

**Downtown Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
September 25, 2024**

Present

Michael Corbin
Drayden Dunn
Kathy Malone
Ed Taylor

Absent

Mario Chavez
Chelette Holden
Terry Moore

Staff

Janie Landry
Stacie Leng
Lauren Davidson
Peggy Hellyer
Lorenzo Lee

Others Present

Lt. David Heaser
Bruce Carroll
KTBS

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:27 pm by Chair Michael Corbin. A quorum was present.

II. ROLL CALL

Mario Chavez, Chelette Holden and Terry Moore were absent.

III. AMEND AGENDA

The agenda was not amended.

IV. WELCOME / INTRODUCTIONS/ PRESENTATIONS

Chairman Corbin thanked the board and search committee for their work regarding the Executive Director search.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Agenda Items).

There were no public comments.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes

Mr. Corbin asked for approval for the following meeting minutes:

- August 28, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes
- February 27, 2024, Special Call Meeting Minutes
- August 30, 2024, Special Call Meeting Minutes
- September 6, 2024, Special Call Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Drayden Dunn to approve the minutes of the August 28, 2024, regular meeting, February 27, 2024 Special Call Meeting, August 30, 2024 Special Call Meeting and the September 6, 2024 Special Call meeting as presented. Kathy Malone seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

B. August 2024 Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement

Ms. Landry reviewed the August 2024 Budgetary Comparison Financial Statement. A small amount of property tax revenue was received during August. City contracts are current. Ms. Landry noted that nothing is out of the ordinary relative to income or expense and did a brief review of the financials. She stated that Terry Moore had requested a commitment letter from Bonvenu Bank to maintain the CD rate at 4% for the \$1.07 million, and that letter has been received. The CD has been renewed for an additional year at that rate. Ms. Landry stated that Mike Montgomery (contractor DDA has used for tree replacement previously) is performing an assessment of downtown trees that need to be replaced. Lt. Heiser reported that the person causing damage to the trees has been arrested several times. A \$10,000 sponsorship was awarded to PrizeFest. Ms. Landry noted that the expense line for Artspace was to repair the tiles at the front entrances so that Ono's could open.

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

V. REPORTS

A. Director's Report

Regions is in receivership. Beth King, leasing agent, believes the receivership will be positive for the building. She has been assured that all vendors will be paid. A local group is considering purchasing the property.

1. Sending Surveys for Downtown Businesses
Surveys are being sent to downtown businesses to get feedback.
Asking how DDA can assist them, if they would be interested in Lunch & Learn technical assistance (Marketing, social media, etc.)
2. \$25,000 in COS Parking Enterprise Fund - New Parking Meters
Approximately 50 meters can be purchased.
Tom Dark said the city will allot the same amount for 2025. Will use those funds to upgrade existing meters for credit/debit card capability.
Requesting quotes.
3. DDA 25-Year Tax Renewal
Current authorization period expires 12/31/27.
Will work with City Administration/DDA Legal Counsel to determine best date to be on ballot.
Property tax is paid only by downtown property owners but voted on city-wide. Will be a renewal; not new tax. Plans ongoing for development of action plan to engage property owners/business owners. DSDC will have to provide marketing; DDA cannot market the renewal.
4. Lunch On Us – August & September
Continues to be a successful program. Coupons are usually given out within a few minutes.
Lines formed outside waiting – weekly. Program ended 9-24-24. Will consider necessary changes to determine best to distribute coupons. 15 restaurants participated.
5. Performed assessment of streetlights that are out downtown – 58 lights out
Texas – 18; Milam – 4; Travis – 10; Caddo – 4; Spring – 11; Fannin – 3; Marshall – 4; Edwards – 4
41 lights have been replaced. Traffic Engineering will continue replacing lights. A few have power issues. Ongoing.
6. Shop On Us –November & December
The event will be similar to Lunch On Us to promote downtown retail.
7. Adopt A Pot
All planters are installed. Two remaining for sponsors. Positive feedback. Requests for additional planters received. FMC. Entering our plantings in photo contest sponsored by Earth Planters.
8. Marketing – Being handled in house.
New themes: Find It Downtown
Block By Block – Getting good feedback about this effort. Personal visits being done.
Will help businesses with window designs. Michael Corbin was involved in a project for the RRD, and the thought was to partner with SRAC to use their props to help decorate. It might be possible

to use for this project. DSDC previously paid for vinyl coverings to improve windows in some of the vacant properties. Staff has designed banners, marketing materials, website, and wayfinding signage to brand. Several new programs in design stages.

9. Wayfinding signage
Design completed. Inventory of signage completed. Quotes received; vendor selected. Installation to begin soon.
10. G-Unit Film & Television – purchasing long-time vacant downtown properties. Jackson has spent \$2,020,000 to acquire several long-time downtown vacant properties/parcels.
 - 218 Texas Street (purchased 5/31/24 for \$275,000)
 - 205 Texas Street (purchased 5/31/24 for \$345,000)
 - Lots 1-13 & ½ of abandoned alley – 301 Spring (purchase 6/13/24 for \$1,020,000);
 - 115 Texas, 119 Texas, 125 Texas, and 129 Texas (purchased 6/13/24 for \$281,250);
 - 611 Texas (purchased 6/28/24 for \$250,000);
 - 401 Spring (purchased 6/15/24 for \$150,000)
 - 308-310 Commerce (purchased 6/14/24 for \$76,872)

DSDC’s legal counsel is attempting to work out legal issues relative to former Dees lease to be able to sell the two parcels Drayden Dunn stated that Curtis Jackson was in Shreveport recently. Downtown lighting was discussed. May be possible for him to partner with DDA/City on lighting replacement/enhancement. Jackson has stated that he wants to be the number one downtown property owner.

11. Submitted Grant Request – Community Foundation
In partnership with Shreveport Common. Requested \$100,000 for new business growth including façade grants, special equipment purchases. Signage. Notification expected prior to October 15th if approved.
12. Ongoing project - assembling database of property owners’ and businesses - emails/contact information. Will maintain/update.
13. Planning Educational Workshops for Downtown Businesses
Preparing two programs designed to support downtown businesses by providing assistance with marketing education, resources, & services to assist downtown businesses.
Educational workshops – in-person and virtual workshops. One-on-one consultations
Access to marketing tools and resources. Networking opportunities. Surveying businesses to determine if they favor re-activation of Retail Merchants Association. Favorable response received.
14. Two new downtown businesses
Hand Forged Tattoo at 619 Edwards
On A Rampage – 425 Texas Street
Showed Lauren’s 30 second video ad.
Lauren Davidson gave a review of the month’s online data.

B. Parking Report

Lorenzo Lee reported that income was about the same as the previous month. There was a slight increase in meter revenue. Two vehicles were booted during the month. Ms. Landry stated that staff is researching the cost of new parking meters. Meter purchase prices have increased approximately 11%. Previous cost for a dual meter was \$460; single meter was \$358. Current anticipated cost is

\$507 for dual meters and \$400 for single meters.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Search Committee – Executive Directors Position

Mr. Corbin stated that Mr. Glover was offered the position. Contract negotiations are ongoing. A press release will be issued when negotiations are completed. He thanked Ms. Landry and staff for everything they have accomplished during the year. Mr. Dunn thanked Mr. Corbin for his hard work regarding the search. There is interest from the Shreveport and African American Chambers of Commerce to host a welcome reception for Mr. Glover.

B. Downtown Security and Homeless: Lt. David Heaser (SPD Downtown)

Ms. Landry said the office still receives complaints about issues related to the homeless issue downtown. She mentioned a social media post from a downtown resident who said she and her child were chased by a homeless person. The streetscape crew is having to clean up human waste around the courthouse and in the bus stops. Lt. Heaser reported that the horses are now on the streets two days a week during the day. SPD still has manpower issues. The night shift is staffed and walking downtown identifying homeless areas and working to get homeless individuals to outreach. Lt. Heaser is downtown five days a week but not always in the office on Travis Street.

C. Vacant Property Ordinance

Ms. Landry reported that the vote on the ordinance was postponed again at the recent city council meeting. The mayor would like to hold another meeting with property owners.

D. UDC Use Matrix – Meeting With MPC

At DDA's request the legislation was postponed by Councilman Brooks to give the board time to meet with MPC regarding the proposed changes. Ms. Landry will set up the meeting.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Bonvenu Bank – DDA CD starting 9-18-2024

Ms. Landry said the bank will be rolling over \$1.07 million into a CD at a 4% rate. A vote is needed to ratify the action.

A motion was made by Michael Corbin to ratify the rollover of the DDA \$1.07 million CD at Bonvenu Bank at a 4% rate for one year. Drayden Dunn seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

B. Contract with Louisiana Department of Revenue Office of Debt Recovery: \$600k currently on the books to collect.

Ms. Landry said that at the last board meeting she had reported that \$500k in unpaid parking tickets had met the 3-year statute of limitations and rolled off the books. There is now another \$600k in unpaid tickets. The State of Louisiana has a collection agency through the Department of Revenue. She has gotten verbal approval from City Attorney Marcus Edwards for DDA to contract with the State to collect outstanding parking tickets. She wanted board approval to contract with the State because the collection process of delinquent tickets will be aggressive. She believes that an amnesty program to forgive the late fees would be a good idea before the state collection efforts would begin. Mr. Edwards agreed. DDA legal counsel Jerry Jones will review the contract with the Department of Revenue and then DDA will publicize the amnesty period. Ms. Landry said a City Council resolution may be necessary. She has requested approval in writing from Mr. Edwards. Money collected from the outstanding tickets would be dedicated to the Parking Enterprise Fund and used for downtown parking needs.

X. ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The October DDA board meeting will be held October 30th at 3:30 pm instead of October 23rd, since Ms. Landry will be out of town attending James Burton's induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame. He is one of only a few musicians to be inducted into both the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the Country Music Hall of Fame.

Drayden Dunn reported that G-Spot will have a ribbon cutting in early November.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS (NON-AGENDA ITEMS)

There were no public comments on non-agenda items.

XII. ADJOURN

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm.

Michael Corbin, Chair