

**Downtown Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
March 27, 2024**

Present

Michael Corbin
Drayden Dunn
Chelette Holden
Tim Huck (Arrived 4:38pm)
Kathy Malone
Terry Moore
Kyle Southard

Absent

Staff

Janie Landry
Stacie Leng
Peggy Hellyer

Others Present

Jon Glover
Roland Ricou
Carla Collins
David Alexander
Ed Crawford
Carlana Stone
Ursula Bowman
Stormy Gage Watts
Craig B. Lee
Tabatha Taylor
Beth King
Gary Brooks
Antiska Harris
Ronald L. Cothran
Jerry Bowman, Jr.
Terri Pugh
Leon Wheeler

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ROLL CALL

Tim Huck arrived at 4:38 pm.

AMEND AGENDA

The agenda was not amended.

III. WELCOME / INTRODUCTIONS/ PRESENTATIONS

There were no introductions or presentations.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Agenda Items)

Roland Ricou commented that he would welcome a national search for the new executive director.

David Alexander echoed Mr. Ricou's comments. It is a pivotal time downtown; office vacancies are at an all-time high.

Ed Crawford also echoed similar sentiments. He said he could not understate how difficult it is for downtown currently and his opinion that a national search is necessary.

Beth King said she represents 500k square feet of space downtown and that she agreed with the previous comments. She said downtown office occupancy is worse than it was in the 80's. She believes the situation can be turned around and there is still a good opportunity to stave off the exodus from downtown, but it is imperative that the DDA not wait on anything. The Executive Director position, in her opinion, requires a good salary. Ms. King believes there is a need for a downtown owners and tenants association to help support the DDA. Property standards should also be addressed, and owners should at the very least stabilize their buildings.

Michael Corbin thanked the Shreveport City council members for attending: Ms. Taylor, Ms. Bowman, and Mr. Brooks and also Caddo Commissioner Ms. Gage Watts.

Carlotta Stone spoke about her excitement about Shreveport. She said Shreveport is great at connectivity and has a wonderful community of creatives.

Councilman Brooks reported that the vacant property ordinance will be on the city council agenda soon.

Councilwoman Bowman stated she was in attendance to listen to the process.

Jon Glover said that she was in attendance to listen to the process for selection of the next director.

Carla Collins attended to learn the qualifications for the director's position.

Councilman Taylor also stated she was in attendance to listen to the process.

Antiska Harris reported that she applied for the director's position, and she wanted to know the qualifications.

Craig B. Lee stated his opinion that racism and nepotism have killed Shreveport. Key things happened since the 70s and 80s that removed the energy from downtown. He gave his opinion that the next director will have to deal with the historical realities of Shreveport. They will need to be qualified and bold enough to see historical realities and create a city that we really want to see.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes

Mr. Corbin asked for approval of the February 28, 2024, meeting minutes. Kyle Southard stated his belief that at the previous meeting the board discussed reviewing the current applicants' resumes against a rubric so that the applicants could be given a status update, and those who were not going to be considered could be informed. He said he did not see this reflected in the minutes.

Michael Corbin stated that it was discussed, but a motion was not made nor voted on. Mr. Southard stated that since the minutes are a matter of public record, and this matter will come under scrutiny, he would like to correct the minutes to note that the board agreed that a rubric be applied to evaluate the original applicants and a status update be given to them. Ms. Landry stated that the minutes can be amended by adding the verbiage "the board had a discussion to refer to a rubric regarding the qualifications of the current applicants and to give them a status update."

A motion was made by Kyle Southard to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2024, meeting minutes as amended. Chelette Holden seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Corbin asked for approval of the February 27, 2024, DDA / DSDC Special Call Meeting Minutes.

A motion was made by Drayden Dunn to approve the February 27, 2024, DDA / DSDC Special Call meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Michael Corbin and passed unanimously.

B. January 2024 Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement

Ms. Landry reviewed the February 2024 Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement. She stated that another deposit of \$10k was received from the city. Revenue so far is \$15k less than budgeted. The city contracts are current, DSDC has paid the management agreement, and interest income is as anticipated. Under expenses, the salary line item is back to normal after the vacation payment was made to the

former director. Nothing is unusual at this time of year. Drayden Dunn asked if \$75k for the beautification was a match between the city and the DDA. Ms. Landry responded that it was.

A motion was made by Kathy Malone to approve the February 2024 Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement as presented. Drayden Dunn seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

VI. REPORTS

A. Director's Report

1. DDA 2023 Audit

Cook & Morehart. March 27, 2024

Audit completed – One finding not due to any issue caused by staff; stolen checking account number.

2. Artwalk 2024

1st Wednesday each month April - December (except October due to Revel)

April 3, 2024 - Texas Street Corridor

3. National Park Service & State of Louisiana Historic Preservation officials in downtown recently to look at several downtown properties applying for the credits.

Staff made a presentation and hosted lunch.

4. Dees Photo Building/Dripp Donuts - 421 Market Street

Owned by DSDC2, Inc.

Building at major risk of collapse. Coordinating demolition; removal of Dripp inventory.

Bus Stop in front of the property on Texas is being closed. DSDC2, Inc. hopes to donate the building/parking lot. Kyle Southard asked if Dripp would remain downtown. Ms. Landry reported that the DSDC attorney advised that she must speak to Dripp through their attorney, but she hopes they will stay downtown. She has attempted efforts to save that building, but the experts recommend demolition.

5. DDA 25-Year Tax Renewal

Current authorization period expires 12/31/27.

Current millage rate 9.04 mills

Will work with City Administration/DD A Legal Counsel to determine best date to put the proposition on city-wide ballot.

Property tax paid only by downtown property owners but voted on city-wide.

Will be a renewal; not new tax.

Developing plan of action to engage property owners/business owners.

6. A Truss Bridge - DSDC2, Inc. - Fiscal Agent

\$25,000 received; signed work order for Miller Tree Service (\$22,500); 2/28/24.

Step 1 - Clear land to access bridge.

Step 2 - Structural Assessment.

Step I – The land has been cleared; completed.

7. 416 Cotton Street - Roof Repairs

DDA approved repairs and/or new roof not to exceed \$45k.

Southern Roofing (\$5230)

Repairs completed, no leaks.

8. Red River District - Ordinance Change - Meter Parking on Commerce Street

Legislation introduced by Councilman Brooks to eliminate enforcement on Commerce Street from 11 am - 5 pm.

Passed by Council on 2/13/24, Legislation in place. ShrevePark is no longer issuing tickets on Commerce Street from 11 am – 5 pm.

9. Downtown Security Cameras

DDA donation of 4 cameras (\$12,203) to SPD.

City Council approved Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with SPD 2-27-24.

Waiting on Mayor's signature. Check will be issued to vendor.

10. DDA Funds to SPD for Downtown Security

DDA transfers money to DSDC for funding additional police downtown.

\$62,674.55 to DSDC since 2021; Officers paid \$35/hr. for 4 hrs. on Saturdays.

\$50,365 used to date.

\$12,309.55 Surplus to apply to 2024.

DDA has \$18,000 allocated in 2024 budget for security.

Surplus + 2024 allocation totals \$30,309.55 and funds program for 108 weeks (if current pay structure remains same).

11. UV Coating - Once in Millennium Moon Mural

Met with Pam Atchison; made decisions to reduce cost.

SRAC moving forward now.

Funding carried over from 2022 COS allocation.

12. Millennium Studio - 300 Douglas Street

30-year lease to G Unit Film & Television Louisiana and Millennium Studio/ Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson

30-Year lease

Option for 15-year extension

Lease includes furniture, fixtures & equipment.

\$2400 per year/Triple Net

Property will be on tax roll.

Ribbon Cutting; 4/18/24; 4 pm, Steps of Government Plaza.

Purchasing additional property downtown.

13. Current interest from a conglomerate of entertainment, news, and sports brand entity.

Staff working to provide information concerning available tax credits and locations.

There was a board discussion about the impact Curtis Jackson's move to Shreveport will have on downtown. Ms. Landry reported that there is interest from others now that 50 Cent has selected Shreveport. She is planning to host a conference call with a group from CA. Ms. Landry will introduce them to Chris Stelly, Louisiana Director of Entertainment. Ms. Holden offered her

services as she stated that she was instrumental in bringing 50 Cent to town.

14. Petroleum Tower, 425 Edwards Street

Project still a possibility.

New investment group providing financial resources.

Met with administration in November 2023.

Asking for sales tax abatement on building materials.

Also asking for approval to extend the RTA program from 5-10 years to 20 years.

Mayor reviewing requests. Indicated support of sales tax abatement.

Hope to start construction summer 2024 (likely 24-month construction period)

Planned 120 units. Exploring potential for few units to be affordable

Project will still be market rate for majority of units.

Developer waiting for input from Mayor's office & Community Development Dept.

15. Marketing - Town Square Media

Developing marketing campaign, redesign of DDA / DSDC website - (design changes can be made at no extra cost - included in the monthly fee).

16. Forte and Tablada- 1010 Marshall

Renovation has begun - new windows; painting facade; remodeling interior

Jordan Pearson - Manager

Should be in the building within 30 days.

B. Parking Report

Lorenzo Lee reported that the parking staff only worked three weeks in February because of the storms, but revenue is now back on track. Coin revenue increased slightly. Seven vehicles were booted; the largest fine was \$875.

Michael Corbin stated that money collected from parking meters goes to the city's parking enterprise fund. The ordinances are set at the city level. DDA has a contract with the city to enforce the ordinances.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Search Committee – Executive Director Position

Michael Corbin reported that the process has taken much longer than the board anticipated in January. He said that as a result, the committee has had better communication with downtown stakeholders. He also said that more skill sets have been added to the position that were not previously considered. Mr. Corbin apologized for the delay but noted he has corresponded with all applicants and thanked them for applying. He believes that DDA should engage a search firm to look for someone with past downtown experience. He believes the original applicants should also be included. Because of the public records law, the names of the applicants were made public. A search firm that was in consideration has withdrawn because of the exposure this search has had. Mr. Corbin stated his opinion that it was irresponsible journalism to indicate that the slate of applicants is not qualified. It is unfortunate that some of the communication between board members has become public also and relayed to elected officials. Internal communication must be kept internal. This is a joint decision of the DDA and the DSD. Mr. Corbin noted that the search committee is comprised of two DSDC members and three DDA members. He also said that it has been difficult to convene the committee because of varying schedules. Mr. Corbin said that the board is fortunate that DDA currently has a good staff in place.

Michael Corbin made a motion to engage with a search firm to expedite the search, include the 13 original applicants in the search, to find the best person to lead DDA and downtown forward.

Drayden Dunn asked for discussion. He stated that the committee members have made themselves readily available and that he has requested special meetings on three separate occasions. He read a prepared statement for the board:

“An important decision to select our next leader, the executive director of the Downtown Development Authority, has been our charge for the past 3 months. I appreciate and am grateful for the opportunity to serve not only this board but the search committee to narrow down and hopefully offer up a person or persons for the board's consideration. While I have been excited about the opportunity to catapult our downtown in a new direction, frustration has overtaken that excitement in the processes that have been implemented by our leadership.

On several occasions both in DDA Board meetings, special sessions, and search committee meetings I have voiced my concerns with transparency, a fair and clear process and ensuring we adhering to our bylaws and motions that have been seconded and voted on unanimously.

On November 30th last year, I reached out to our Chairman Michael Corbin, as Vice-Chairman requesting a special session for the board to discuss the path forward and plan to replace our Executive Director who had recently resigned since our next board meeting was not scheduled for another three weeks. Michael within his right declined the proposed special meeting to discuss ahead of the board meeting. Unfortunately, during the search process this has become the norm, moving without a sense of urgency.

Chairman Corbin did in fact create a job listing that the search committee ultimately approved. I had specific comments about two items, including ED responsibilities and board appointments, which were not considered or added.

When brought before the board, the charge was made to make sure we listed the position nationally, reaching coast to coast and using social media. Chairman Corbin ensured placement on downtowninternational.com a site dedicated to downtown development across the world, the City of Shreveport Website, DDA Website, LinkedIn and possibly other social media platforms.

This search yielded 3 applicants outside of our region including California, Lake Charles and Connecticut that in my opinion had an absolutely decorated resume. The board unanimously voted to have the search committee (made up of both DDA and DSDC members) to bring a total of four names unless we could deem applicants not viable candidates after consideration. This again was a motion that was seconded and voted on unanimously. Today, this request has not been satisfied. I understand why we have not brought any applicants to our board to consider two months later, and that reason is because we have failed to properly vet and review the 13 applicants collectively, discuss their resumes and packets, and even failed to rank, grade and score the applicants. Today, we still lack a rubric even though the board requested this in our February meeting, and I also voiced this in our special joint session.

Chairman Corbin has consistently stated in his media tours that we prefer an applicant with DDA experience and although that is preferred, it is not required. There are many in the community who believe our previous ED did a swell job for 14 years who too had no DDA experience when given the opportunity or many of the detailed preferences and requirements on the current job posted.

I stated on the record several times that I want us to follow a clear, transparent and fair process in our selection process and I cannot say that has been accomplished. Without a detailed review of applicants why would we open back up the search before ensuring the qualifications of our current applicants when it is not the appetite of the board. Chairman Corbin sent an email granting permission to move forward with a new headhunting firm and requested us to reply all with an affirmative. Not one board member gave a notice to proceed. I believe that is due to lack of communication, transparency and lack of due diligence.

We have to do the right thing. We stated our concerns and made many recommendations to make this process better, but the Chairman within in right in some cases proceeded with his selection plans.

Instead of contacting board members to unify, Chairman Corbin did an interview where he stated "I (not we) want to see if there's anything out there with DDA experience and proven track record". Later in the same interview Chairman Corbin stated that he had conversations with people and knew multiple people who would have expressed interest but because of a public record request they did not. He went on to say that they "could have been a good fit". I highly doubt that these potential applicants have DDA experience.

At this point, we cannot afford to go back on what we as a board agreed to do and that's find the best candidate possible and the only way we can do that is with a fair and objective process. I will ask that the board honor our agreement and vote and do the right thing for Shreveport and its treasured downtown."

Mr. Dunn closed by saying:

"We have already made a motion and a second that we bring four names in December and being on the search committee I can attest that we have not reviewed resumes, we have not scored these individuals, we have not given an interview to any of the individuals and instead, it was a unilateral decision that was made to move on to a head-hunting firm. As far as a national search, there has been a national search, that is why we got applicants from California and Connecticut. As far as a headhunting firm, there were three proposals submitted for a headhunter firm. Somehow, someway, no one at this table saw all three. We only saw one proposal that you made a unilateral decision to bring forward. This is not the way we should do business. We should be transparent; we should do our due diligence. In the last board meeting, all of us said we have no problem with hiring a firm, but Kathy had a question, and that question was what the success / fail rate was of the firm we would hire. We wanted to be able to engage the headhunting firm and ask questions. Only Michael has talked to the headhunting firm. Numerous times we asked can we bring this to the table, can we hold a special meeting, can we hop on a zoom, can you bring us a rubric. Cal even went out of the way to create a rubric for us to implement and that got no response. I just have to push back. We are not in a position to open up the search because at the end of the day, it's not even fair why we are opening the search back up. Is it because we want candidates that have DDA experience or is it because people have told you they would apply if they were given a chance to do it in an anonymous form. I think it's more the latter than the first."

Michael Corbin thanked Mr. Dunn for his comments. He said it is his responsibility as chair to vet the firms, stay within the budget, and determine which firm has the necessary experience. He contacted the Urban Land Institute (ULI) as Linc Coleman suggested, however, ULI does not offer recruiting services. Information on the firms and the cost of the service is necessary before a decision can be made.

Mr. Southard agreed with Mr. Dunn's comments. He said that he is not on the search committee but

disagreed that there was a lack of responsiveness to Mr. Corbin's emails from the two DDA search committee members: Terry Moore and Drayden Dunn. He would also like to push back on Mr. Corbin's statement made at city council. Mr. Southard then read Mr. Corbin's statement:

"The search committee and those who are volunteering to serve on these boards are all busy, professional people and I cannot tell you how difficult it is get those people together or to respond to an email."

Mr. Southard stated that he did not appreciate the statement. He said that the special joint meeting was called on short notice. He gave his opinion that the board members have responded when Mr. Corbin sent emails. Mr. Southard mentioned two specific emails: (1) March 13th, Ms. Holden responded to Mr. Corbin's email that she thought the committee was going to evaluate all the applications using a rubric, and Mr. Corbin replied that the board did discuss doing so. (2) March 18, Mr. Southard noted similar comments made by Ms. Holden. Mr. Southard gave his opinion that very specific, unanimous suggestions were assembled about how the search was to be conducted and how the DDA should be treating those who applied.

Mr. Corbin responded that he did not agree with Mr. Southard's comments and reiterated that he does not get responses from the committee. He purposely has not moved forward with evaluation of the 13 resumes for two reasons: (1) the search firms advised him not to and stated they will handle the HR process. (2) Once the committee has the rubric - which he has had since the day after the second meeting - and when the resumes are evaluated according to the rubric, the results become a matter of public record which will further complicate the process.

Mr. Southard stated that the minutes of the last meeting reflect the fact that the previous rating sheet used for former search committees has not been located in the DDA files. Only the results of the ratings have been found. He then asked Mr. Corbin if he had a rubric the day following the special meeting.

Mr. Corbin stated that he had a shell of one and had HR professionals review it. He asked Mr. Southard why it mattered. Mr. Southard stated his belief that Mr. Corbin was saying things that are inaccurate. He felt that Mr. Corbin was trying to intimidate him by pulling him aside and discussing resigning. Mr. Southard said he does not have confidence in Mr. Corbin's leadership for the board or search committee because of the way he has acted throughout the entire process.

Mr. Corbin stated he would be happy to address Mr. Southard's comments. Mr. Southard sent an email to the mayor and the CAO criticizing Mr. Corbin's performance as chairman of the board and also expressing Mr. Southard's desire to be replaced on the board.

Mr. Southard stated that this was not true. Mr. Corbin said that the copy of the email he received stated both things.

Mr. Southard stated he would make the email public record. Mr. Corbin said this was what he was referring to in his opening remarks about communication. The person that sent the email to Mr. Corbin is not on the distribution list. Mr. Southard stated for the board what the email contained:

"I was nominated for this board by mayor Adrian Perkins and approved unanimously by city council. Before I resign because I don't believe in the direction that Mr. Corbin is taking this search and the board, and I also do not want to have anything to do with somebody who throws people under the bus for lack of responsiveness."

Mr. Corbin denied that he had thrown anyone under the bus.

Mr. Southard gave his opinion that Mr. Corbin's statement at the city council meeting did just that.

Mr. Southard's email statement:

"I don't want to resign from a position that I hold very dear to myself, and I think it's important to the community, without letting the person or the office who nominated me into this position know how much I appreciate the opportunity but why I would resign if that does happen? And what I did say is that if this continues, and if we cannot get some kind of resolution from Mr. Corbin, then I probably will seek your approval in finding someone to replace me. "

Mr. Southard concluded by saying that is not the same as saying I want to resign.

Drayden Dunn stated the following:

"At the end of the day, we made a motion and agreed to have a rubric. We've already discussed and said that we would bring four names to the table, and if those four names were not viable, we can bring three, two or one, and that has not happened. How can we sit here and say we want to open back up the search when you went on record and said you have talked to people who want to apply as long as it's anonymous? That is not right. These people already applied, their name has been put out there to the public, they have been scrutinized and deemed unqualified already and us as a board and a search committee haven't even discussed any names or resumes or looked at a rubric. How is that fair and transparent? Why are we moving to open the search...and not doing what's right and doing what we agreed upon. The board voted on this, and it was seconded and it's not even up for discussion in my opinion because we have to do what we agreed to do."

Chelette Holden stated that if the committee had done what was voted on and gone through the 13 applications and presented the four, or whatever the case might be, and the board determined there was not a viable applicant, she believes that everyone would agree to a national search. She believes that the 13 original candidates are owed that.

Mr. Corbin clarified Mr. Dunn's last comment: the board did vote on bringing four names from the search back to the board for final consideration. There was not a motion or vote about using a rubric. There was discussion about it. It has been incredibly hard, especially given the DSDC issues with the Dripp Donuts building to find a time when people are available and to get responses. He is happy to schedule another search committee meeting after April 10th as he will be out of town.

Mr. Dunn said that last month he requested a special meeting and there was unanimous agreement from the board and another 30 days have passed. He has not seen any emails or zoom requests for a meeting.

Mr. Corbin reiterated that he could schedule something after April 10th. He would prefer to have the meeting in person. He also repeated that every search firm he has spoken to has asked the committee to not rate the resumes already received, but to allow the search firm to do so.

Mr. Dunn said that the board has not even agreed to go to a search firm yet. Mr. Corbin replied that a motion was on the table to address that.

Mr. Southard stated that he is not against a national search, he greatly respects Mr. Alexander and Mr. Crawford and the input from the downtown stakeholders who have voiced their opinions. His point is that it is unfair to the applicants who have applied to leave them in limbo so long.

Tim Huck asked at what point are the 13 applications going to be reviewed by the committee. He gave his opinion that each search committee member should be given all the resumes, if they have not already, and each member review them and make their own list to bring to a committee meeting. All 13 are not viable resumes, possibly no one has all the qualifications. He said that all board members, council members and stakeholders have probably received phone calls and emails about the applicants. Treating everyone fairly is important for the board to move forward. As a board, the determination must be what is best for everyone. A little more delicate and extreme professionalism from all sides would be welcomed. Mr. Huck believes the process was started backwards: should have started with the national search committee. He said the committee can still rank the current applicants, and not give those resumes to a national search committee. Mr. Southard did ask for four, and the board approved that, with the ability to present fewer as needed. The committee would be remiss not to rank the ones who already applied. Have one committee meeting, bring the results to the board, and proceed from there. If there are no viable candidates, then to serve the community, the board would be obligated to move to a national search. This would be fair to all.

Mr. Dunn reread the motion from the December 2023 minutes for the board:

A motion was made by Tim Huck for the board to accept the search committee's recommendations as presented with the requirement to bring forward four names at a minimum to present to the board unless justification not to bring four names forward is given. The motion was seconded by Kathy Malone and passed unanimously.

Mr. Dunn said the search was national at the beginning – it was posted on a national website. He gave his opinion that Mr. Corbin is talking to a headhunting firm to circumvent the public records request.

Mr. Southard stated that Mr. Huck highlighted what the board discussed in February. There should be a committee meeting prior to April 10th.

Mr. Corbin said that the board did not understand some things when the search started at the end of December. This included engagement with stakeholders downtown, hearing from elected officials and further board discussions. Mr. Corbin said no one is trying to circumvent what the board originally voted on and hiring a search firm is not a way to circumvent a public records request. All Louisiana laws must be followed. He would recommend that any firm that is hired work closely with the DDA legal counsel to make sure that all Louisiana laws are followed.

Mr. Corbin changed his previous motion:

Michael Corbin made a motion that a search committee meeting be scheduled as soon as the five members are available and rank the top four resumes from the ones received. Communicate to the entire group of 13 what the board is doing, to those who do not make the top four, thank them for their time, and continue the conversation to see if we can find a search firm within budget to take this further.

Mr. Dunn made a substitute motion that a rubric be completed, that all candidates be assessed, that the board adhere to the motion that has been seconded, to select four candidates and interview those four candidates and if any candidates are deemed viable, they be brought to the board. At that point, if we say these candidates are not for us, then we take it to a private search firm. Chelette Holden seconded Mr. Dunn's substitute motion at a later point in the meeting. The motion was not voted on at this point.

Mr. Huck would like to go back to his original motion made in December that the board take the recommendations of the search committee. The committee needs to vet what candidates we have, and the recommendation may be that nobody qualifies. The board does not have a recommendation from the committee currently. He believes that would probably please most people at the table.

Mr. Huck made a substitute motion that the search committee meet, vet the candidates, and come back to the board with a recommendation as requested. If that recommendation happens to be that a headhunter is needed and do another search, then the board would agree with the committee's recommendation. Kyle Southard seconded the motion. The motion was not voted on at this time.

Terry Moore said that there was a statement made by Senator Sam Jenkins. "Senator Jenkins said that this is one that we have to get right. This is why I am urging the DDA board to undertake a national search to hire someone with a proven track record in revitalizing downtown business districts." Jenkins says Louisiana is scheduled to receive billions of dollars in infrastructure funding over the next several years and with downtown being a part of his Senate District 39, he is enthused to work in tandem with a visionary DDA CEO to take advantage of this "once in a generation opportunity." "Local applicants should be considered," says Senator Jenkins. "But I urge the board to conduct a national search and offer a competitive salary." But he strongly encourages the board to commit to bringing on a person with professional skills to develop business and entertainment districts that includes and promotes residential living and lifestyle. Mr. Moore said that he believes Senator Jenkins' comments address all the issues. He said that board members should put their differences aside and meet the needs of a future downtown and the stakeholders. He would be happy to put that into a motion.

Mr. Dunn asked Ms. Landry to clarify the motion. Ms. Landry stated that there are several motions on the table; some have not been seconded and none have been voted on or withdrawn. Mr. Corbin and Mr. Huck then withdrew their motions. Ms. Hellyer reread the motion made by Mr. Dunn: Mr. Dunn made a substitute motion that a rubric be completed, all candidates be assessed, four candidates be selected and interviewed. If any candidates are deemed viable, they should be brought to the board. At that point, if the board does not believe the candidates are viable for the position, then a private search firm be hired.

Mr. Corbin would like to make a substitute motion to Mr. Dunn's, with just a slight revision.

Mr. Corbin made a motion that the search committee meet, pick the top four local applicants, and let the remaining nine applicants know where we are, but that we not conduct interviews if we are engaging with a search firm. Also come back with search firm proposals, including their track record, methodology and cost. At that point the board can make the determination of what to do with the original four.

Mr. Dunn said he honors the substitute motion, but he prefers his motion because the board will not know to engage a search firm if they have not vetted the applicants thoroughly and interviewed them. After interviews, if the board deems that none of the applicants meet the qualifications, then it can be turned over to a private search firm.

Mr. Moore stated that when we have leadership that is removed and not caught up in the intensity of the situation and has the foresight to say that we should look nationally, but include local applicants, it does not have to be an either-or situation.

Mr. Dunn reiterated that there was a process that was agreed upon and that the process must be followed through.

Mr. Moore said that in following a process it does not mean that the board closes itself off to good ideas coming from the outside. If the board is doing what is best for the city, it should be open to ideas that may come from outside.

Mr. Huck stated that he would like to see the recommendation from the search committee.

Mr. Corbin said that was fair and he would support a motion to kick this back to the search committee to evaluate the resumes.

Mr. Southard agreed.

Mr. Dunn said his motion stands: the committee has a rubric and that the candidates are vetted and then open it to a national search if necessary.

Mr. Corbin reminded the board that counsel has advised that if the board interviews the candidates instead of the committee, the interviews become a matter of public record and the interviews are open meetings.

Mr. Southard stated that he would like a second attorney's opinion about interviews being open meetings.

Mr. Corbin asked Ms. Landry to check again with Attorney Jones for his opinion.

Ms. Landry stated that as she has been a candidate four times for the executive director position, the sunshine law is part of the process. All interviews she participated in were publicly conducted, as were the rubric rankings of the candidates and interviews. The candidates all had the option to withdraw if at any point they did not want their information to be public. She said this requirement is not DDA legal counsel's opinion but rather Louisiana state law.

Mr. Dunn made a change to his motion with respect to Ms. Landry's statement.

The motion is as follows: The search committee selects four names from the applicants to bring to the board and the board conducts the interviews in public.

Mr. Corbin asked if Mr. Dunn's motion could be changed to the following:

The search committee, in as short a timeframe as possible, vet the resumes and bring a report back to the DDA board of a path forward, whether that is to interview candidates, do a job search or start over and in the meantime, Mr. Corbin will personally email all of the applicants to explain what the board is doing.

Mr. Dunn said he would consider that, but he questions what it hurts to move forward once the board selects the four to have a conversation with them. Mr. Corbin said that we are telling any or all of them that if we decide to go with a search firm and they have already been interviewed, they were not good enough. Me. Holden agreed with Mr. Corbin.

Mr. Moore stated that it is no reflection on the candidates if the board decides to go with a national search. The candidates can still be considered, but the DDA wants to exhaust every available means to get the best possible leader for Shreveport. Mr. Corbin restated that he would like the search committee to hash out the path forward and bring that recommendation to the board.

Mr. Dunn edited his previous motion to state:

The search committee will vet the 13 applicants, bring 4 resumes to the board with a recommendation from the search committee on the path forward.

Mr. Corbin thinks the wording should read:

The search committee, in as timely a fashion as possible, rank the resumes, and bring viable resumes and a path forward to the DDA board.

Mr. Southard said that the reason he wanted four candidates chosen originally was that it seemed that the committee would not receive many qualified applicants and he wanted it to be apparent how thorough the first search was.

Mr. Huck suggested that the motion read “prior to the next board meeting instead of as soon as possible.” That gives the search committee specific orders and the board the ability to hear the full recommendation.

Mr. Dunn’s motion was amended and restated by Ms. Hellyer: Prior to the next board meeting, the search committee create a rubric, vet the 13 candidates’ resumes, select viable candidates, interview them, and bring the candidates to the board, if viable, and select a national search if not.

Mr. Corbin asked that the motion be changed to: The search committee meet and bring a recommendation of the path forward to the board by the next meeting.

Mr. Dunn asked for comments from Kathy Malone. She stated that the board needs movement and should stop going in a circle. She would like the search committee to meet before the next board meeting and do something. She suggested the committee explain to the board what they have accomplished and the timeline. She gave her opinion that it might not be possible to vet all 13 resumes before the next meeting, but movement forward is needed.

Mr. Dunn stated that he was keeping his motion as stated. He wants the current applicants vetted, ranked, and interviewed before they are brought to the board and before a national search is conducted.

Mr. Corbin said that he withdrew his first motion regarding the national search. He said he would not vote for the motion if it included language about interviews because he believes that is a discussion that the search committee must have as charged and bring back to the board.

Mr. Dunn said the board defines what the committee’s responsibilities are.

Mr. Southard said that can be delegated to the committee though, if they want to interview, that’s up to them.

Mr. Huck said he agreed with everyone present to a degree. He does not want to tell the search committee that they must conduct interviews, but he does want to tell them that before the next meeting they have to bring a recommendation to the board, or the board has to start over on a search committee.

**Mr. Dunn revised his motion to remove interviews by the committee:
Prior to the next board meeting, the search committee should create a rubric, vet the 13**

candidates' resumes, select viable candidates and bring the candidates to the board, if viable, and select a national search firm if not. Chelette Holden seconded the motion.

Mr. Corbin asked Mr. Dunn to restate his motion: **The search committee agree on a rubric, vet the 13 applicants, evaluate if there are four viable applicants to bring back to the board and have a path forward.**

Mr. Corbin asked if he could make the motion simpler: **The search committee bring a recommendation to the board by the April meeting.** Mr. Huck thought that Mr. Dunn was right about vetting the 13 candidates, so that those not moving forward can be notified.

Mr. Corbin reworded the motion: **The search committee will complete their evaluation of the resumes, bring the top ranked names and a suggested path forward to the board by the next meeting.**

Mr. Dunn and Mr. Southard asked for the rubric to remain in the motion. Mr. Corbin will send the rubric to the board for review. Mr. Huck said if the rubric was added back into the motion, he would agree to it.

The final motion of Mr. Dunn was restated by Ms. Hellyer:

The search committee will complete the evaluation of the resumes using a rubric to determine the top 4 ranked candidates and present them to the board before the next board meeting, with a suggested path forward. The motion was seconded by Chelette Holden and passed unanimously.

2. **Downtown Security and Homeless**
No discussion.
3. **Vacant Property Ordinance**
Previously discussed.
4. **Downtown Amenity Fund / Lighting Grant**
No discussion.
5. **Security Cameras**
No discussion.
6. **By-Laws**
No discussion.
7. **416 Cotton Street Roof Replacement**
Discussed under Director's Report.
8. **Open Container Ordinance – Red River District**
There was no discussion.
9. **Real Estate Development Incentives**
No discussion.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. **Waiver of 180 Day Demolition Delay – Dees Building, 421 Market St.**

Ms. Landry stated that the DDA must send a letter to the city permits and inspections department to waive the 180-day demolition delay.

A motion was made by Tim Huck for the DDA to send a letter to the city permits and inspections department to waive the 180-day demolition delay for 421 Market St. The motion was seconded by Michael Corbin and passed unanimously.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no public comments.

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS (NON-AGENDA ITEMS)

Antiska Harris commented as one of the original 13 applicants. She stated that saying that no one is qualified locally is making her feel overlooked. She thinks Mr. Corbin is making these decisions unilaterally. The applicants have been under scrutiny and are hearing many rumors. She went into this with passion, did not consider the salary and wished to revitalize the downtown. She feels that she is very qualified for the position.

Mr. Corbin said that he does not believe anyone on the DDA board or staff have made any public comments that the applicants are not qualified. The statements have been made in the media. The board may have gotten ahead of itself in advertising the position the first time. He appreciated her attending the meeting and appreciated her comments but suggested she not say too much and jeopardize her active candidacy.

Ms. Harris said she was always hearing rumors, it is not a level playing field and she does not even know where the information came from, she just wants a fair opportunity.

Mr. Moore said that the board is tasked with finding the best possible director that the DDA can afford.

Mr. Huck said that the board started backwards but is still tasked with finding the best possible candidate.

XI. ADJOURN

With no further business to address, the meeting adjourned at 5:40 pm.

Kyle Southard, Secretary