

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD
July 10, 2013 – 5:30pm – City Hall – 3rd Floor Council Chambers

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

1. Vice-Chairman Paris Morfopoulos called the meeting to order at 5:30pm
2. Citizen Comments – Items Not on the Agenda

Jack Mortimer, Water's Edge resident and President of the Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA) advised that he is lining up a special presentation by the head of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) in Kissimmee. He said they are similar to our downtown in size and had a problem similar to ours with empty storefronts, but has had a lot of success. Mr. Mortimer will be setting up the meeting with Ms. Hamilton at end of July or early August and has invited the board to attend.

Vincent Fiore, Executive Chef/Owner of the Sage advised that he will be opening his business starting as a full service banquet facility for corporate events, business meetings, weddings and Sunday brunches. His future plans include an old school dinner club. Mr. Fiore has a cooking show in 6 states and plans to speak with producers about filming some shows in Clearwater. His soft opening/VIP party is scheduled for August 15, 2013. Since his arrival on June 18th, he has contracts with 14 brides and has 20 employees.

Member Polglaze asked if he would be offering catering services and Mr. Fiore responded yes.

3. Recognition of Jonathan Anderson for Graphics Design USA Award

Vice-Chairman Morfopoulos announced that the City of Clearwater received three American In-house Design Awards from Graphic Design USA. The awards are for the new Fun 'n Sun logo designed for the Parks & Recreation Department; the Clearwater Beach advertisement designed for the Phillies Program; and the Cleveland Street District Walking Map designed for Clearwater's Downtown Development Board. Graphic Design USA sponsors this design competition to spotlight areas of excellence and opportunity. The American In-house Design Awards is the original and biggest showcase for outstanding work by in-house designers. It recognizes these designers for their talent, the challenges they face, and for their contributions to businesses and institutions. The city's Graphic Designer is Jonathan Anderson from the Public Communications Department. More than 4,000 entries were submitted from across the country and a highly selective 15 percent are recognized with awards. The board wanted to recognize Jonathan Anderson with this plaque for his design work for the DDB's Cleveland Street District Walking map.

4. Approve the Minutes from the May 8, 2013 Regular Monthly Meeting

Member Wright moved to approve the minutes from the May 8, 2013 meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

5. Approve the Minutes from the June 5, 2013 Regular Monthly Meeting

Member Herndon moved to approve the minutes from the June 5, 2013 meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

6. Adopt May 2013 Financial Statement for Filing

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

7. Request for Sponsorship for the Clearwater Super Boat Championship Festival 2013 – Brian Aungst & Frank Chivas

Mr. Aungst referenced the impact study that had been distributed to board members. There was a \$15 million economic impact for the three day event, which included the popular boat parade, seafood festival and boat race. He said that they displayed the Cleveland Street District logo on promotional materials and that they appreciated the board's previous support.

Vice-Chairman Morfopoulos asked if the event would continue regardless of whether or not the Board sponsored it. Mr. Aungst responded yes, however they probably would not have a Boat Parade.

Member Bosi asked if the big power boats would be present at the next event. Mr. Aungst said they would be, unless there was an accident in an earlier race which required extensive repairs to boats.

Vice-Chairman Morfopoulos commented that the funds for the 2012 boat race will come out of this year's budget. Ms. Fogarty-France added that the event straddles two fiscal years, last year and this current year.

Member Bosi asked the reason for the difference between last year's request of \$10,000 and this year's request for \$15,000. Mr. Aungst replied that in view of the budget crunch, they could reduce the request to \$10,000. They don't make money on this event, their desire is to give the community a world class event and it is a labor of love.

Vice-Chairman Morfopoulos asked if there were any citizen's comments.

Bill Sturtevant, Clearwater Downtown Partnership Chairman, spoke of the support his organization received from Mr. Aungst and Mr. Chivas when the Fourth Friday events started through funding and promotional assistance. He said they came forward and supported us when we needed it.

Member Bosi moved to table funding decision for the 2013 Clearwater Super Power Boat Festival until the next meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

8. Budget Discussion

a. Taxable Value from Property Appraiser – Geri Campos Lopez

Geri Campos Lopez stated that the revised numbers show a preliminary budget increase of \$4,000. She also advised that staff would meet with the CRA Executive Director and the City Manager to define priorities from the CRA perspective for making allocations.

Member Wright asked for staff to give guidance as to fund balance, specifically how much should be protected and kept in reserve. Ms. Campos Lopez said she would talk with the Finance Director regarding this.

b. Funding Requests/Programs & Events

Vice-Chairman Morfopoulos reminded presenters that no funding decisions will be made at this meeting.

1) **Sculpture360** – Christopher Hubbard stated this program was entering their sixth season. This program has inspired four exhibitions in Florida. The program has grown and they plan to add marine themed sculptures to the Call to Artists. When asked if the program would continue if DDB could not fund them Mr. Hubbard said they would proceed with the exhibit with or without the board's support, but do appreciate funding help.

2) **Jolley Trolley Coastal Loop** – Rosemary Longenecker said that the Trolley first came before the board three years ago regarding the Coastal route. Over the three year period 95,000 people been transported through this area. Ridership has been on the flat side for the first part of 2013, but the month of June showed a 17% increase over last year. They transport a variety of people: seniors in the morning, teens around noon, then families and couples in the afternoon and evening. She said the holidays are popular so they are looking into extending coverage if the holiday doesn't fall on the weekend.

Member Herndon asked about the turnaround, currently at Island Estates, and if there was any consideration to making the turnaround here in downtown Clearwater. Ms. Longenecker said that people were leery of the downtown area at night, although they get good traffic on Blast Fridays.

Vice-Chairman Morfopoulos asked what would happen if the DDB does not provide funding. Ms. Longenecker said it would jeopardize the entire route.

Member Wright commented that when you look over Cleveland Street you don't see the trolleys. Ms. Longenecker said that it was an hour route.

Councilmember Gibson asked of the 95,000 passengers travelling through, how many stopped at the Cleveland Street District. He added that this should be considered regarding future funding. Ms. Longenecker said that she didn't know, but Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) would have that information.

Councilmember Polglaze asked about having a direct run to get the tourists off the beach. Ms. Longenecker said they have trained the tourists to go to the Publix on Island Estates to pick up the Trolley and go downtown.

Member Bosi said that with the budget concerns, they may have the same situation next year and not be able to fund. Ms. Longenecker said that PSTA matches everything the city gives, but they couldn't do this without subsidizing.

Vice-Chairman Morfopoulos asked if there were any Citizen's Comments:

Julie Bujalski, Vice-Mayor of Dunedin, said that we should be getting the information quarterly from PSTA. If the penny for transit passes in 2014, everything will be covered by PSTA, the service will be extended to seven days per week and to the beach every half hour instead of hourly. She added that they are asking to commit to two more years of support as all other entities have.

Brad Miller, CEO of PSTA recommends that the DDB fund the Jolley Trolley Coastal Route. There has been a change in the management and Ms. Longenecker has been great in getting up to speed. PSTA relies on events and the Jolley Trolley bends over backwards to work with them.

Bob Clifford, board member of the Jolley Trolley, requested that the board look at the significant return on investment. The Jolley Trolley runs three days per week, fifty-two weeks per year, and now seven holidays.

3) **5th Annual Achieva Credit Union Box Car Rally 2013** – Chelsey Wilson advised that they are going into their fifth year and since the beginning have contributed \$75,000 to education, \$35,000 in 2012.

Member Wright asked if they received help from the Pinellas Education Foundation. Ms. Wilson said that they benefit from the funding, but help with promotion. Achieva plans and executes the event and they appreciate the support from the board since the start.

4) **Clearwater's Blast Friday** - Jeff Hartzog, representing Ruth Eckerd Hall, Capitol Theatre and Blast Friday said that this event has grown exponentially. They have only received about \$20,000 total for corporate sponsorships, but expected a lot more.

Mr. Hartzog is requesting \$50,000 to produce ten events, which includes Miracle on Cleveland Street, complete with the snow, and the added fireworks for the December event. Each event averages \$16,000 to produce, which includes the talent, production, cleanup, Portolets, security (they have had to double the police costs). They would need to add EMTs at future events.

Vice-Chairman Morfopoulos asked where they get the additional funding to make up the difference for the \$16,000 per event. Mr. Hartzog responded that they receive \$75,000 from the CRA, and funds from VIP ticket sales, beer and wine sales, along with vendor fees. This excludes Ruth Eckerd Hall employee salaries. It is a break-even event for them.

Member Bosi commented that this is going into the fifth year, the standard of the acts has increased, the number of people have increased, so why weren't there major corporate sponsors in Pinellas County wanting to be involved. Mr. Hartzog said that Ruth Eckerd Hall is behind them, and the Threshers came in late last season. Otherwise, he doesn't have a definitive answer to that question, but an area of focus is to bring in those corporate sponsorships. They need to have cash and some sponsors provide in-kind services. Bright House gives some cash, but much more in in-kind advertisement. Miracle on Cleveland Street is an easier sell since it brings in children and families for the holidays.

Vice-Chairman Morfopoulos asked what would happen if they could only give half, but not full funding. Mr. Hartzog said it would affect the number of events.

Member Bosi asked if it would be possible to do a national act for half of the events. Mr. Hartzog said that they look at this as a premier event for Clearwater. They are bringing in local acts that are giving a reduced fee and want to continue to use them as opening acts, but not as the headliner/signature event.

5) **Clearwater Super Boat National Championship Festival 2014** – This event was addressed by Mr. Aungst earlier. Board Members were reminded to change the date for this event on application in binder to September 26-28, 2014.

6) **Clearwater Sea Blues Festival** – Brian Craig was not present.

7) **Downtown Clearwater Farmer's Market** – Pat Fernandez said she is looking forward to the nineteenth season of the market. It is a long lasting event at thirty weeks, beginning in October. They are currently located on the 500 block of Cleveland Street. She noted that pedestrian traffic is higher on days that the market is there. The Farmer's Market is an introduction to Cleveland Street for those who haven't been there before. Ms. Fernandez also said they need to find a replacement golf cart to transport barricades, chairs, etc. since theirs was stolen.

Member Bosi asked how many locations they have had. Ms. Fernandez answered that they have been in front of City Hall, the Police Station, Station Square Park (two different locations), but this is the fourth year on Cleveland Street. She added that they like this location the best and felt it was safer for people too.

Member Bosi asked if they had plans to extend the market. Ms. Fernandez said they could extend to the 600 block if they could get more vendors.

8) **Star Spectacular – Spring Fun 'n Sun Event** – Bill Sturtevant suggested that the Star Spectacular be expanded to be a quarterly event. He and Chairman Allbritton met with Terry Schmidt (formerly with Parks and Recreation), who agreed to work on downtown events with them. Mr. Schmidt brings sponsorship, media relationships, creative theme suggestions – for example Blues, Bikes & BBQ.

Member Wright asked if the \$2,500 requested was for one or two events. Mr. Sturtevant said the request was for two events at \$2,500 each.

Member Bosi asked if one event had to be cut, which should they cut? Mr. Sturtevant said the one during Super Power Boats weekend, but would like to talk with Chairman Allbritton.

Member Bosi said the board's commitments would be for the next two years, but because of economic challenges they wouldn't be able to support them in the future and asked if they would be able to secure sponsorships to be self-sufficient. Mr. Sturtevant said that he thought they would.

9) 5th Annual Z Festival (Deaf & Hard of Hearing Day) – Jenny Esno & Chris Wagner

Dawn Marie Caggiano, Marketing Director for the Z Company said that their recent festival had 3,000 people in attendance. Many people attend with hearing family members (70% are hearing). Approximately 70% of Z Festival attendees also visited the Clearwater Marine Aquarium. Last year they had agreed not to have food vendors in order to allow opportunity for local merchants. However, they do bring in entertainers. The current VP in Marketing is also the President of the National Association of the Deaf and promotes this event when travelling nationally. Many come because of that and some attendees have moved here. They need to have a firm date so they can advertise.

Ms. Caggiano said they had requested \$7,000 but will reduce amount to \$5,000 due to budget issues and noted that they had received additional sponsors.

Member Wright asked if the event would be specifically on Cleveland Street. Ms. Caggiano said yes it would be between Ft. Harrison to Osceola avenues.

Vice-Chairman Morfopoulos asked if people would be staying here locally. Ms. Caggiano replied that 20% stay at hotels here.

10) Clearwater Celebrates America – Brian Craig was not present.

11) Clearwater Fun 'n Sun Festival – Brian Craig was not present.

12) Clearwater Gateway Farmer's Market – Sandra Lyth, CEO of the Hispanic Outreach Center addressed the board. She noted that the market started January 12, 2013 and their season was twenty weeks and held in the 1200 block of Cleveland Street. Ms. Lyth advised that they had 15,800 visitors and that it was a multicultural market with food products and artisans. They market will open October 5, 2013 for thirty-four weeks, but stated assistance is needed. Their goal is to provide low cost fresh fruits and vegetables to the underserved population. The market is located in the block where Save-A-Lot is located and near Nature's Food Patch, but that store is specialized and not affordable for the low income population. She would appreciate any funding the board may be able to provide.

Vice-Chairman Morfopoulos asked if there were any citizen's comments:

Mark Wilkins, owner of Cleveland Plaza, Ltd. asked the board to consider the other side. His business pays \$48,000 in taxes. There is a traffic flow problem on market days due to the market. They met with city staff and were promised better signage for parking and police assistance, but never received them. Save-A-Lot spent \$1 million to come into the area. An email from the store manager read "I'm shocked and disappointed that the City would allow the farmer's market to locate there." Seniors have almost been hit several times. Mr. Wilkins suggests a different location for the market.

Member Bosi asked if sales were lower on that Saturday compared to others. Mr. Wilkins was unable to comment on that however, he said he was contractually obligated to provide parking spaces for Nature's Food Patch.

Member Bosi asked if it would be better if the market was moved to the empty lot. Mr. Wilkins said that would be ok. He was just requesting the board not to provide funding if the market stayed in the same location.

Laurie Powers-Shamon, Nature's Food Patch, said that she resented being called a niche market. She has been part of this community for twenty-six years, employs thirty people, has a lease and a legal right to ninety-nine parking spots. Her store is visited by 130 customers per hour. Although she can't prove her amount of lost sales, her main concerns were that one of

the main entrances to her plaza is shut down on Saturday and that her employees and customers should be able to use those parking spaces. She said that it isn't fair for the City to do this to business owners that provide employment for many people, pay taxes and business license fees. Ms. Powers-Shamon requested that the farmers market be moved one block over.

Vice-Chairman Morfopoulos commented that Nature's Food Patch is one of our success stories.

13) **Clearwater Jazz Holiday** – Bob Childress stated that this is a non-profit event to generate community involvement as well as revenue. They want to double the economic impact over the next few years and be more of a partner to businesses. Currently they are a four day event, but propose to bring in music earlier prior to the event, and to begin on Wednesday holding a Jazz Walk. This would help support hotels and restaurants in the area.

Member Bosi asked if this would be a nighttime event. Mr. Childress said that yes it would be. This would also give people a chance to see what changes have been made, since Capital Theatre would be closer to completion.

Member Bosi asked if he had talked with the Merchant's Association. Mr. Childress said that Tony Starova has always been supportive and stays open.

Member Bosi asked about the costs for the nighttime event. Mr. Childress wasn't sure, but the costs of insurance and the artists were all increasing. They hoped it would be self-perpetuating with additional sponsors, but big sponsorships were down about 70%.

Member Bosi asked why the big corporations weren't renewing their support. Mr. Childress said that instead of global corporate funding, it came back to the local corporations and they couldn't do it.

Mr. Childress said they hoped to give back a night to help the Cleveland Street District.

Member Wright applauded him for charging for the main events which was a bold move and for bringing something to the CSD.

Member Herndon asked how the people from the marina could be accommodated. Mr. Childress said the marina is new and there are several new changes. Michele Gallagher, Operations Manager, said there was an entrance at the base of the marina for access. However, once they were in the park, they were in the park.

14) **Clearwater Star Spectacular** – Super Boat Weekend – This event was covered with # 8).

15) **Live After Five (October 2013 – September 2014)** – Bill Sturtevant said that funding this has changed since we began. By bringing in Terry Schmidt it has expanded the theme and sponsorships. They will have something every Friday night in the CSD, using different parts of the block and the park. The summer heat is a concern regarding events, but he said it is critical to bring in professional help in events promotion.

16) **Palm Tree Lights on Cleveland Street** – Member Herndon suggested a long term solution to what the City had invested in and that was permanent lighting for palm trees. Ideally \$30,000 will light them all up. With the Capitol Theatre opening he suggested removing the rope lights and spotlights. During the holidays they can change out the colors and the fixtures have a lifetime warranty.

Member discussion ensued regarding cost, phasing it in and potential involvement from the CRA. The current cost is \$9,000 for the 400 block and four trees on west end of 600 block. The current lights don't work and are not to code so something needs to be done. He suggested another possibility would be considering a progressive approach, upgrading one block at a time. And possibly the CRA could help fund the improvements on the other blocks.

Ms. Campos Lopez said that it wasn't currently in the budget, but she could bring it up.

Member Bosi moved to get CRA involvement in order to move the Palm Tree Lighting project forward. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

9. Final Comments

Member Wright requested for the record from the CRA staff the board's minimum funds balance that needed to be retained. He also requested working guidelines for any out-of-cycle requests for funding. He added that the economy is getting better, the increase of \$4,000 wasn't huge, but it has turned the corner.

Member Bosi said they have tough decisions to make. The board does need a set of ground rules for funding. He doesn't think they should vote on requests the same night that they hear them. They are still a long way from their previous budgets. They need to consider what they are funding this year as well as consider future years. He would like to see more capital projects that are funded on things that will have greater long term impact for the community.

Vice-Chairman Morfopoulos said that they have to deal with a lot of ad hoc issues but don't have a firm mission statement on what they are supposed to be trying to do. He suggests having a future meeting to discuss from the top down, what specific goals, purposes and programs are important to them. If it doesn't fit into the chart, they wouldn't fund it. He would like to have that added to the agenda.

Member Herndon asked if there was a way for the City of Clearwater to require downtown window fronts that are vacant to do something other than put up brown paper.

Ms. Campos Lopez said that she would check into it, but didn't think that brown paper was allowed.

Ms. Fogarty France spoke with the particular storefront owner and was assured it would be taken care of, but hasn't been yet. This location will be a showroom for the new condos on the 400 block.

Councilmember Gibson said he can see the board is ready to spend every dollar that comes in from taxpayers. They have the same problem on a different scale with the City Council. He advised that once capital projects are built that require operating dollars you're stuck. He would like to see more focus on what will have the greatest impact when considering what gets funded. There are a lot of good things we can spend money on, but don't have the money to spend.

Councilmember Polglaze said that he is an events guy but the events haven't kept storefronts open on the 500 and 600 blocks. He added that we are on the cusp; there are so many golden opportunities and different things changing downtown. When you have the amount of requests that have come in over the last few months, he advised the board to go for those that have the potential to grow and benefit Cleveland Street. If you can only fund 30%, it's not wise to spend every dollar and go into reserves.

10. The meeting was adjourned at 7:59p.m.

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING ACTION AGENDA

July 10, 2013 – 5:30 p.m.

07.10.13.01

Member Wright moved to approve the minutes from the May 8, 2013 meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

07.10.13.02

Member Herndon moved to approve the minutes from the June 5, 2013 meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

07.10.13.03

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

07.10.13.04

Member Bosi moved to table funding decision for the 2013 Clearwater Super Power Boat Festival until the next meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

07.10.13.05

Member Bosi moved to get CRA involvement in order to move the Palm Tree Lighting project forward. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.