

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING  
May 3, 2017 – 5:30 PM – City Hall – Council Chambers

Members Present:	Paris Morfopoulos	Chairman
	Dennis Bosi	Vice-Chairman
	Thomas Wright	Member
	Tony Starova	Member
	Stu Sjouwerman	Member
	Zachary Thorn	Member
Also Present:	Bill Jonson	Ex-officio/Councilmember
	Anne Fogarty France	Board Administrator
	Seth Taylor	CRA Director
Absent:	Chelsea Allison	Treasurer
	Doreen Caudell	Ex-officio/Councilmember

1. Chairman Morfopoulos called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. asking the board and Ex-officio members to introduce themselves.
2. Citizens Comments--Items not on the agenda—No comments.
3. Approve the Minutes from the April 5, 2017, Meeting

**Member Wright moved to approve the minutes from the April 5, 2017, meeting. The motion was duly seconded and upon roll call, the vote was:**

**“Ayes”:** Member Morfopoulos, Member Bosi, Member Starova, Member Sjouwerman, Member Wright, and Member Thorn.

**“Nays”:** None.

**Motion carried.**

4. Adopt March 2017 Financial Statement for Filing

**Member Bosi moved to adopt the March 2017 Financial Statement for filing. The motion was duly seconded.**

**Upon roll call, the vote was:**

**“Ayes”:** Member Morfopoulos, Member Bosi, Member Starova, Member Sjouwerman, Member Wright, and Member Thorn.

**“Nays”:** None.

**Motion carried.**

5. Funding Request—Station Square Park Bazaar Art—Jennie Pearl, Artist/Organizer **(Item discussed out of agenda order)**

Member Wright questioned whether the Board wanted to address this funding request even though Ms. Pearl did not show up to speak to the request. Anne Fogarty France advised the Board that she did not know why Ms. Pearl was not in attendance. She stated Ms. Pearl has had several successful events which have brought people to Station Square Park over the past two months. Ms. Pearl decided to come to the DDB to see if it would be willing to sponsor and fund the July, August, and September events.

Member Morfopoulos stated he did not think we should consider funding an event if no one shows up to request the funding. Mr. Wright asked if Seth Taylor, as the CRA Director, could advocate for Ms. Pearl. Mr. Taylor stated that this event has been a crowd builder. Member Bosi asked if the CRA supports this event, and Mr. Taylor advised him that it does.

**Member Bosi moved to approve funding for the Station Square Park Bazaar Art in the amount of \$3,000 on first reading. The motion was duly seconded.**

Mr. Wright suggested that the Board take action; and, if someone does not show up at the next meeting to discuss the request, the Board will not approve the funding on second reading. Further discussion ensued. At the conclusion, the Chairman called for a vote.

**Upon roll call, the vote was:**

**“Ayes”:** Member Bosi, Member Starova, Member Sjouwerman, Member Wright, and Member Thorn.

**“Nays”:** Member Morfopoulos

**Motion carried by a vote of 5 to 1.**

6. Downtown Clearwater Merchants Association (DCMA) Update—Lina Teixeira, owner of Studio 617, and the newly-elected President of the DCMA as of January of this year addressed the Board. As an association we recognize the importance of our active participation in the revitalization efforts we reaffirmed our goal to contribute to the reestablishment of Downtown Clearwater as a desirable destination for residents and visitors. With that goal in mind the following actions have been implemented. The group changed its name to DCMA, created a Core group within the association with leadership roles to disseminate responsibilities to be increase productivity. This core group of 11 also vote and make decisions and we brainstormed on a slogan, logo, images, branding and an ad campaign for all our marketing efforts which were unanimously approved to move forward with a comprehensive marketing campaign. The marketing campaign includes but is not limited to print, social media transport as well as general media sources. We established our own social media network with Twitter, Instagram and Facebook to promote our merchants and events. The roll out of the marketing campaign will begin on May 11 in Creative Loafing and on the Jolley Trolley and Clearwater Ferry. Ms. Teixeira scheduled five 5-minute conversational interviews on ABC Morning Shows featuring merchants and upcoming events. The ads will be sponsored in part by the DCMA and individual merchants and we are reaching out for sponsors. Images are being shared with CRA and we are willing to share. DCMA has supplemented the Blast Friday events and this continues to be a challenge on the 600 block. They are continuing the last Friday branding by holding summer sidewalk sale events,

Questions arose about number of paid members and Ms. Teixeira advised that there are currently 23 members, 13 who are waiting to renew and eight possible new members.

The Association is working with the CRA to ensure the branding of Downtown Clearwater is consistent.

Member Starova asked what issues the merchants were facing Ms. Teixeira advised the Board that there are three main issues: 1) she wishes the city would relax the guidelines while the area is weak and having outdoor display would be a way to show the merchants are busy, 2) additional signage would be another way and she is in communication with Michael Delk and 3) the merchants have felt the collateral damage as far as the controversy between the City, the Church of Scientology, and the Clearwater Marine Aquarium.

Member Thorn asked Ms. Teixeira what she meant by “boycott.” Ms. Teixeira stated she was told by a staff member from the church’s welcome center that the City does not want uniformed members of the church on Cleveland Street. Over the last few days there has been a noticeable absence of uniformed members walking the streets.

Seth Taylor, Community Development Agency Director, stated that the City has not taken any position regarding uniforms. A lengthy discussion ensued concerning this issue. Members expressed great concern about this happening if it is true. The need to change the perception of Downtown Clearwater and make people understand there is more here than the Church was brought up.

#### **7. Review of DDB Mission and Goals—Chairman Morfopoulos**

Chairman Morfopoulos reviewed the Board’s goals and objectives. He briefly reviewed the PowerPoint presentation. He suggested that the Board should formalize any written policies that it operates under that are not in writing. Mr. Morfopoulos suggested there should be an agenda item to determine what statistics the Board is most interested in gathering. The Board would like to see where Downtown Clearwater is headed.

#### **8. Presentation of New Downtown Clearwater Logo—Seth Taylor, Community Redevelopment Agency Director**

Mr. Taylor presented the Board with the new Downtown Clearwater logo that was developed by Sparxoo. A lengthy discussion ensued concerning the process used to select the logo. Some Board members expressed their displeasure with the fact that the Board was not included in the selection process, although Member Thorn was on the review committee. Mr. Taylor explained that Sparxoo was selected from a group of 24 marketing companies and is one of the premiere marketing companies in the business. Overall, the Board agreed that the new logo is much better than the old one.

#### **9. Chairman’s Comments**

Chairman Morfopoulos advised the Board of upcoming events. These events are listed on the web site at [www.clevelandstreetdistrict.com](http://www.clevelandstreetdistrict.com).

There will be a downtown zoning update meeting at the Main Library on May 31<sup>st</sup>.

#### **10. Final Comments**

Member Thorn suggested that the Board members need to remain positive and look at the big picture and support the City in everything from a referendum to the finished project.

Member Wright told Seth Taylor that he has been a great positive individual and a great CRA Director since you've come here and that he shouldn't let the Board's comments about the logo ruin his day. He said the last Blast Friday was one of the best he has seen. He said things are happening in Clearwater and the Nolen Apartments are coming along. He recently hired someone who will reside there.

Member Bosi stated he can't wait for the Nolen Apartments to be finished so he will have neighbors. He also said there are no better cheerleaders for the City of Clearwater than the members of this board and that he looks forward to the things to come

Member Starova congratulated the Pro Shop Pub on its 41 years in business and is the oldest gay bar in the area. He advised that John Legend will be at Coachman Park on May 13. He wished everyone a happy Cinco de Mayo.

Member Sjouwerman said the DDB should have its own email list server and if we had 50 to 100,000 email addresses we could send mailers to let them know about all the good things that are here. You can use a group like Constant Contact or Mail Chimp and get email addresses from people.

Mr. Taylor said as part of the contract with Sparxoo we will be designing a newsletter which will assist with obtaining email addresses.

Ms. Fogarty France said she has had discussion with Mr. Sjouwerman concerning methods to obtain email addresses after our new website is on line.

Ex-officio Member Jonson said there are many good things happening in Downtown Clearwater. We've already talked about the great Blast Friday and programming in Station Square. We have the pending opening of the Clear Sky Restaurant. There is a lot of movement on Imagine Clearwater the Council funded another 500,000 at their last meeting. He thinks we should focus on the celebrating the small victories. He is encouraged by the signs that new businesses are opening on Cleveland Street. He congratulated Mr. Starova and Ms. Teixeira on how the Downtown Clearwater Merchants Association is growing. The Council did discuss landscaping on the property next door. They did talk about signage at the work session on Monday and there is something called the Comprehensive Sign Program that allows you to have more signage and there is a feel. He is impressed by the Board's position on various issues.

Mr. Taylor thanked the Board members for volunteering their time to serve on the Board.

**11.** The meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m.