

**CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD**  
June 5, 2013 – 5:30pm – City Hall – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Council Chambers

|                  |                     |  |
|------------------|---------------------|--|
| Members Present: | David Allbritton    | Chairman                                 |
|                  | Craig Rubright      | Treasurer                                |
|                  | Thomas Wright       | Member                                   |
|                  | Dennis Bosi         | Member                                   |
|                  | Paris Morfopoulos   | Member                                   |
|                  | Tony Starova        | Member                                   |
|                  | John Herndon        | Member                                   |
| Also Present:    | Paul Gibson         | Ex-Officio/Councilmember                 |
|                  | Geri Campos Lopez   | Director, Economic Development & Housing |
|                  | Anne Fogarty France | Board Administrator                      |
| Absent           | Jay Polglaze        | Ex-Officio/Councilmember                 |

**1. The Meeting was called to order at 5:30p.m.**

**2. Citizen Comments – Items Not on the Agenda**

Bill Sturtevant, Clearwater Downtown Partnership advised the board that on June 18, 2013 Rod Irwin will ask the CRA to approve the selection committee's recommendation for the developer of the Town Lake. This is an opportunity to bring in residential and a time to move forward. Mr. Sturtevant asked for the board's support of the request.

Jack Mortimer, Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA) stated that three restaurants closed on the 500 block and the 600 block has some issues. He noted that he met with Frank Dame, Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA), and asked for his help – more than half of the visitors do not come up the street from the CMA. The suggestion to move the trolley stop was not approved by the city for now.

Mr. Mortimer met with the Clearwater Planning Department and discovered that signs can be placed in the windows at the corner of Cleveland and Osceola.

Member Bosi asked what the DNA's concern was. Mr. Mortimer responded that they wanted the merchants to succeed and asked that the board not give up.

Chairman Allbritton thanked Mr. Mortimer for his ideas and invited him to attend the Merchant's Association meeting the following Tuesday, June 11, 2013 at 4:30 p.m.

**3. Adopt April 2013 Financial Statement for Filing**

**Member Wright moved to adopt the April 2013 Financial Statement for filing. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

4. **Sea Blues Festival/Blues Walk Post Event Report** – Chairman Allbritton advised the board that Brian Craig was unable to attend because he was in charge of coordinating the graduations at Bright House Networks field.

5. **Blast Friday Post Event Report**

Jeff Hartzog, General Manager of Capitol Theatre and Special Projects, addressed the board. He stated that they produced ten Blast Friday events and the Miracle on Cleveland Street - a family fun event with snow. The Miracle event had the biggest attendance at 7,200. The weather was a problem for the end of the year fireworks which were postponed and the Molly Hatchet concert had to be moved into the theatre. The group Candlebox performed in January with fireworks and an attendance of 3,500. In February, Dave Mason brought an attendance of 6,600. Overall, 45,000 people came to the Cleveland Street District this year.

Mr. Hartzog said that growth caused higher costs. They added about \$6,800 for fireworks, but saved funds on insurance by booking ten events at one time. The Wet District Ordinance helped them as well as the sponsoring of the VIP area by Great Bay Distributors. They wanted to break even and sponsorships were slow to come, but in the end they increased over 30% from last year.

Member discussion regarding the stage position on Ft. Harrison, with responses from Mr. Hartzog alerting the board that the event wasn't able to be spread out more since they had to keep two fire lanes open, and they will discuss options with the fire chief and possible alternate routes. The traffic control and the amount of police required to do an event at Ft. Harrison intersection is greater with the cost doubling from \$200 to \$400 per event. On a positive note there were no public complaints about the intersection closure. They angled the stage to redirect sound.

Member Morfopoulos asked how much sponsorship was in-kind.

Mr. Hartzog responded that much of sponsorship was in-kind, approximately \$20,000.

Regarding questions on budget issues Mr. Hartzog said they planned on keeping the acts to about the \$7,000 range to get a good quality event. If necessary, they will cut back on the number of shows rather than the quality. They may do an 11<sup>th</sup> act, hoping to break even, not to make money.

6. **Clearwater Downtown Farmer's Market Post Event Report**

Pat Fernandez reported that they had another successful year with the Farmers Market. They had an average of 25 to 30 vendors. Attendance increased with the snowbirds and with special events they held.

A copy of the financial report was provided and she noted that revenues were down a little from last year. The Farmer's Market paid for the parking spaces used. Their insurance costs decreased and they lowered their advertising costs.

They are experimenting with a monthly summer market. Weekly market attendance is a habit and they need to get people back into the habit of coming to the market.

Ms. Fernandez also reported that their golf cart was stolen from the city's parking garage. It was last used on May 15, 2013.

Member Bosi asked if the parking meters were removed, would they still have to pay?

Councilmember Gibson said that was a question for the City Manager.

Member Rubright asked where the vendors come from.

Ms. Fernandez responded that they come from all over the Clearwater and Orlando areas.

Member Starova said it was his opinion that the First Friday markets didn't work. They didn't bring anyone to the downtown area. He also was concerned about the food vendors present – there were 30% produce/ craft vendors and 70% food vendors. The merchants pay rent and have other fees. He thought they needed to find new ways to bring in new businesses.

Ms. Fernandez acknowledged they had five First Friday markets and that it did not work out. However, she noted that the Farmers Market brought in other people to the downtown area that would not know about the stores otherwise.

Member Bosi commented that it was nice to have a different variety for one day of the week. He also suggested that the businesses could be vendors at the Farmer's Market. The restaurants in Dunedin have had booths.

Chairman Allbritton suggested getting together with the Merchant's Association. They could come up with other ideas and would be willing to work this out.

## **7. Z Festival Post Event Report**

Jenny Esno presented on behalf of Chris Wagner, who was delivering a graduation speech and unable to attend the meeting.

Ms. Esno reported that the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Event was heading into its fifth season. They had been alternating between blocks 400 and 600 to spread the event around. Food vendors were not brought in so they could direct people to the Cleveland Street District merchants. There were 3,400 total people in attendance for the two events: Z Festival event and a movie event at WDTA. Because of the events, two families were relocating to the area. There were numerous requests to see Winter the dolphin. The Downtown Development Board (DDB) logo was included on all photos of attendees.

Ms. Esno reported a few problems: There were no portolets delivered for the event, posing a problem with merchants, a toilet paper shortage and causing some families to leave early. The event date was moved a few times and it was hard to reschedule everyone. She also felt that they should be able to allow merchants to have outdoor sales.

There is not enough event space downtown and they lost two meetings, one to Brandon and one to Tampa. They also had to take people to Largo for hotels because their event was in the middle of Spring Break. It was estimated that they lost about 1500-1800 people because they couldn't accommodate them.

Ms. Esno commented that only half of their attendees were deaf and hard of hearing. They come with their hearing family members. She felt that this needs to be done as more of a community event.

Member Herndon asked if there were any attendees from WDTA? Ms. Esno replied that people coming out of the aquarium had very little time on the street because of a strict time frame to catch the trolley.

## **8. Adopt Preliminary Budget FY 2013-14**

Chairman Allbritton said that the preliminary budget included fixed costs that the board was committed to along with sponsorship requests this year for \$163,000.

Ms. Fogarty-France added there were also funding requests from the Jolley Trolley that included an increase over last year's cost and a request to improve palm tree lights that Member Herndon obtained costs for.

Chairman Allbritton advised that he was asking the board to adopt the preliminary budget. He noted that board members had a book that included a breakdown of the sponsorship requests for their review. The line items would be decided at a later meeting. He was looking for a motion to vote to balance the budget to zero without going into reserves. The difference of \$65,000 could be put in as separate line items under promotional events at a later meeting. He thought they could dip in about \$20,000, but shouldn't go over that to meet fund requests.

Discussion ensued regarding possible deferment of payments to the city for the \$50,000 per year commitment for the boat slips although Ms. Campos Lopez advised that the board had made a commitment to fund the boat slips. Comments included the commitment was to the taxpayers and that it could be damaging to the reputation and credibility of the board to do this and wouldn't be taken well by city management.

Some board members felt that deferring funds would give the board flexibility and Member Wright requested to see the written language of the commitment.

Chairman Allbritton thought they needed to keep their commitment, but said they could talk with the city manager about possible options. They were challenged here and were reaching out.

**Member Bosi moved to adopt the preliminary budget for FY 2013-2014 and the motion was duly seconded and discussion ensued.**

Member Wright questioned what the reserve amount was. Ms. Fogarty-France responded that it would depend on what was left in the fund balance which was estimated at \$92,000.

Chairman Allbritton restated that he would feel comfortable going into reserve about \$20,000.

Member discussion ensued regarding whether to use all funds or to keep some in reserve.

Chairman Allbritton said that everyone had a good perspective. He called for a vote to approve the preliminary budget with discussion on how to spend it at the next meeting.

**Upon call for the vote, Members Allbritton, Herndon, Starova, Morfopoulos, Bosi and Rubright voted "Aye"; Member Wright voted "Nay". Motion carried.**

## **9. Parking Meter Discussion**

Chairman Allbritton said that discussion was held years ago. What was learned that the merchants and their employees were parking in spaces in front of the businesses, interfering with customers and traffic flow. The new Merchant's Association would like to see the meters removed with the businesses policing themselves not to park in front of the stores. They would also like to have a two hour time limit on the meters.

Geri Campos-Lopez explained that many of the board members weren't here when they did the experiment and the study to back it up. The City's position is that the meters are there and are not in agreement that they should be removed. The study showed that the merchants and their employees parked in the spaces all day moving

them ever couple of hours. With the budget situation as it is, the City is not in the position to do anything different. Unless there is data to show the meters should be removed the city doesn't want to remove them.

Member discussion ensued concerning the low revenue generated, the turnover for the merchants and the information that other cities like Dunedin, Largo and Sarasota don't have meters.

Member Morfopoulos stated that he has a problem with the Capitol Theatre receiving all the parking spaces on the western side of the block for their valet service.

Ms. Lopez advised that she would look into this matter.

Chairman Allbritton called for Citizen Comments.

Bob Clifford, CEO of the Clearwater Regional Chamber of Commerce, had a discussion at the executive board and was on a fact finding mission to see what options were out there. He thought that ongoing conversation was needed to determine the challenges and hoped that continued conversation would bring a resolution.

Bill Sturtevant stated he was looking into different options and would like the Merchant's Association to police this problem.

Member Bosi said they were stuck on issues and had to look at the core of the problem. They needed to find out why the storefronts were empty and why the restaurants were closing. He felt that we have great events but still have empty storefronts, we have attractions and still have empty storefronts. It's not meters, not events but wondered what the problem was.

Mr. Sturtevant responded that meters were a small piece of the puzzle. The problem with empty storefronts that we don't have enough people living here. Retail was tried and that didn't work. He stated that this is a piece of the puzzle as was the boat slips.

Chairman Allbritton thanked him for insights and asked for a motion to table this – there would be meetings coming up to further discuss.

**Member Wright moved to table the Parking Meter discussion to a later date. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

#### **10. Sponsorship Request/ For the Love of Clearwater Art Exhibit**

Jerri Menaul owner of Canvas Zoo and Menaul Art Gallery stated that they adopted Peter Kageyama's theme from his book "For the Love of Cities" for an art show exhibit entitled "For the Love of Clearwater". Art will be displayed in the library during a show that begins June 26. The goal was to embrace the city of Clearwater. She also promoted "Group Hug Clearwater" that asked everyone to take a picture of what they love about their city and post it on Facebook.

Ms. Menaul requested the board's support and possible funding in the amount of \$300-\$500, to create a collage of the group hug photos.

**Member Wright moved to approve the DDB's support of For the Love of Clearwater Art Exhibit and to put the information on the district website. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.**

## 11. Live After Five Event Update

Mr. Sturtevant reported there had been two Live After Five events since the last meeting. The Loft was going to be part of the event, but they are no longer there. Because they don't have this anchor they have dropped the entertainment on the 600 block. He submitted a new budget, which gives opportunity to do more marketing and promotion of downtown. There will be an attempt to get professional help with this down the road. They were close to firming up a Creative Loafing deal for a ½ page advertisement.

Member Bosi asked if restaurants have been putting entertainment in their establishments.

Member Starova said that discounts were offered and the stores stayed opened. The atmosphere changed into a sidewalk café atmosphere during the three hours of the event.

Mr. Sturtevant said the goal is to have different themes and promotion.

Chairman Allbritton said for clarification these are not really events. They are not advertising a band on the street and stated that it was all about the merchants, their entertainment and their specials. Promotion would include the whole district, not just the block.

**Member Wright moved to accept the amended budget for Live After Five in the amount of \$7,960. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.**

## 12. 2012 DDB Sponsorship Request Forms – Anne Fogarty France

Ms. Fogarty France said she had distributed binders holding the 15 sponsorship requests received for this fiscal year to each member. She noted that the presenters would come before the board next month. She asked what time limit the board would like to set for each presentation. Chairman Allbritton said he would like the presentations to be three minutes each followed by questions from the board.

Ms. Fogarty France offered kudos to the board for funding the Cleveland Street District Walking map and advised that its design had won an award. She advised the board that there was a \$250 fee for production costs to have the walking map appear in the Graphic Design USA magazine, on its website and in its app.

Member Wright felt the board should publicly recognize the graphic artist, Jonathan Anderson, with a plaque.

Ms. Fogarty France advised that there was funding in the office expenditures line item.

**Member Wright moved to fund the \$250 fee for Graphic Design USA production costs and to publicly recognize Jonathan Anderson with a plaque. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.**

## 13. Chairman's Report

The chairman advised that he would not give a report due to the late hour.

## 14. Final Comments

Member Rubright felt that the board didn't need to spend everything in reserve.

Member Morfopoulos thanked Bob Clifford and Bill Sturtevant for their longtime support of the downtown area. He also talked about a possible ribbon cutting event for display of his dolphin along with a "Group Hug".

**15. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55p.m.**

**CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING ACTION AGENDA**

June 5, 2013 – 5:30 p.m.

06.05.13.01

**Member Wright moved to adopt the April 2013 Financial Statement for filing. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

06.05.13.02

**Member Bosi moved to adopt the preliminary budget for FY 2013-2014 and the motion was duly seconded and discussion ensued.**

**Upon call for the vote, Members Allbritton, Herndon, Starova, Morfopoulos, Bosi and Rubright voted "Aye"; Member Wright voted "Nay". Motion carried.**

06.5.13.03

**Member Wright moved to table the Parking Meter discussion to a later date. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

06.05.13.4

**Member Wright moved to approve the DDB's support of For the Love of Clearwater Art Exhibit and to put the information on the district website. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.**

06.05.13.5

**Member Wright moved to accept the amended budget for Live After Five in the amount of \$7,960. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.**

06.05.13.12

**Member Wright moved to fund the \$250 fee for Graphic Design USA production costs and to publicly recognize Jonathan Anderson with a plaque. The motion was duly seconded and passed unanimously.**