

**Downtown Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
March 22, 2023**

Present	Absent	Staff	Others Present
Drayden Dunn	Michael Corbin	Liz Swaine	
Chelette Holden (arrived 3:40)		Janie Landry	
Tim Huck		Stacie Leng	
Kathy Malone		Peggy Hellyer	
Terry Moore			
Kyle Southard			

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:33 pm by Chairman Tim Huck.

II. ROLL CALL

Peggy Hellyer called the roll. Michael Corbin and Chelette Holden were not present. Ms. Holden arrived at 3:40 pm.

III. APPROVAL OF ABSENCES

Tim Huck made a motion to accept the absences of Michael Corbin and Chelette Holden. Kyle Southard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

IV. AMEND AGENDA

The agenda was not amended.

V. WELCOME / INTRODUCTIONS/ PRESENTATIONS

There were no welcomes, introductions, or presentations.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes

Ms. Swaine asked for a review of the February 22, 2023, regular meeting minutes and for any revisions.

A motion was made by Drayden Dunn to approve the minutes of the February 22, 2023, meeting. Kathy Malone seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

February 2023 Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement

Ms. Swaine reviewed the February 2023 Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement. She stated that the City had sent another check for taxes received. The Streetscape contract has been signed, and payment has been received. The new 3-year parking contract has also been signed, but no payment has been received yet. The annual DSDC management contract fee has been paid. She stated that expenses are as expected at this time.

A Motion was made by Terry Moore to approve the February 2023 Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement as presented. Kyle Southard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

VIII. REPORTS

A. Director's Report

1. 50 Cent/Millennium Studio

Dr. Holden stated there was full support from the City Council and that a signed agreement has been delivered to 50 Cent. Ms. Swaine stated that he has a number of projects in play, needs the studio as soon as possible, and plans to hire locals. She stated her opinion that this project is very significant to the city.

2. 500 Fannin- State Office Building

Estimated to take 200-300 days for demolition. Architectural drawings should be completed by Dec. 2023. Employees could be in the building by 2025. Ms. Swaine reported she hopes the State will consider over-building the garage by several hundred spaces to help with parking for adjacent properties.

3. 425/427 Crockett Street

100% leased. Three apartments, commercial space, restaurant.

4. 1200 Marshall Street.

Historic rehab and new businesses are moving in.

5. 421 Market Street - Dripp Donuts.

Huge grand opening and continued strong foot traffic, including Saturdays. Kyle Southard reported Dripp is selling 800 donuts per day.

Terry Moore asked if there are any grocery stores interested in downtown. Ms. Swaine reported that grocery stores look for residential growth, and downtown residential is not at the needed level yet. Kyle Southard stated he has a friend who wants to develop an international grocery store in the DDD which would certainly attract people downtown. He said the Porter Howard building was a potential location but did not work out. Ms. Swaine suggested the PPG building, which is currently on the market. The one-level building has parking on site.

6. New Businesses:

- 605 Texas St.- Trap Krabs – now open.
- 420 Marshall St. – Ashley's Tiers of Love, a bakery with a built-in clientele, is anticipated to open in May.
- 1200 Marshall St.- Waddell's Gallery of Distinction, open now.

7. Events:

- Celebrate and Pollinate, Artspace- Thursday 10:00 am - 7:30 pm
- US Navy Band- Friday 6:00 pm -8:00 pm- Weather may necessitate moving to Artspace.
- Rubbish Revamp Garage Sale (with Remington) Sat., April 8
- Downtown Plant Swap- Sat., April 15 @ Shreve Station
- Love the Boot Downtown Cleanup- Sat., April 22 (with Aquarium)

B. Parking Report

Lorenzo Lee reported that ticket revenue for February was lower than January. Coinage was up, but overall numbers are slightly lower than last year at this time. Combined revenue averaged about \$35,600 per month. No vehicles were booted last month.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

A. Downtown Security

Ms. Swaine gave a review of a New York Times article about the homeless situation in Phoenix which reflects a direct cost to businesses and residential. She stated there are fewer individuals with shopping carts sleeping downtown, but said there are still pockets of homelessness in the Red River District. The population is not yet to the point of being too large for the police to handle. Tim Huck reported that there are some aggressive panhandlers at night, and some that are accumulating large piles of belongings. Ms. Swaine said that Trap Krabs had discussed the possibility of feeding the homeless on Sundays and that she asked him to donate the food to the shelters instead. Terry Moore reported seeing a woman on the Texas Street bridge with a shopping cart recently. He also stated that there is a tent city in the heavy thicket along the Clyde Fant running trail. Tim Huck said he took a cruise from New Orleans recently and did not walk around after the cruise because the homeless situation was so bad.

B. Trees

Ms. Swaine reported that all the new trees are planted, and some are already budding out. Tree trimming and shrubbery removal will be next. Dead shrubbery is especially an issue at the Texas Street bridge at the entrance to downtown. Removal of shrubbery falls to SPAR. Ms. Swaine spoke with SPAR Director Shelly Ragle and offered to get a crew in to help if SPAR would maintain. Dead shrubbery is also found on Spring Street along the exit from I-20. Ms. Swaine made the same offer to help with that area. She stated she is working with the horticulturist at the Aquarium to advise on plantings.

Terry Moore reported he was at a Chamber of Commerce meeting with some business owners who have relocated to Shreveport. He stated his opinion that deals have been lost in the Uber ride from the airport to downtown because drivers discuss how bad it is to live in Shreveport. He stated his belief that hotel employees and other service workers also hurt economic development efforts because of their negative comments about Shreveport. Mr. Moore asked for opinions on what could be done to make positive changes. Ms. Swaine said that the Convention & Tourist Bureau provides training for hotel employees, drivers, and others to give positive responses to questions from visitors. Kyle Southard commended the staff for providing assistance to help improve the overall look of downtown and cited the shrubs as an example.

C. Downtown Amenity Fund / Downtown Lighting Grants

Two applications have been received for this grant which is designed to provide assistance to property owners to help keep lights on from dusk to dawn at downtown businesses. Lindora Baker, 800 Texas Ave. has received tentative approval. An application from William O'Brien, 700 Texas Street, has also been received.

D. Vacant Property Ordinance

Ms. Swaine reported that Mayor Arceneaux asked if Jerry Jones, DDA counsel, would rewrite the vacant property ordinance to make it Shreveport specific.

E. DDA Audit

Cook and Morehart have completed the DDA audit. It was a good audit with no findings.

F. Street Directional Conversions

Ms. Swaine has been talking with Councilman Gary Brooks and others about converting downtown's one-way streets into two-way. The one-way streets are a deterrent to some people. Some cost would be involved to make the changes. Kyle Southard asked whether pedestrian areas would be a possibility Ms. Swaine said that a study would be necessary to assess the impact on some

businesses. She also gave her opinion that the issue is worth a discussion. Mr. Southard said he has some information on Milam Street as a potential pedestrian area and will share it with Ms. Swaine.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. Joe Minicozzi- Urban3 Findings

Ms. Swaine gave a review of Joe Minicozzi's Urban 3 study that was recently presented. It was a year-long, data-driven study pulled directly from available Shreveport data. The study highlighted that City of Shreveport revenues total \$217M, and expenditures are \$253M.

The greatest market value per acre is downtown due to its density. 8.3% of the total land mass creates 74% of the city's revenue. Downtown buildings have a small footprint and have more value per acre. The Beck building is at the top for most revenue per acreage. It is a compact small building with continued occupancy.

Vacant land has the lowest rate of return. The city has substantial infrastructure upkeep. Infrastructure is aging and it is not being maintained. Current spending for all infrastructure costs is \$99 million, but Minicozzi found that it should be \$193 million. The city has also continued to annex additional property, though the population has declined steadily since 1980.

Urban 3's takeaways for Shreveport:

- Concentrated development is more productive.
- Infrastructure is not cheap.
- Cost & revenue vary with what we build.
- Seek efficiency in systems.
- Development patterns matter.
- Prioritize repairing past harms.

Takeaways for Downtown:

- Aggressively fight demolitions.
- Prioritize for-profit businesses.
- Be even more vocal about downtown needs.
- Attempt again to engage the Parish for financial assistance.
- Be intentional in deployment of money.

Drayden Dunn commented that the tax rolls stood out the most to him. He said that development of downtown's large vacant buildings, such as the Slattery building must occur, and that developers will likely have to be creative. Dunn also stated his belief that the Parish should finally support downtown. Tim Huck stated his opinion that there needs to be conversation with Caddo commissioners concerning the issue. He also believes that the Sheriff's office needs to patrol downtown. Mr. Dunn suggested a request from the board to make a specific ask of the Parish.

It was stated that many AEP/SWEPCO poles downtown need repair. Ms. Swaine will visit with Michael Corbin to determine the cost to repair or replace the lighting, which might be an area where the Parish could assist.

There was a discussion regarding a downtown parking garage which could be on the bond issue the Mayor is considering. Another funding mechanism could be a public private partnership. Kathy Malone stated her hope that the City takes action relative to the information presented by Minicozzi rather than placing the study on a shelf. Kyle Southard said the Board should embrace the study and encourage the City to push to get recommendations pursued.

XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS (NON-AGENDA ITEMS)

There were no public comments.

XIII. ADJOURN

With no further business to address, the meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm

Kyle Southard, Secretary