

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**

**Tuesday, February 7, 2023 – 3:00 PM  
In Person**

Roll taken, Quorum present – Meeting called to order at 3:06 p.m.

**Members Present:** Gregory Curtis, Carla Major, Chris Ross, Judy Barrasso, Cleveland Spears, Leann Moses, Damon Burns, Kristi Taglauer, Coleman Adler, William Bradshaw, Paul Flower

**Members Absent: N/A**

**Staff/Counsel Present:** CEO Davon Barbour, Anthony Carter, Darren Harris, Hunter Hebert, T. Trent Dang, Stuart Taylor, Scott Whittaker, Counsel Scott Whittaker, Brittany Carnes (Stone Pigman) Via Zoom: Luther Speight, CPA, Wade Carter, CPA

**Notice:** The time, location, and agenda had been adequately and publicly noticed.

**Call for Public Input Cards: N/A**

**Public Comments:** Scott Polakoff, founding member of United4NOLA, shared his and the district residents' concerns about crime, security, cleanliness. The residents do not see security, nor do they see any cleanliness. Would like to know the metrics for pinnacle security, and block by block clean up. When they happen to see block by block they are not that effective. Would like to have contact numbers for both security and block by block. CEO Barbour will share the metric reports that are normally provided to the Board of Commissioners monthly. On March 4th, there will be a community walk with the Art District, NOPD, with possible City involvement through CM Harris's office and the hospitality industry.

**Action Items:**

1. Approval of November 2022 Financial Reports – **Action Item**
2. Approval of December 2022 Financial Reports – **Action Item**
3. Acceptance of 2021 Audit Report – **Action Item**
4. Approval of CEA with New Orleans Police & Justice Foundation Regarding Public Safety Cameras – **Action Item**
5. Approval of DDD Office Lease Extension – **Action Item**
6. Approval of Stormwater Escrow Transfer – **Action Item**

**Approval of Meeting Minutes from December 6, 2022, Board Meeting**

Motion to approve by Commissioner Flower, seconded by Commissioner Bradshaw. Motion carried.

**Public Safety Update Captain LeJon Roberts NOPD 8<sup>th</sup> District Commander**

Capt. Roberts held various positions withing the NOPD, notably Special Operations Division and Capt. of the First District. One (1) non-fatal shooting year to date in the district, they believe it may have been self-inflicted. Five (5) armed robberies year to date in the district three (3) of which have been cleared. Biggest problem in the eight district is property crimes. Three hundred and five (305) property crimes year to date. One hundred and eighty-eight (188) are automobile thefts and burglaries. Big uptick at the end of last year and early this year centered around the Smoothie King center and Caesar's Superdome during special events. Both the Captain and Lt. Samuel Palumbo spoke about the NOPD strategy/efforts using Special Operations resources, State Police, use of their drones, covert operations to prevent automobile burglaries/thefts in and around the Smoothie King Center and Superdome. The next two (2) games resulted in zero (0) automobile burglaries, thefts in and around the parking lots. He also gave an example of a known habitual juvenile offender who was shot in the chest on Canal St. 4<sup>th</sup> July during Essence Fest. On January 31<sup>st</sup> of this year he went on a crime spree in the 8<sup>th</sup> district, special operations were able to identify and arrest him. Capt. Roberts assured the board that in some instances parents are also being held responsible. Last year 8<sup>th</sup> district had twelve (12) homicides versus uptown with ten (10). Do not leave things of value in your car, specifically guns. In response, to Commissioner Flower question regarding the NOPD being understaffed, how understaffed is the 8<sup>th</sup> district? Capt. Roberts would like to have double what he has now – he has seventy-seven (77) on staff including himself. He also reassured the board that LSP will be assisting through Mardi Gras Season.

Lt Palumbo shared that crime is down twelve percent (12%) in the 8<sup>th</sup> district, three percent (3 %) violent crime, twenty four percent (24%) in the DDD for the year fifty percent (50%) in violent crime. At this time last year we had twenty-two (22) violent crimes for the year, right now we have eleven (11). Most notable reductions are in armed robbery we have one (1) for the year, aggravated assaults we have one (1) compared to six (6) last year. These numbers are specifically for the DDD. Only category that violent crime is up is one (1) aggravated battery by shooting this year compared to zero at this time last year, in the Harrah's parking garage – this shooting Capt. Roberts mentioned and is believed to be self-inflicted. Property crime twenty-two (22%) percent down. Only category we have seen a spike is in, is automobile thefts fourteen percent (14%) which has started to taper off. Automobile burglaries are down twenty-seven percent (27%)

#### **Treasurer's Report –**

Approval of November 2022 Financial Reports – **Action Item**

Motion by Commissioner Ross seconded by Commissioner Taglauer. Motion carried

### **Approval of December 2022 Financial Reports – Action Item**

Note the December financials are unaudited. Unaudited Financials are recorded on a cash basis, based upon what was actually paid and what was received. There will be an updated financial report which will take into account all adjusted items at the end of the year.

As of December 2022:

- Internal resources are as budgeted
- Received interest revenue for December
- RTA shelter fees have not been received for December
- DDD did not receive any monies from the city in December – 4<sup>th</sup> month without collections
- Operating expenses – Landscaping vendor is behind in submitting invoices- however, those invoices have since been received
- Other expenses are in line with the budget

In response to commissioner Burns question regarding infrastructure fund for 2022, Anthony Carter assured him that 1.25M will be placed in an escrow fund in 2023. 2.5M were placed in the escrow fund in 2020 and 2021 which represents the 5M.

Motion to approve by Commissioner Ross seconded by Commissioner Taglauer. Motion carried

### **Acceptance of 2021 Audit Report – Action Item**

Luther Speight and Associates performed the 2021 audit. Note: Compliance Finding-Escrow funds were not adequately secured per LA state requirements. Anthony Carter, Director of Finance will ensure that all funds are placed with a federally insured financial institution and in the DDD's name. Report was processed and accepted by the legislative auditor on January 3, 2023.

Motion by Finance Committee Chair Ross to accept, seconded by Commissioner Moses. Motion carried.

### **Chair's Report:**

Approval of CEA with New Orleans Police & Justice Foundation Regarding Public Safety Cameras – **Action Item**

CEO Barbour did a presentation highlighting the continued collaboration of DDD/NOPJ. DDD will fund the equipment and installation initially, then it would be up to the end-user (property owner/business owner) to be responsible for repairs. There will be a NOPJF/User agreement. DDD will coordinate and approve locations.

### **Gist of board members discussion:**

- Secretary Spears Expressed concern about DDD marketing the SafetyCam program.
- Chair Curtis would like to see robust PR/marketing about the SafetyCam program. Requested a program review/strategy in 30, 60, 90 days.
- Commissioner Bradshaw would like for there to be tracking mechanism for the Safe Cam

- Vice Chair Major wanted to know the timeline for the installation of the SafetyCam. CEO Barbour: Per the agreement Property Owners have 60-days to install the cameras.

Motion by Commissioner Flower to approve CEA, seconded by Vice Chair Major. Motion carried.

#### **Approval of DDD Office Lease Extension – Action Item**

Upon recommendation of both the Finance/Executive committees, consensus was the DDD consult with an independent broker, consider an option in the present lease extension for the DDD to have the opportunity to opt out of the present lease. Decision deferred

#### **Approval of Stormwater Escrow Transfer – Action Item**

The escrow is presently held with Southern Loan Servicing -title and escrow company where the funds not protected as the state said they should be. DDD received three (3) proposals- JP Morgan Chase, Hancock Whitney and LAMP. Per Chair Curtis, the Finance Committee will take the lead on this no action is necessary at this point. Decision deferred

#### **President's Report – President & CEO Davon Barbour**

- Expressed his appreciation to the attendees for a successful board retreat. Please complete the post event survey
- Downtown Security Alliance formed coordinated with NOPD and security professionals to representing downtown properties and businesses
- DDD is staffed up
- Introduced Alexis Kyman, Director of Public Policy

#### **Operations:**

- Clean and safe: Safety Alliance team meetings will be held quarterly
- Crisis management training for the rangers
- NOPD detail assisted the Department of Health with the Calliope encampment clean up
- Operations team removed holiday décor
- Continuing to audit and document streetlights, trash cans

#### **Economic Development:**

- First brokers roundtable held – well attended and received
- New Retail Tenant Improvement Grant to be introduced to the public
- New team member for research and development will start on February 27th

#### **Communications**

- DDD continue to receive favourable press coverage and requests for speaking engagements
- DDD has hired Deep Fried Advertising
- Code enforcement campaign about to be launched
- Advertising the SafeWalk program

- Advertising the grant programs

Chair Curtis suggested Secretary Spears re-convene marketing committee meetings

**Synopsis of observations/questions by board members:**

- Vice Chair Major: Is the DDD doing anything to show employee appreciation for their efforts during the Mardi Gras season? Has the DDD reached out to Tulane? CEO Barbour reassured Vice Chair Major the DDD has monthly meetings with Tulane, also President Fitts will be attending one of the Board of Commissioner's meetings. Because of his busy schedule he could not attend this meeting. Commissioner Moses also pointed out she has received positive feedback from Randy Phillipson on the DDD's relationship with Tulane
- Treasurer Ross: Would like to improve reporting of security metrics for stakeholders, public
- Commissioner Adler: Asked for clarity on crime cameras usage – is it for prevention, or resolution. What are the statistics? Commissioner Taglauer explained that the RTCC provides resolution
- Commissioner Burns: DDD role in workforce, create opportunities and implement preventative measures for repeat offenders in the community. Chair Curtis mentioned that both he and CEO Barbour met with CAO Montano, some of the discussion included the strike team, workforce development opportunities making sure that DDD has continued funding from the city, making sure DDD is actively partnering with city agencies to effectuate change and to invest in the community

**Old Business –**

- Vice Chair Major like to discuss the DDD's participation/support of the parade at the next board meeting
- Chair Curtis would like further discussion on Block by Block and timeline for issuing RFPs for the cleaning the district. CEO Barbour reported to the board he is in the process of forming a sub-committee to advise/assist with the process of the RFP for cleaning Anthony Carter suggested that Commissioner Burns be on the committee
- Commissioner Moses: Wisner funds released? Anthony Carter said that in the government system as of January 5<sup>th</sup> the cheque has been processed

**New Business – N/A**

**Executive Session** –Motion to move into Executive Session by Commissioner Flower, seconded by Major. No decision was made

**Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn by Vice Chair Carla Major, seconded by Commissioner Kristi Taglauer. Motion carried.