

**Downtown Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
August 23, 2023**

Present	Absent	Staff	Others Present
Michael Corbin	Tim Huck	Liz Swaine	
Drayden Dunn	Kathy Malone	Stacie Leng	
Chelette Holden	Kyle Southard	Peggy Hellyer	
Terry Moore			

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:33 pm by Chair Michael Corbin.

B. ROLL CALL

Peggy Hellyer called the roll. Tim Huck, Kathy Malone, and Kyle Southard were absent.

C. APPROVAL OF ABSENCES

Drayden Dunn made a motion to accept the absences of Tim Huck, Kathy Malone and Kyle Southard. Terry Moore seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

D. AMEND AGENDA

The agenda was not amended.

E. WELCOME / INTRODUCTIONS/ PRESENTATIONS

There were no introductions of presentations.

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

G. CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes

Ms. Swaine asked for a review of the July 26, 2023, regular meeting minutes and for any revisions.

A motion was made by Drayden Dunn to approve the minutes of the July 26, 2023, meeting. Chelette Holden seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

July 2023 Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement

Ms. Swaine reviewed the July 2023 Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement. A small amount of property tax income was received for the month. Staff is still waiting for the Caddo Assessor's office to determine the anticipated property tax revenue that will be received in 2024. Assessor Charles Henington is not running for re-election. The Assessor's position and his office is very important to DDA as staff is frequently in contact with his office regarding DDA tax revenue.

Payment from the City for the Streetscape and Parking contracts is current. The Parking contract was increased for 2023 and the additional funds will be reserved for new equipment, etc. The only line item that is over on the expense side is insurance which will be adjusted for the 2024 budget.

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

VIII. REPORTS

A. Director's Report

1. Petroleum Tower, 425 Edwards
The city made a reasonably good counter to all the requested incentives from the developers and is awaiting their response. The project is hopefully still moving forward.
2. Shreveport Casino Market Report
Only four casinos in the state showed an increase in July including Sam's Bally's and Horseshoe. The increase is likely due to the change in the smoking ordinance.
3. PGW Building, 525 Cotton Street
Request to Rezone for Storage Facility
This property is located adjacent to the Hub, which causes issues unfortunately. The hearing is scheduled for Sept. 6. If the rezoning is approved, it would be permanently changed. Drayden Dunn asked if the DDA should go on record against the rezoning. Ms. Swaine suggested it would be better to work with the owner to find another usage for the building. She spoke with MPC staff and SPD about the homeless shelter and the problems it creates. There are always people on the sidewalk, drug deals, etc. happening there. She said she will make that case again.
4. Uneeda Lofts, 711 Milam Street
Appointment-only tours
32 one-bedroom Lofts
Market rate - \$857 to \$1,015, SF from 592 - 753 sf.
Affordable rate/monthly rate averaging \$521
5. Refine Design Boutiques, 616 Texas Street
Appli-Ks moved from 624 Texas to 616 Texas Street
First year Birthday Bash was Sat. Aug. 12
6. Downtown Space Available
Know anyone looking? Have them call us!
7. Quilt Kiosk Repaired!
DDA dogged the driver's insurance company for payment.
8. Suzy Survey- 5 Questions
Town Square Media. This will go out to thousands of people.
 1. What is your favorite thing about downtown?
 2. If you could change one thing about downtown, what would it be?
 3. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think about downtown?
 4. What is something you would like to see downtown?
 5. What would make downtown more important to our community? Not sure if this one is worded quite correctly.

Terry Moore stated that the perception is that downtown is not safe. Drayden Dunn commented that there are no consistent hours across businesses. Abby Singer's was closed recently at dinner hours. Big Sun Gallery is never open even though they have a Hillary Frazier exhibit hanging. Ms. Swaine reviewed the DDA's attempt at Second Saturday Downtown and stated that the problem was exactly what Mr. Dunn mentioned. Mr. Moore said that the trolley tour was awesome when it was running. Ms. Swaine commented that the trolley ran once a month on a Thursday, and there used to be a

lunch trolley, but it was not used.

9. PrizeFest – Ms. Swaine asked for the board members’ ticket requests. She asked that the requests be limited to two tickets initially for events.

Saturday, Aug. 26 is the last Shreveport Farmers’ Market of the season! 7:30 am -12:30 pm

Downtown Shreveport Artwalk is Wednesday, Sept. 6, 5-8 pm

The board members discussed the importance of making certain that all downtown businesses know about various events that are occurring downtown. For instance: Heels and Reels at the Robinson would bring shoppers to Refine Design. Ms. Swaine stated that staff works diligently to inform all downtown businesses about events, etc. and that we want all to be successful. It was noted that businesses cannot be forced into cooperating or participating if they do not choose to do so. Drayden Dunn said he never knows about the events at the Convention Center. Ms. Swaine responded that she usually gets notice of events about a month before they occur. She also sends out an email to the 500 plus local businesses advising them of events. Drayden Dunn asked if a downtown stakeholders meeting would be a possibility. Ms. Swaine reported that DDA did this for business owners in 2022 but not for residents and business owners together. She stated her opinion that such a meeting would certainly be possible and would be a good idea.

B. Parking Report

Lorenzo Lee reported that the parking report has been changed slightly to show coinage combined in meter revenue. July was a good month. No vehicles were booted in June, but eight were booted in July.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

A. Downtown Security and Homeless

Ms. Swaine reported that SPD is interested in locating an SPD office downtown. Michael Corbin stated he might know of a potential space from a local business. Ms. Swaine reported that the police were rarely at the kiosk under the bridge because the space was too small. She stated that it is definitely desirable to have an SPD office downtown. She said wants assurance that there will be officers stationed downtown - a downtown unit and that it should be visible. Mr. Corbin asked if there was an increase in downtown homeless recently. Ms. Swaine reported that the downtown homeless population does appear to have increased, but she is unsure as to the reason. She reminded board members to call the non-emergency police number and choose option 3 to report panhandlers.

B. Trees / Downtown Amenity Fund / Downtown Lighting Grants

Ms. Swaine reported she asked property owners for help watering the trees in an effort to save them during the drought. The trees are very stressed. A third-party vendor is watering once a week, and Streetscape employees are also working overtime to water. Ten trees have been lost to date.

C. Vacant Property Ordinance

There was no discussion on the vacant property ordinance.

D. Downtown Amenity Fund / Downtown Lighting Grants

There have been three requests for lighting grants to date. Cooper’s Corner has just been awarded a grant.

E. Street Directional Conversations

There was no discussion on the street directions.

NEW BUSINESS

A. SPD Request for Camera Funding

Ms. Swaine reported that in 2006, DDA purchased cameras for the City. The cameras, which were located in the Red River district and riverfront area, are no longer functional, but the attachment points are still there. There was a review of the new cameras SPD would like to purchase.

Camera locations include the following areas: across from the Pelican statue, on the rear of the former Expo Hall, 600 block of Commerce Street, and at the base of the Bakowski (Texas Street) Bridge. Some of these locations are not very populated but will show the travel to and from the city. Cost of the equipment is \$9400. SPD would like one additional camera, for a total not to exceed cost of \$15,000. This figure does not include maintenance which will be provided by the City.

Michael Corbin asked why SPD came to the DDA asking for funds for the purchase. Ms. Swaine replied that SPD does not have financial resources to acquire the cameras. Michael Corbin said that SWEPCO has reported three City cameras because they were attached to poles that had broken and the cameras were pointed at the ground. Ms. Swaine stated her belief that cameras are needed to supplement the police. The City will not do the installation. The cameras will be installed by Jett or Guardian. Terry Moore stated his opinion that the camera purchase would be a good decision.

Terry Moore made a motion to fund the purchase of cameras for SPD up to \$15,000. Chelette Holden seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

B. City-wide Bond Issue / Riverfront Development Fund

Ms. Swaine stated she does not know what the City's bonding capacity is currently by may be \$200M. This bond issue will increase taxes and most likely will not pass. Michael Corbin said there are still no new police stations that were approved by the voters from the last bond issue.

Ten (10) green rectangular trash receptacles have been ordered. There was a discussion of self-watering Earth Planters. These planters have been used successfully in other cities in the same planting zone as Shreveport. Tim Hoover, Aquarium horticulturist, will assist with plant selection. Terry Moore asked if the planters could be placed in areas where there are cameras. Drayden Dunn suggested the planters include signage that the area is under surveillance. The Board agreed these suggestions would be a good idea.

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 4:50 pm