

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING  
March 7, 2018 – 5:30 PM – City Hall – Council Chambers

Members Present:	Paris Morfopoulos	Chairman
	Stu Sjouwerman	Vice-Chairman
	Caitlein Jammo	Treasurer
	Ray Cassano	Member
	Venkat “Vincent” Devineni	Member
	Lina Teixeira	Member
	Thomas Wright	Member

Also Present:	Bill Jonson	Ex-officio Councilmember
	Doreen Caudell	Ex-officio Councilmember
	Amanda Thompsons	CRA Director
	Anne Fogarty France	Board Administrator

1. Chairman Morfopoulos called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. asking the board and Ex-officio councilmembers to introduce themselves.
2. Citizens Comments--Items not on the agenda—No comments.
3. Approve the Minutes from the February 7, 2018, Meeting

**Member Wright moved to approve the minutes from the February 7, 2018 meeting. The motion was duly seconded and upon roll call, the vote was:**

**Ayes: Member Morfopoulos, Member Wright, Member Jammo, Member Teixeira, Member Cassano, and Member Devineni.**

**Nays: None.**

**Motion carried.**

4. Adopt January 2018 Financial Statement for Filing

**Member Sjouwerman moved to adopt the January 2018 Financial Statement for filing. The motion was duly seconded.**

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

**Ayes: Member Morfopoulos, Member Wright, Member Jammo, Member Teixeira, Member Cassano, and Member Devineni.**

**Nays: None.**

**Motion carried.**

5. Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Updates—Amanda Thompson, CRA Director

Amanda Thompson, CRA Director, addressed some questions that were raised by the Board at the last meeting. The Martin Luther King Avenue property for which the DDB provided funds to the CRA

to purchase will be sold and the monies (approximately \$40,000) returned to the DDB. The sale of this property is a high priority.

The Garden Avenue Garage mural that the DDB funded for \$5,000 ran into a few snags. Ms. Thompson met with Parks and Recreation and the Public Art and Design Board. The City is soliciting other artists and is also looking at other sites. A panel will be established and will report back to the boards. Chairman Morfopoulos suggested that the monies be returned to the DDB for allocation at a future date since the funds were approved in 2016 and the project has still not been started. Ms. Thompson advised him that she will report back to the Board next month with a start date or the funds will be returned. The money was paid to the Parks & Recreation Cultural Affairs Division.

The wayfinding project is moving forward. It was held up because of approvals needed from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for signs on the state highway rights of way. The downtown area has been uncoupled from U.S. 19 so that part of the project can move forward. The current sign posts can be used with the updated signs. There should be progress visible where the current signs are. The new gateway signs need to be approved by the FDOT. The CRA has \$250,000 budgeted for these signs once permission is granted. Mr. Morfopoulos suggested the Board write a letter to assist with obtaining the approvals. Ex-officio Member Caudell thought this was a good idea and asked Ms. Thompson to give her the name of her contact at FDOT.

Ms. Thompson said there are 23,000 email addresses in the database of those who our city email updates. She doesn't know how many of these may duplicates because one can request information from multiple areas. It is possible to set up a list server.

6. Placemaking Presentation—Amanda Thompson, CRA Director, gave a PowerPoint presentation of placemaking. She advised the Board of the role the CRA will play moving forward. She asked the members to provide their backgrounds which they did. The presentation showed what the City needs to do to make the downtown area vibrant. Member Cassano said that the homeless is a real problem in downtown which the City needs to address. Ms. Thompson assured him that the City is working on this. She stated that the CRA is ruled by both public and private regulations. She said networking is an important role for the CRA.
7. Second Reading—Funding Request for Dali Tours Downtown—Carolyn Bradham, Downtown Clearwater Merchants' Association

The Board considered this request on second reading. Member Teixeira said the event will be called the Clearwater Galleriez Tour and the schedule has been set.

**Member Wright moved to approve on second reading funding for the Dali Tour in the amount of \$1500 from future initiatives. The motion was duly seconded and upon roll call, the vote was:**

**“Ayes”:**                    **Member Morfopoulos, Member Wright, Member Sjouwerman, Member Jammo, Member Cassano, and Member Devineni.**

**“Nays”:**                    **None.**

**Abstentions:**        **Member Teixeira**

**Motion carried.**

## 8. Revise and Approve DDB Goals, Purposes, and Policies—Chairman Morfopoulos

Chairman Morfopoulos explained to the Board why it developed goals, purposes, and policies. The Board can't realistically adopt all the items outlined in the City code. He said the Board needs to decide what it can reasonably do within its resources and time. The consensus of the members was that they do not want the Board to just be a body that provides funding to various special events.

Many good ideas were expressed by the members. Member Jammo stated that in the short term we need to focus on the arts because that helps build a successful downtown and in the long term we need to draw people from the surrounding areas.

Member Teixeira said Secondary Goal "a" which is to advise the city and CRA on policies which will bring more business and residents to downtown is important because we have a very diverse group of people that can be used to accomplish this goal.

Ex-officio Councilmember Jonson said sometimes members identify concerns but not a way to resolve these concerns and suggested the Board review its priorities each year and follow through on completing them.

Member Devineni had three major points: 1) to solve the homeless problem, a full-time Police Officer should be allocated for six months at Cleveland Street and Garden Avenue; 2) the anchor tenant program is important and he would like the CRA Director to give the Board a monthly update on who has applied, and 3) the parking situation—there are lots of parking spaces in the area but people don't want to walk a long distance from the parking to downtown. He had additional items which he will send to Anne Fogarty France for the Board.

Ex-officio Councilmember Caudell stated the City Council has provided direction on improvements to Crest Lake Park. She said years ago we had a great parade that was very successful. The members should bring to the CRA and City Council events that you want to see happen. Parking is an issue on the beach. People need to be directed to use the Pelican Walk Parking Garage. She has been having a lot of meetings regarding transit.

Member Wright stated that Goal "d" regarding preparing and distributing public relations materials is not the Board's job. The Board should hire someone to handle that for them.

Ms. Caudell said we should look to private sponsorships to fund some of these events. She said there are lots of entities who would be willing to be sponsors.

Member Sjouwerman said the Board should have more of a strategic role than a technical role. It should be an accelerator in getting things done. Members should find out what is needed and wanted and come back with a plan and then get with the CRA to see how to make it happen.

Ms. Thompson said the CRA needs to renew the County TIF in October. She will be updating the downtown plan within the next 45 days. The Board should write a memo with things it wants to work on and what its priorities are.

Mr. Morfopoulos suggested that the members provide additional ideas in the form of a motion that the members could vote on. Members were asked to provide this information to Anne Fogarty-France by the end of next week. It was then suggested that the members hold a special workshop on a Saturday morning to brainstorm ideas. The consensus was that all the members were in favor of this idea.

9. Discussions on Revisions to 2017 DDB Funding Request (for approval April 4<sup>th</sup>)—Chairman Morfopoulos asked the Board members to review the form and send their requested changes to Ms. Fogarty-France. She will send the form to the Board electronically.

#### **10. Chairman's Comments**

Mr. Morfopoulos advised the Board on upcoming events. The list of events is available at [www.downtowncleawater.com](http://www.downtowncleawater.com).

#### **11. Final Comments**

Mr. Cassano said he enjoyed the meeting. He said we need to catch up with other cities. We need to get people to want to move in to downtown.

Ms. Teixeira is happy with the collaboration with the CRA and feels the change in the Board's direction is a great next step.

Mr. Wright said he would not ask when the Harborview Center would be demolished.

Mr. Sjouwerman agreed with Ms. Thompson that we needed to get the arts supported in downtown. He also said the new logo looks like a child drew it and feels we deserve better and it should be redone.

Member Jammo said she is looking forward to the strategic meeting.

Member Devineni said he was very interested in the on-line presence and feels we also need a Facebook page.

Mr. Jonson said this was his last meeting and he has enjoyed working with the Board over the past six years. He said the Board members work hard for not getting paid. He said with all the hard work it is still sometimes hard to get things across the finish line. He can now visit with the members one on one and hopes they will allow him to do so.

Ms. Caudell welcomed Ms. Thompson and feels she is on the right track. Marketing is very important. It is hard to get all the cities in Pinellas County on the same page to accomplish something like mass transit.

Ms. Thompson thanked everyone and said she is looking forward to working with everyone.

Mr. Morfopoulos stated he is excited with where the Board is going; many things that have been done have been at the initiation of this board. He said he was very impressed with the Blues Festival and congratulated everyone who organized it.

12. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.