

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD
July 11, 2012 – 5:30 PM – City Hall – 3rd Floor Council Chambers

Members Present:	David Allbritton	Chairman
	Dennis Bosi	Vice-Chairman
	Thomas Wright	Treasurer
	Paris Morfopoulos	Member
	Tony Starova	Member
	John Herndon	Member

Absent: Sean Belanger

Also Present:	Paul Gibson	Ex-Officio/Councilmember
	Jay Polglaze	Ex-Officio/Councilmember
	Geri Campos Lopez	Director of Economic Development and Housing
	Anne Fogarty-France	Board Administrator
	Courtney Orr	Downtown Manager

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall.

1. Citizen Comments - Items Not on the Agenda

There were no citizen comments.

2. Approve Minutes from the June 6, 2012 Regular Monthly Meeting

Member Wright moved to approve the minutes from the June 6, 2012 meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

3. Adopt May 2012 Financial Statement for Filing

Member Morfopoulos moved to adopt the May 2012 Financial Statement for filing. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

4. Budget Discussion

a. Taxable Value from Property Appraiser - Geri Campos Lopez

Ms. Lopez stated that they received word from the appraiser's office and unfortunately the property value number keeps decreasing. At the last meeting she noted that she was questioning where the numbers came from and why the Downtown Development Board's (DDB) decrease is more than the Community Redevelopment Agency's (CRA). She learned that the difference is due to tangible personal property taxes that are collected by the DDB and not the CRA. Homestead exemptions were another discrepancy that were included.

Ms. Lopez stated that there was an 8.38% decrease in funds from last year. The total revenue is two hundred twenty-two thousand nine hundred seventy two dollars which is a ten thousand dollar deficit from the preliminary numbers. They will be discussing this more in depth at next month's meeting.

b. Funding Requests/Programs

1) Jolley Trolley - Bob Longenecker

Bob Longenecker distributed an update on the coastal route for the Jolley Trolley. The route started two years ago and ridership is three times more than what they originally forecasted. They have had to supplement the route with a third trolley almost every Saturday and occasionally on Fridays and Sundays as well. The original agreement with the DDB was for half the amount of what the other cities have sponsored. They were lucky to get a state grant to cover expenses but the grant will run out in 2013. The more trolleys he has to put on the route the faster the grant is used up. They are requesting nine thousand two hundred twenty dollars in funding for next year.

Vice-Chairman Bosi asked what the original amount of the sponsorship was to which Mr. Longenecker responded that it was originally for twelve thousand dollars.

Member Starova asked what the ridership was for downtown Clearwater to which Mr. Longenecker responded sixty thousand people.

Vice-Chairman Bosi asked what the deficit will be once the funding runs out to which Mr. Longenecker responded that they will not be able to survive that kind of deficit. The route was pitched as a public/private cooperative arrangement but there is currently no private cooperation in Tarpon Springs.

Member Morfopoulos stated that downtown Clearwater gets one-fifth the benefits than the other cities and he feels that they are paying disproportionately more than what other cities are paying. Mr. Longenecker responded that he originally approached the board for an equal partnership but the board asked him to give them a better proposal so he talked to the other cities and they agreed to have the DDB pay half the amount of what they were paying.

Member Wright stated that the handout shows a thirteen percent decrease in funding for 2013 and asked if that was because the grant was ending to which Mr. Longenecker responded that the cities funding should remain constant and that he will have to take a look at that.

Ex-Officio/Councilmember Polglaze asked if ridership has been monitored on Blast Friday weekends to which Mr. Longenecker responded that the survey was done on weekends when there were no events and that ridership in every city goes up when an event is taking place.

Member Starova stated that the Jolley Trolley is a huge success and suggested that they place the Cleveland Street District event calendar in all the trolleys.

2) Sculpture360 - Christopher Hubbard

Christopher Hubbard was not in attendance.

c. Sponsorship Requests/Events

1) 4th Annual Achieva Credit Union Box Car Rally 2013 - Chelsey Wilson

Chelsey Wilson stated that the Box Car Rally would be held on October 6, 2012 instead of September as in previous years and that the 2013 rally will be held in October as well. They will be keeping a similar format as in the past but this year they will be adding old fashion games like the sack race. They are partnering with Clear Channel and Pepsi is going to be donating the beverages.

Chairman Allbritton asked if they will be moving to the top of the hill to which Ms. Wilson responded that they cars had a pusher last year and it was a little unfair. This year they are having ramps just on top of the hill. Since there are no pushers they will be moving the start line up a bit.

Vice-Chairman Bosi asked if they are going to have different classes to which Ms. Wilson responded that they will have the Peewee class between ages seven and twelve, the teen class between ages thirteen and seventeen, the high school and adult class for those over the age of eighteen, and the corporate class. They are not having a standard derby class because it did not work in the past. People were not sure if their cars qualified to be in the class.

Chairman Allbritton asked if they had one thousand five hundred spectators last year to which Ms. Wilson responded yes.

Member Starova asked if they can make the sign bigger than the two by four sign they had last year. He would prefer the sign to be ten by four to which Ms. Wilson responded that she will look into it.

Member Morfopoulos asked what their sponsorship request was in the past to which Ms. Wilson responded that they requested one thousand dollars but they are hoping to get more funding this year to help improve the event and increase attendance.

2) Blast Friday - James Raulerson

Jeff Hartzog stated that Ruth Eckerd Hall jumped at the chance to take over Blast Friday when they were asked. They knew it was a good event and they made it into a great event. The Edgar Winter Band performed at last month's event and four thousand five hundred people were in attendance.

Mr. Hartzog stated that weather is a problem for them during the summer and that Ruth Eckerd Hall has lost fifty thousand dollars this year. It costs around one hundred seventeen thousand dollars for talent, hotels and transportation over the course of the ten events. They have worked through the insurance problems and the liquor license issue has been resolved.

Mr. Hartzog stated that this year they are looking to not only have the slides for the Miracle event but to actually make it snow on Cleveland Street.

Eric Blankenship of Ruth Eckerd Hall talked about sponsorship.

Chairman Allbritton stated that the board is facing budget cuts themselves and asked if there are any other corporate sponsors besides the ones that have already been listed on the form to which Mr. Blankenship responded that this has been a new event for corporate sponsors as well but they should be able to bring in

new sponsors now. They currently have three to four media sponsors and they actually need more exposure to bring in more cash sponsors. Casanova is a cash sponsor.

Chairman Allbritton stated that he does not want to see the high level of entertainment diminishing and asked if they will have to reduce their advertising or quality of entertainment to stay within their budget to which Mr. Hartzog responded they might even have to cut down on the number of events. They are marketing the events as one but in actuality there are ten events. They are hoping to have ten thousand people attend the Miracle event this year.

Vice-Chairman Bosi stated that they seem to be stuck with sixties and seventies retro bands and asked if they can bring in different bands for these events to which Mr. Hartzog responded that they have taken a look at what is successful for outdoor events but they will be looking at other bands. They still have more concerts to book.

Member Morfopoulos asked how much funding they are asking from the CRA and how much from the DDB to which Mr. Hartzog responded that they are requesting fifty thousand dollars from the DDB and seventy-five thousand dollars from the CRA.

Member Morfopoulos asked how much the CRA was going to sponsor to which Mr. Hartzog responded that he feels they will be sponsoring the entire amount requested.

Vice-Chairman Bosi asked if that was contingent on the DDB sponsoring fifty thousand dollars to which Mr. Hartzog responded yes.

Member Starova stated that Blast Friday put downtown Clearwater on the map and he thinks they should continue sponsoring Blast Friday events. They are moving in the right direction and keep getting better every year. Mr. Hartzog responded that Blast Friday is growing and they are looking into working with other events like the Super Boat races. They are also looking to tie in other events with Blast Friday which will make it even more spectacular.

Member Starova asked if they can have the title read Clearwater's Blast Friday instead of Casanova's Blast Friday to which Mr. Blankenship responded that he does not know if Clearwater can be top bill and that their title sponsor was Casanova last year and their presenting sponsor is Bright House Networks. Mr. Aungst addressed the board and noted that Bright House Networks is giving four hundred thousand dollars of advertising to Blast Friday so it is really hard for him to sponsor the event and not be given the title sponsorship.

Mr. Blankenship noted that he always tries to look at a situation from the customer's perspective. For example, if the title of an event is too long it can be cumbersome.

Vice-Chairman Bosi stated that he does not want them to lose sight of the fact that Blast Friday was initially started by funding from the DDB. This is a Cleveland Street District event, not a city or county event. Mr. Blankenship responded that this is why they do not push Ruth Eckerd Hall as the title sponsor.

Member Morfopoulos stated that the DDB has been very interested in backing Blast Friday and has invested a lot of money in it. He is pleased that Ruth Eckerd Hall is supporting it but unfortunately the DDB is looking at a budget decrease. He asked if they will be able to handle a reduction in funding to

which Mr. Hartzog responded that since there is not much income coming in they will have to compensate for the decrease in funding by making cuts in various areas.

Vice-Chairman Bosi asked what the level of entertainment was to which Mr. Hartzog responded that they recruit acts that are in the seven thousand dollar range per act

Mr. Hartzog stated that they are looking to do more than one act on the bill so they will have local talent open up for the higher acts.

3) Clearwater Super Boat National Championship Festival - Brian Aungst & Frank Chivas

Frank Chivas handed the board the latest issue of Destination Tampa Bay Magazine that included a full page advertisement for the Clearwater Super Boat National Championship Festival with the Cleveland Street District logo.

Brian Aungst stated that they will be working closely with Ruth Eckerd Hall and that they will also hold a seafood festival during the day on Saturday and Sunday. A full weekend planned for this event which will bring a lot of people to downtown Clearwater.

Member Herndon asked how many people were in attendance last year to which Mr. Aungst responded between three thousand five hundred and four thousand people.

Vice-Chairman Bosi stated that he could not remember what the insurance for the parade was last year to which Mr. Aungst responded that insurance for the entire event has gone up. The amount has been calculated into the requested funding. He feels that this is an important event for the DDB and the community of Clearwater and they need the board's support. The addition of a seafood festival will bring a lot more people to the city.

Vice-Chairman Bosi thanked them for using the Cleveland Street logo in their marketing campaign to which Mr. Aungst responded that the board requested it so they honored that request.

4) Downtown Clearwater Farmer's Market - Pat Fernandez

Pat Fernandez stated that the Farmer's Market has over thirty events over the season and this will be their eighteenth season in operation. They will be opening on October 24, 2012 and they have reduced their funding request this year. The market does special events like Souper Soups that brings a lot of people to downtown. There are more people in downtown Clearwater during the day that the Farmer's Market is open than any other time of week.

Ms. Fernandez stated that they Jolley Trolley drops people off at Dolphin Tale Adventures which is close to the Farmer's Market and people have to walk a block to get to them. She requested that the trolley add another stop so that people do not have to walk to the Farmer's Market. She also mentioned that one of the market's vendors has opened a business in downtown Clearwater.

Vice-Chairman Bosi asked if they are trying to expand to which Ms. Fernandez responded that they tried last year but they do not have enough vendors to expand and it gets expensive.

Member Morfopoulos asked how many people attend the Farmer's Market and how many vendors do they have to which Ms. Fernandez responded that between seven hundred and one thousand people come to the market every week and that they have between 22 – 26 vendors weekly.

5) Fun 'n Sun Music Festival - Brian Craig

Brian Craig stated that this will be the sixtieth anniversary of the Fun 'n Sun Music Festival so this year's theme is to celebrate all of Clearwater's destinations and show people why Clearwater is so special. He advised he would comment on the SeaBlues Festival as well.

Mr. Craig stated that they had poor weather last year but they still had between six thousand and seven thousand people attend the event. Nine thousand people attended the event on Saturday night when the weather was better.

Vice-Chairman Bosi asked if they were looking for seven thousand five hundred dollars in funding per event to which Mr. Craig responded yes and stated that branding is the key component. They are going to have banners up and TV spots to promote Cleveland Street District. Cleveland Street merchants will be given their booths for free to participate in the event. The funding will enable them to put up exit signage as well. If the DDB or the Downtown Clearwater Merchants Association (DCMA) would like to collectively put coupons together to hand out at the event they will do it. The SeaBlues Walk they organized last year was a benefit for the Cleveland Street District merchants that stayed open.

Chairman Allbritton stated thanked him for doing a great job to which Mr. Craig responded that it comes from years of experience. The recent Fourth of July fireworks were a Coachman Park exclusive event. They put on a nautical fireworks show synchronized to music.

Mr. Craig advised that for those who have not seen nautical fireworks before, the fireworks are launched from the shore to the water then erupts from the water and creates a fountain and light effect.

Member Morfopoulos asked how many people were in Coachman Park for July 4th to which Mr. Craig responded thirteen thousand people were in Coachman Park alone. They estimate that a total of sixty five thousand to seventy thousand people saw the Fourth of July event.

Member Herndon stated that he watched the fireworks from the twenty-fourth floor of Water's Edge and it was the best fireworks show he had ever seen.

Member Herndon asked if there was a better way to get people out of downtown after the event to which Mr. Craig responded that they tried to hold the event earlier in the day but they could not do that. They also tried to hold an after party but they did not receive funding for that so he did not suggest it this year.

Member Morfopoulos stated that he attended the event and was very impressed with the police effort. They did a great job to keep the flow of traffic going.

Member Starova stated that he stayed open during the event last year as well as this year and his business did really well both years. He had a live band performing in his restaurant and he could not close his doors until two in the morning. This is the only event where the bridge is closed so no one can go to the beaches, everyone has to stay on Cleveland Street. Mr. Craig responded that everything worked out great

and that this year it was a more active crowd than they have ever had. The food lines were long and the beer ran out towards the end of the night.

Ex-Officio/Councilmember Polglaze stated that unfortunately he had to be out of town during that time but he heard that the celebration in Clearwater was the largest in Pinellas County. He congratulated them on doing a great job. Mr. Craig responded that he hopes the board will take all that energy and excitement and support them for the Sun 'n Fun as well as the Sea Blues Festival.

6) Sea Blues Festival - Brian Craig

Brian Craig stated that the Blues Festival is celebrating its seventh year and that the DDB has been a part of this event since the beginning and he would appreciate their support once again.

7) Clearwater Jazz Holiday 2013 - Michelle Gallagher & Patrick Sheppard

Patrick Sheppard thanked the board for funding the Clearwater Jazz Holiday in the past and stated that they placed an advertisement on page seven in the current issue of Destination Tampa Bay Magazine. All marketing material contains the Cleveland Street District logo. Mr. Sheppard stated that they have been working closely with Ruth Eckerd Hall who has been wonderful supporters of the event throughout the years. The name of the event is Clearwater Jazz Holiday and it will always remain that way.

Mr. Sheppard stated that the board in doing a great job in improving downtown Clearwater. The committee is planning on involving the merchants on Cleveland Street for the 2013 event with musicians inside the restaurants but they need the restaurants to support them by staying open. Most events get over at 10:00 p.m. so merchants should not have a problem doing that. This is a signature event for Clearwater and they could not function without everyone's support, including the DDB's. This year they are requesting fifteen thousand dollars in funding.

Vice-Chairman Bosi asked if they are charging an entry fee for the event this year to which Mr. Sheppard responded yes.

Vice-Chairman Bosi asked if they have received any feedback from people who have attended in the past about being charged to attend the event this year to which Mr. Sheppard responded that one person objected to being charged for the event but most people thought a ten dollar entry fee to see Bonnie Raitt was a great deal.

Member Morfopoulos stated that the board appreciates the volunteers and all their hard work to which Mr. Sheppard responded that they could not do this without the volunteers.

Chairman Allbritton stated that they are going to have to make some tough decisions on how to fund these events.

8) 4th Annual Z Festival (Deaf & Hard of Hearing Day) - Jenny Esno & Chris Wagner

Jenny Esno advised the board that Chris Wagner was voted President of the National Association of the Deaf last week and that the Z Company has been named a Fast 500 company. She showed the board the poster that was displayed throughout Clearwater for last year's event. Even with the bad weather on the event day, they had approximately two thousand people attend. They could not set up the kid zone due to

heavy winds. This year they want to do something different which will cost the company twenty-five thousand dollars. They want to reach out to the three hundred sixty-five thousand deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the St. Petersburg and Clearwater areas to inform them about the event.

Mr. Wagner addressed the board and thanked them for their sponsorship for previous events. He stated that they have contacted a lot of international entertainers to perform at the event.

Ms. Esno stated that due to the event's success other cities have asked Mr. Wagner's group to organize their events as well. This is a great event for the deaf community and it shows diversity.

Vice-Chairman Bosi asked what the DDB's commitment to the Z Festival was last year to which Ms. Esno responded three thousand five hundred dollars.

Vice-Chairman Bosi asked how much the Z Festival is requesting in funding this year to which Ms. Esno responded seven thousand dollars due increased marketing. They would like to put a full page in the Tampa Bay Times but they do not have a partnership with them so it will cost them more money. Another reason for increase in budget cost is the international entertainers they will be bringing in for the event.

Vice-Chairman Bosi asked what the goal was for increased participants to which Ms. Esno responded that they would like to bring the numbers up to the same level as events in other cities. She just came back from an event in Kentucky and they had an excellent turnout.

Member Starova asked what the attendance was last year to which Ms. Esno responded that they had a clicker which they used at the start of the event and again at 3:00 p.m. They counted a total of two thousand eight hundred people.

Member Starova asked if this event was the only one of its kind exclusive to the State of Florida to which Ms. Esno responded yes and that it is very family oriented.

Chairman Allbritton asked if they previously held an event at the Conference Center in Tampa to which Ms. Esno responded yes and that the event was called Deaf Nation. It was the first event that they held in the Tampa Bay area.

Vice-Chairman Bosi asked if they are seeking funding from any other corporations to which Ms. Esno responded that they have received in kind sponsorship. There is a fine line that the company has to follow when requesting donations. They can ask for donations within the community. Tony's Pizzeria and Dunkin Donuts have offered discounts and have been very supportive of the event.

5. Final Comments

Member Wright stated that it is going to be difficult to make a decision on funding these events and not dipping into their reserves.

Member Starova stated that each presentation was unique and it is going to be difficult to make a decision but felt the board will do their best to try and help as much as they can. If they have events that are working for them then the board needs to continue with those. The Fourth of July celebration was a great event and this is the second year that he has been participating in it by having music before and after the

fireworks. He suggested that other restaurants stay open during the event as well as it will bring them lots of business.

Vice-Chairman Bosi suggested that the board members visit other cities to see what they do for their monthly events and then compare them to what Clearwater does. Every city puts on different events and they might be pleasantly surprised and might even get ideas on how to do things better. They have a lot of great events in Clearwater and are doing a wonderful job in improving the city. It is great to bring five thousand people to Cleveland Street but if only three or four stores are benefitting from it then they need to reconsider their strategy. He feels that the Fourth of July after party is a great idea and that they should leave it up to the merchants to take advantage of that. They have put a lot of money towards these events but the benefit costs are not there.

Chairman Allbritton stated that businesses need to get involved in these events as Tony's Pizzeria does. The board is investing in bringing people downtown but they do not have the businesses supporting them. He feels that the budget will eventually come back up and then they will be able to fund newer and greater events. He also mentioned that all the board members have great ideas and it is good to see everyone working together.

Member Morfopoulos stated that for the last few years they have invested in events and they have been successful. What is lacking is that they have not been able to get businesses to take advantage of this. Businesses cannot survive between events unless they keep drawing customers back. They need to figure out how to keep people coming back to Cleveland Street other than for events.

Member Herndon stated that the board has a limited budget to work with and sixty to seventy thousand dollars is not a lot of money to spread around. The board is moving in a positive direction and Capitol Theater is a great asset to downtown Clearwater.

Ex-Officio/Councilmember Gibson stated that the board should not despair and that Clearwater Beach looked like downtown Clearwater ten years ago.

Ex-Officio/Councilmember Polglaze stated that it is hard to be patient but this is one investment that the board has made for several years and it has worked. Property owners and the economic downturn have been a problem but there is a lot of interest in downtown Clearwater. All the groups that requested funding are very passionate about their events and have been successful with them. He thinks that the board will be surprised at how much the city can improve in the next couple of years.

Chairman Allbritton instructed the board members to study their sponsorship packets and be prepared to discuss them at next month's meeting.

6. Adjournment

Chairman Allbritton adjourned the July 11, 2012 regular meeting of the Clearwater Downtown Development Board at 7:25 p.m.

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING ACTION AGENDA

Wednesday, July 11, 2012 - 5:30 pm

07.11.12.01

Member Wright moved to approve the minutes from the June 6, 2012 meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

07.11.12.02

Member Morfopoulos moved to adopt the May 2012 Financial Statement for filing. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.