifications.

B. Downtown Security Latest Updates

The downtown unit has been moved back to downtown. Four officers are on duty during the day. There has been no movement on the security cameras. This project appears to be on hold currently.

C. I Am Downtown Campaign/Downtown Marketing

A number of ads are running with the goal of keeping downtown businesses top of mind. Photos and testimonials of what downtown means to various business owners are getting good organic and paid reach.

D. Downtown Re-opening/COVID-19

Staff feels that only about 50% of businesses and employees are back downtown. Motorist and foot traffic are down. District courts are now open. Bars remain closed and several are trying takeout and other creative ideas to survive. Some are targeting late evening sales and after-hours to go. Ms. Battiste asked if Fatty Arbuckles is providing food or just beverages. Ms. Swaine replied that Fatty's is just serving drinks – no food now. As previously mentioned, most are concerned about the no-smoking ban in addition to COVID. Ms. Swaine said that marketing would not help at this time since the bars are not open.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. Acceptance of 2019 DDA Audit

The results of the 2019 DDA Audit were presented to the Board by Travis Morehart under Presentations.

John Hubbard made a motion to accept the 2019 DDA Audit as presented. Lloyd Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Appointment of 2021 Budget Committee

A brief discussion was held concerning the need for a committee to review and make recommendations concerning the 2021 budget. Lloyd Brown volunteered, and Tim Huck was volunteered by other board members. John Hubbard, Candice Battiste and Stan Varner offered to assist if needed.

XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS (NON-AGENDA ITEMS)

None.

XIII. ADJOURN

With no further business to address, John Hubbard made a motion to adjourn at 4:40pm. The motion, seconded by Candice Battiste, was unanimously approved.

Candice Battiste, Secretary