

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING  
March 2, 2016 – 5:30 PM – City Hall – Council Chambers

Members Present:	Paris Morfopoulos Dennis Bosi Chelsea Allison Zachary Thorn Thomas Wright	Chairman Vice-Chairman Member Member Member
Also Present:	Bill Jonson Jay Polglaze Geri Campos Lopez  Denise Sanderson	Ex-Officio/Councilmember Ex-Officio/Councilmember Director, Economic Development & Housing Department Assistant Director, Economic Development & Housing Department
Absent:	Tony Starova Stu Sjouwerman	Member Member

1. Chairman Morfopoulos called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. asking the board and Ex Officio members to introduce themselves.
2. Citizens Comments--Items not on the agenda—No comments.
3. Approve the Minutes from the February 3, 2016, Meeting

**Member Bosi moved to approve the minutes from the February 3, 2016, meeting. The motion was duly seconded and upon roll call, the vote was:**

**“Ayes”:** Member Morfopoulos, Member Bosi, Member Allison, Member Thorn, and Member Wright.

**“Nays”:** None.

**Motion carried.**

4. Adopt January 2016 Financial Statement for Filing

**Member Wright moved to adopt the January 2016 Financial Statement for filing. The motion was duly seconded and upon roll call, the vote was:**

**Ayes”:** Member Morfopoulos, Member Bosi, Member Allison, Member Thorn, and Member Wright.

**“Nays”:** None.

**Motion carried.**

## 5. Review 2016 Sponsorship Form

Discussion ensued concerning revising the Sponsorship Form. Member Bosi expressed concern that the form contains so much information that it is hard to verify that everything is being done. There are no checks and balances to ensure compliance with all the requirements.

Member Bosi suggested a committee be created to review the form and make suggested revisions. Director Lopez advised the Board that the form must be ready for final approval at the April meeting so it is ready for the budget process that starts in May. Chairman Morfopoulos stated that such committee meetings require a public notice. Ex Officio Member Jonson suggested that information regarding the DDB banners and logos could be submitted as an attachment to the form. Ex Officio Member Polglaze agreed that the form could be streamlined.

Member Bosi stated he attends many of these events to see what is going on and who is attending. He would be interested in some historical performance information. Member Wright stated the DDB should not give funds in advance, and he thought the Board had decided it would not provide funds to those organizations that do not provide the required report within three months of the event. Director Lopez advised the Board that she believes everyone has submitted the report, although they may not have been submitted within the three-month timeframe.

At the conclusion of the discussion, it was determined that the form would be sent to the members electronically and Board members would provide their recommendations to Anne Fogarty-France via email.

**Member Wright moved that the Board independently make changes to the form and submit them to Anne Fogarty-France for the next DDB meeting. The motion was duly seconded and upon roll call, the vote was:**

**Ayes”:** Member Morfopoulos, Member Bosi, Member Allison, Member Thorn, and Member Wright.

**“Nays”:** None.

**Motion carried.**

## 6. ULI Update – FY 15-16, Quarter 1

Director Lopez gave the Board a PowerPoint presentation on the ULI update that City Manager Horne presented to the CRA on Monday (please see attached). Five projects have been completed, six projects are on schedule, and two projects are underway but slightly behind schedule. Ms. Lopez shared update of activities of Clearwater Business SPARK and suggested that by the next meeting she could have the numbers associated with exposure (web, referrals, etc). There is a VIP event on March 31 for Clearwater Business Spark. All members should have received an invitation. Ms. Lopez stated they hope the next stakeholder group meeting will be held in May.

Member Wright asked who was heading the Bluff Master Plan committee. The Committee was comprised of the Planning Director, the Assistant Planning Director, the Parks & Recreation Director, the Marine & Aviation Director, Ms. Lopez, and the Engineering Director.

Member Thorn asked what the timeframe is for completion of the Bluff Master Plan study. The City received 8 proposals and narrowed it down to six. They hope to have a contract by April and anticipate completion of the study by March, 2017.

Director Lopez said the *“Bridge as a Gateway”* project is underway. The Cultural Affairs Committee is consulting with the City of Tampa since they went through something similar. Member Bosi asked about installing lighting on the underside of the bridge. Director Lopez stated this has an artistic component and any kind of attachment must go through the necessary approval process.

Director Lopez stated the revised downtown redevelopment plan is expected to incorporate all new and existing plans: North Marina Master Plan, Comprehensive Boating Plan, Bluff Master Plan, and the East Gateway Vision Plan.

The roll out of the new branding is in process. Chairman Morfopoulos asked what the public's response to the branding has been. Director Lopez stated the response from the public has been very positive. There are great opportunities to use the new tag phrase. As an example, the City ran an ad in the Boston Herald that was very positive.

Member Bosi suggested that as these projects move along and the CRA starts looking for a partnership with the DDB to assist with some of these projects, the DDB should start looking at holding some funds back to be able to help with projects.

Director Lopez stated that they are always looking at partnership opportunities. One area she suggested the DDB start thinking about is restaurants. They are getting many inquiries about the \$50,000 interior build-out grant program. The program is currently on hold and has not been budgeted. Member Bosi suggested they not be so quick to spend this money next year. Next year is a really important planning year with a lot of projects coming out of the Bluff Master Plan process.

Ex Officio Member Polglaze stated this is a very relevant point. There are people out there who are looking for participation and a good faith commitment. Microbreweries/brew pubs are very interested.

Chairman Morfopoulos asked for an update on 1100 Cleveland Street. Director Lopez advised him that the last information she had on this was that the project fell through. Ex Officio Member Polglaze said the City Attorney indicated the project is still underway. Ms. Lopez was on vacation and her information was three weeks old. Mr. Polglaze will get clarification on this.

Ex Officio Member Jonson asked if some of these projects will replace or update the wayfinding signs downtown. Director Lopez advised him that this is not included as part of the current ULI priorities but is on the radar to be addressed in the future.

Ex Officio Member Jonson asked the board if this project update was meeting its expectations. Member Wright stated he was happy to see progress and did not really have any expectations as to when the projects would be completed. Director Lopez felt that the City is on schedule with most of the projects. Member Allison stated she would like to see more momentum, but there are a lot of projects on the list.

Ex Officio Member Polglaze stated The Nolen is a quantifiable result. The City needs to set the stage to prepare for development by the private sector. Transportation gridlock is a very big issue for downtown. There will need to be a downtown parking garage to support remote parking for beachgoers, the Capital Theatre, City Hall, and anything else downtown.

Member Bosi asked if the passage of the pending referendums will speed up the process. Director Lopez said this will set the stage but not necessarily speed up the process. There are other referendums that will be required for some things such as the Harborview and City Hall.

Chairman Morfopoulos stated there are a very large number of recommendations being processed by the same number of people (staff). Although the public is impatient for something to occur; RFPs take time but progress is being made.

Ex Officio Member Jonson stated that some of the things Economic Development has done are outstanding and far exceeded his expectations. Director Lopez said that once the City starts the Bluff Master Plan, things will move faster.

## **7. Review of Goals/Purposes**

Chairman Morfopoulos distributed a document (see attached) on the Board's goals and purpose that was created as a result of the series of workshops that began on January 14. The members read various sections of the report. Mr. Morfopoulos advised the Board that each section will be reviewed at future meetings. Member Bosi asked if it is possible to get the figures mentioned under the statistics section of the report. Director Lopez advised him that the Board has received some figures, but they will put together a spreadsheet with everything in one place. They may not be able to go back too far for some of the information. She stated they will also be working on the report to request County extension of the TIF.

Ex Officio Member Jonson was thrilled the Board is reviewing goals because it adds discipline and direction. One of the things in the report is to survey downtown freeholders and business owners. Some people have communicated to him that we should focus on the gateways, not just Cleveland Street. He understands there are some difficult landlords but others are terrific. There may be something the DDB could do to assist with this. Ex Officio Member Jonson said that Panama City, for one, has marketing consultants who come in to help owners build their businesses. They show them ways to improve their storefronts and build their customer base. The Board may want to consider this as part of its scope.

## **8. Chairman's Report**

Chairman Morfopoulos advised the Board of upcoming events. They include:

March 6	Wild Splash (sold out)
March 12	Pierce Street Market 10 to 4 (monthly--second and fourth Saturdays)
March 19	Pierce Street Market (make-up day from January)
March 13	Peace Concert Series 3:00 to 4:30
March 25	Blast Friday with Atlanta Rhythm Section 5:30
March 31	Clearwater Business Spark Open House 6:00 to 7:30 Clearwater Main Library

## **9. Final Comments**

Member Thorn stated that Blast Friday was awesome this past Friday. The Chamber of Commerce is opening a visitors' center at Westfield Countryside Mall. The ferry is going to be offering \$2 one-way rides during spring break. He encouraged everyone to vote yes on the referendums.

Member Wright questioned where the DDB banners are that were supposed to be hanging along Cleveland Street. Director Lopez will look into this and report back to the Board. Mr. Wright

complimented Chairman Morfopoulos on his leadership. He also stated the new monument on the causeway looks great with the new branding logo.

Member Bosi attended the Sea Blues and there was a great showing. He stated the street was packed on Blast Friday.

Chairman Morfopoulos asked Member Thorn if the DDB could have brochures and maps at the visitors' center and was advised it could.

Member Allison stated she worked on selecting the art to be installed on Cleveland Street and thinks the selections will look very nice.

Ex Officio Member Jonson complimented the group organized by the Church of Scientology to clean up downtown. About 117 people participated. He received a couple of complaints of overgrowth in plants in pots on Cleveland Street and passed this on to the City Manager. He noticed some sidewalk renovations and suggested they could repair the underground feeds for streetlamps at the same time. While he was participating in the cleanup, someone asked him where to park to use the trail. He believes there are opportunities to improve the trail through downtown although it belongs to Pinellas County so the City is not responsible for it.

Member Thorn noticed a bike repair station heading over to beach and suggested that perhaps there could be one in downtown.

Ex Officio Member Polglaze told the Board he and his wife are the proud grandparents of a new grandson, Jayce, who weighed 6 lbs. 1 oz.

**10.** The meeting was adjourned at 7.04 p.m.