

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING
March 1, 2017 – 5:30 PM – City Hall – Council Chambers

Members Present:	Paris Morfopoulos	Chairman
	Dennis Bosi	Vice-Chairman
	Thomas Wright	Member (Arrived at 5:32 p.m.)
	Tony Starova	Member
	Stu Sjouwerman	Member
	Chelsea Allison	Treasurer
Also Present:	Bill Jonson	Ex-officio/Councilmember
	Doreen Caudell	Ex-officio/Councilmember (Arrived at 5:36 p.m.)
	Anne Fogarty France	Board Administrator
	Seth Taylor	CRA Director
Absent:	Zachary Thorn	Member

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. Post Event Report—Super Boat National Championship—Frank Chivas gave the Board a report on the event. He advised that the event was successful and that they are looking for input from the Board as to ways to get people downtown on Friday and Saturday nights. The Black Honkeys concert at the Capitol Theatre was well-attended, but it did not bring people into the streets. The Friday night event needs to be marketed separately from the races. The Black Honkeys have been hired for next year's event which will be held the weekend of September 29, 2017. Discussion ensued regarding ways to improve the event. Seth Taylor, CRA Director, suggested that he meet with Mr. Chivas to discuss different marketing ideas.
4. Approve the Minutes from the February 1, 2017, Meeting

Member Sjouwerman moved to approve the minutes from the February 1, 2017, meeting. The motion was duly seconded and upon roll call, the vote was:

“Ayes”: Member Morfopoulos, Member Bosi, Member Allison, Member Starova, and Member Sjouwerman.

“Nays”: None.

Motion carried.

5. Adopt January 2017 Financial Statement for Filing

Member Allison moved to adopt the January 2017 Financial Statement for filing. The motion was duly seconded.

Several members asked question regarding this financial statement.

Upon roll call, the vote was:

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

“Nays”: None.

Motion carried.

6. Adopt Resolution 1-17—FY2016-17 Mid-year Budget Amendment—Member Allison read Resolution 1-17 into the record. Florida statutes require that boards adopt their budget by resolution. The DDB’s budget needed to be amended to add the line item for the \$6,000 for the Tax Collector’s commissions.

Member Wright moved to adopt Resolution 1-17 FY 2016-17 Mid-year Budget Amendment. The motion was duly seconded and upon roll call, the vote was:

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

“Nays”: None.

Motion carried.

7. Funding Request—Latino Anniversary Party—Ady Ramos addressed the board on the request for funding assistance for the La Fondita de Leo second anniversary party. They were requesting \$10,000. The event is taking place on Blast Friday, May 26th. People come from all over Tampa Bay to attend this event and many members of the Hispanic community do not know about the various events held in downtown Clearwater. Holding this party is one way to get the Hispanic community to visit downtown and learn about the area.

A lengthy discussion ensued concerning the pros and cons of granting large amounts of money. This is the third downtown business to come before the board for funding assistance. The DDB needs to support the downtown merchants, but this may not be the best way to do it. In the past the DDB established funding levels for various events. The board is only a third of the way through the year and has already spent a large portion of its unallocated funds. Questions arose as to why the board has a budget deadline for funding requests when it seems to consider many other requests that are received during the course of the year.

Members felt that this was a diverse event taking place on Blast Friday on Cleveland Street and funding should be awarded. At the conclusion of the discussion, the DDB decided to fund this event in a smaller amount than that requested.

Member Starova moved to approve funding for the Latino Anniversary Party in the amount of \$3,500 on first reading. The motion was duly seconded and upon roll call, the vote was:

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

“Nays”: None.

Motion carried.

8. Discussion Regarding Funding Business Startups—Seth Taylor, Director, Community Redevelopment Agency

Seth Taylor, CRA Director, addressed the Board stating he felt the DDB needed to be more focused on its mission and how that mission will be accomplished. He said the money granted to the Pierce Street Market build-out prompted this discussion. The DDB granted the market \$20,000, but does not really have enough funding to grant these large requests.

The DDB needs to determine what key programs and services it wants to provide. He said the DDB should focus on downtown marketing, downtown beautification and downtown events to include arts and culture and parks programming. The CRA has a much larger budget and can better assist with larger requests. The CRA's position has changed since the last meeting because its policy framework has been refined over the past few weeks.

Chairman Morfopoulos stated that there will be an item on next month's agenda to further discuss this issue.

Member Bosi suggested that Mr. Taylor meet with each DDB member individually before the next meeting so they can see how the CRA plans to proceed.

9. 2017-18 DDB Funding Request Application—Chairman Morfopoulos

Chairman Morfopoulos advised the DDB members that they needed to review the Funding Request Application for next year and provide any suggested changes to Anne Fogarty France by March 17. This will be on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting. Member Wright asked if the application process was on line or still on paper and was advised that it is on paper.

10. Chairman's Comments

Chairman Morfopoulos advised the Board of upcoming events. These events are listed on the web site at ClevelandStreetDistrict.com

He also advised the DDB that the City Council has adopted the Imagine Clearwater report. The next step is for City staff to come back to the Council with how to proceed with implementation of the recommendations.

Mr. Morfopoulos advised the members that the next meeting will start with a walking tour of downtown. It was suggested that the DDB take a Jolley Trolley ride around the whole downtown district. Discussion ensued concerning the "sunshine law" implications. Members will have to stay together as a group so any notes may be taken. Board members cannot discuss any items listed on the agenda. Ms. Fogarty France will look into the cost of the trolley for a future tour.

The DDB will also have its mid-year review at the next meeting which will include a review of its mission and goals.

11. Final Comments

Member Wright stated he likes that the board is getting more and more done. He said he feels according to Robert's Rules of Order the board should make a motion before discussing an item as the freefall discussion gets the board off track.

Member Bosi stated that at one time the board wished it had more funding requests than money to give and we should be careful of what we wish for since it is now in that situation. He thinks there should be a motion and then discussion as sometimes we do not have enough information to make the motion which is why there is the ability to amend a motion.

Member Starova stated the board is coming to a sense of what it wants to do and how we are going to do it. He would like an item on the agenda to discuss promotional ideas. He stated that the City needs to be more bike friendly, dog friendly and people friendly.

Member Sjouwerman suggested a novel idea would be to have an email list server. All the City events could be promoted through the list. There is money budgeted for this.

Member Allison stated she has heard a lot tonight about having no tenants downtown. She said a lot of progress has been over the last few years. She suggested part of the problem may be that building owners don't have the things prospective tenants need in order to open businesses. We want people to open businesses and stay in business and not close down within six months. She agreed with Member Sjouwerman in regard to TAFFIE providing resources to businesses.

Ex-officio Member Jonson stated he had some great ideas 1) When you have a published agenda item, you can discuss the item without a motion and then discuss it after a motion is made 2) he wanted to commend Member Caudell and her leadership as she was instrumental at the meeting where the Council adopted the Imagine Clearwater plan, 3) the 600 block of Cleveland Street has been built up with businesses such as the Escape Room, Endless Treasures and Studio 617 but the 500 block needs to be built up, 4) while at Blast Friday, he noticed that the 600 block seemed dark and wondered if some of the lights that block needed to be replaced with LED lights by Duke Energy, 5) he assisted Clear Sky with a Duke Energy problem along with Seth Taylor, 6) while in Ft. Pierce he noted that the merchants had program with restaurants for a progressive dinner that may be a way to get people into the various restaurants—they had 3 groups would go to one restaurant for appetizers, one for the entrée, and one for dessert and 7) the Chamber at Westfield Countryside has information on downtown and he asked if the DDB participated. Ms. Fogarty France advised that the board did participate.

Ex-officio Member Caudell asked if the DDB had a social media page and was told no. She stated there were various social media pages for downtown that are available to the board members to share and like. She felt that everyone needed to put information on Downtown Clearwater out on their own social media sites to promote the City and be excited about what was going on.

12. The meeting was adjourned at 7:21 p.m.