

Downtown Development District Board of Commissioners Meeting  
Ronald E. Gardner Board Room  
Tuesday, September 12, 2023– 3:00 PM  
**In Person**

Roll taken, Quorum present – Meeting called to order at 0.00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Gregory Curtis, Leann Moses, Kristi Taglauer, Chris Ross, Carla Major, Coleman Adler, Eric Jones, Edwin Murray, Alex Glaser

**Members Absent:** Damon Burns, William Bradshaw

**Staff/Counsel Present:** President & CEO Davon Barbour, Bianka Brown, Hunter Hebert, Alexis Kyman, Ashley Mills, Christopher Kane, Legal Counsel (Adams & Reese)

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

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

**Public Comments:**

Nathaniel Scales, Garden Doctors, expressed his disappointment that his company was not recommended for the landscape contract and criticized Hunter Hebert, Director of Operations managing of the procurement process. Chair Curtis asked that he direct his comments to the Chair and the Board.

**Action Items:**

- I. Approval of Meeting Minutes from August 1, 2023, Board Meeting – **Action Item\***
- II. Treasurer’s Report
  - a. Approval of July 2023 Financial Reports – **Action Item\***
  - b. Approval of 2023 Budget Re-Forecast – **Action Item\***
- III. Chair’s Report
  - a. Approval of Resolution to Designate a Representative to Act on Behalf of the Downtown Development District for State of Louisiana Line-Item Appropriations Under Act 397 – **Action Item\***
  - b. Approval of the CEA for Bio District Strategic Planning – **Action Item\***
  - c. Approval of Expansion of Security Camera Network within the DDD – **Action Item\***
  - d. Approval of Landscape Maintenance Contractor for RFP 2023-50-03 – **Action Item\***

**Approval of Meeting Minutes from August 1, 2023, Board Meeting – Action Item\***

Call for a motion to approve with the addition of the questions/responses from Block by Block to the Chair and Board of Commissioners. The Chair requested the correspondence to the DDD staff, and the responses from Block by Block be entered into the minutes.

Motion to approve by Treasurer Chris Ross, seconded by Secretary Kristi Taglauer. Motion carried

**Treasurer's Report:****Approval of July 2023 Financial Reports – Action Item\***

CFO Bianca Brown highlighted :

**Revenue:**

- YTD actuals totaled \$10, M; YTD budget totaled \$5,851 M, that reflects a positive variance of \$4,178 M. The revenue variance is mainly attributed to the collections rate which is currently at 102% of the current adopted budget

**Expenses:**

- Operating Expenses YTD actuals totaled \$4.4 M
- YTD budgeted totaled \$5.4 M, which reflects a positive variance of \$1,M
- Public Space Operations, which is mainly comprised of Landscape Maintenance, Street Furnishings & Beautification, along with cleaning and maintenance had a total YTD actual of \$1,6M with a YTD budget of \$1,9M, which reflects a positive variance 84% of the total budget expended
- Public Safety- Rangers Police Detail, Private Security Services and Homelessness Services ad a YTD actual of \$1.4.M, compared to the year-to-date budget of \$1.9M which reflects a positive variance and 75% of the total budget
- Economic Development and Planning which consist of District Wide Development, Workforce Development, Business Retention & Recruitment and Façade Incentives had a YTD actual of \$330, 480 and a YTD budget of \$468, 645, which reflects a positive variance and about 70% of total budget
- Marketing/ Events which consist of our Holiday & DDD Events, Communications and Public Affairs had a YTD actual of \$308, 074 with a total budget of \$394,438, which reflects a positive variance and 78% of the total budget expended.
- Administration, which is mainly comprised of expenses related to ongoing operations, had a YTD Actual of \$733,334 and a YTD budget of \$770,349, which reflects a positive variance and 95% of the total budget expended.

Motion to approve by Finance Committee, seconded by Commissioner Moses. Motion carried.

**Approval of 2023 Budget Re-Forecast – Action Item\*****Revenues:**

- Total Revenues are expected to increase by \$983,476, roughly about 8.6%.
- Operating revenues, which are comprised of DDD internal sources and City Sources, are expected to increase by 9.2%.
- DDD Internal Sources, which is mainly comprised of revenue from DDD events that comes from Sponsorship and Ticket Sales from the Downtown NOLA Awards and DDD Holiday Event Sponsorships.
- Interest earned revenue related to the DDD internal sources is generated from the bank balances of the accounts held at Whitney National Bank, and revenue from the Banner Program.
- DDD Internal Sources had an original adopted budget of \$192,445. Staff are proposing a revised budget of \$170,899 in accordance with the projected forecast amount.

- DDD City and State Sources which is comprised of Ad Valorem Taxes, DDD Infrastructure Fund, Less Collection Fees & Assessor Fees (4%), Interest on Investments from funds held at the Board of Liquidation.
- DDD City and State Sources also include State Capital Outlay Funds of \$500,000 for the Revitalization of Harmony Circle and additional grant funds of \$250,000 for the Beautification Project that was received from the State of Louisiana, which diversify DDD's revenue sources.
- Total City and State Sources original adopted budgeted was \$9,838,249. Staff are proposing a revised budget of \$10,780,279 to reflect the additional grant revenue and the projected forecast amounts. Capital Sources such as Bond Proceeds and General Fund Cash Proceeds remain unchanged.

#### **Expenses:**

- Expenses are expected to increase by 8.6%, to have an overall balanced budget of \$12,428,170.
- Public Space Operations is expected to increase by 25%, from \$3,288,744 to \$4,123,052 mainly in the areas of Street Furnishings & Beautification, Infrastructure, Cleaning and Maintenance and Miscellaneous which includes an offset to the newly awarded grant funds from the Capital Outlay Project and Beautification Grant.
- The Public Safety line item is expected to decrease by 3.8%, from \$3,278,591 to \$3,157,443 mainly due to the redirecting of expenses for our Homelessness Outreach Services which will be covered under the Wisner Grant Funds. There will be no decrease in Public Safety service. Due to funding support from Wisner, a portion of the homeless outreach service is shifted shifting the expense to Downtown Development Unlimited, DDD's nonprofit charitable arm, to offset the grant revenue.
- Economic Development & Planning is expected to increase by 4.3%, from \$803,391 to \$837,710, mainly in the areas of Workforce Development and Grant Awards for the highly successful Façade Improvement Program.
- Marketing and Communications increased by 16% from \$677,894 to \$786,506 in the areas of Holiday Events and Communications, along with the onboarding of a PR firm to handle communications that is 100% covered by state grant funds for the Harmony Circle revitalization project.
- Administration is increasing by 8.8%, from \$1,320,598 to \$1,437,212 mainly in the areas of personnel cost, office space and general operations to cover professional services and staff development opportunities with stakeholders.

Commissioner Moses requested that staff provide an update on the appropriate Agreement to facilitate the transfer of funds from DDU to DDD, ensuring financial compliance. Motion to approve by Finance Committee, seconded by Commissioner Taglauer. Motion carried

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

Development District for State of Louisiana Line-Item Appropriations Under Act 397 – **Action Item\***

Resolution read in full. Roll call. Resolution adopted.

### **Approval of the CEA for BioDistrict Strategic Planning – Action Item\***

President & CEO Barbour gave a presentation of the BioDistrict Strategic Plan which will eventually go before the City and New Orleans Community Support Foundation for final approval. Andy Kopplin, President & CEO of GNOF, in response to Secretary Taglauer's question of the timeline explained that he expects things to take place between now and March 2024. The CEA is between the city of New Orleans (\$75K), DDD (\$75K) and the New Orleans Community Support Foundation (\$150K) a subsidiary of GNOF. A briefing document was sent to the Board of Commissioners describing the project summary and the timeline.

Mr. Kopplin conveyed his appreciation for Davon being a champion of the work, a visionary, a thought leader in the area of life sciences. He is an asset to the DDD and to the community. He also expressed his thanks to Senator Murray as a partner at LSU helping to work to get a State match for the City funding for the BioDistrict.

Motion to approve by Commissioner Major, seconded by Commissioner Moses. Motion carried

### **Approval of Expansion of Security Camera Network within the DDD – Action Item\***

- DDD seeks expand to install additional public safety cameras throughout the district that link to the City's 24/7 Real-Time Crime Center (RTCC), which is operated by The New Orleans Office of Homeland Security (NOHSEP).
- The contracted scope of work will provide for the installation of eleven (11) cameras throughout the district - 3 along Canal St. and 8 cameras scattered throughout the district
- The cameras will be purchased from and installed by Covergint, an existing, approved state vendor. The City of New Orleans also contracts with Covergint to install its public safety cameras.

Motion to approve by Commissioner Major, seconded by Secretary Taglauer. Motion carried

**Note:** Chair Curtis would like a resolution drawn up to recognize Commissioner Judy Barrasso for her service and contribution to the DDD at the DDD 2023 Awards Event in October.

Motion to approve Commissioner Moses, seconded by Commissioner Major. Motion carried

### **Approval of Landscape Maintenance Contractor for RFP 2023-50-03 – Action Item\***

After listening to both RCI and Garden Doctors, Chair Curtis requested that the board table this item primarily because of the impact on the budget, also to have further discussion on why the DDD is not extending the contract, and to ensure the new commissioners are comfortable with their decisions.

Motion to table this item by Commissioner Jones, seconded Commissioner Glaser. Motion carried

#### **Note:**

Commissioner Jones continued to question the integrity of the process, lack of accountability, lack of oversight. Commissioner Moses expressed that the role of the Finance Committee, Executive Committee and Board of Commissioners meetings is to provide organizational oversight.

**President's Report:**

President & CEO Barbour. Discussed the key components of work plan:

- Façade Improvement – expressed his appreciation to Meaghan Nguyen and Tyler Correa for significantly expanding interest in the program
- Office Market outreach - thanks to Operations and Economic Development staff for their collaborative efforts to stabilize the office market
- Public safety – noted DDD efforts including SafeCam and Security Alliance Meetings
- Clean-up program – “Do Dat” pet stations implemented
- Biz New Orleans magazine – DDD’s work is profiled in the September 2023 issue
- 10/18 Downtown NOLA Awards

Sidewalk Cleaning & Public Space Maintenance RFP – President & CEO Barbour conveyed that a new draft RFP had been transmitted to the Board and that Board feedback deadline is September 12, 2023.

Capital Outlay – Commissioner Murray inquired if the CEA for Harmony Circle had been executed. President & CEO Barbour confirmed completion of the task.

President and CEO Barbour expressed his appreciation “to every single hard-working member of the DDD who work with the utmost integrity, respect and customer service for our public.” He also noted that staff complete annual ethics training.

**Communications, Operations, Governmental Affairs:** Reports were sent out via email to board members

**Old Business – N/A**

**New Business: N/A**

**Executive Session:** Vice Chair Major made the motion to go into Executive Session, second Commissioner Jones. Roll call. Motion by Vice Chair Major to return from Executive Session. No decision was made. Second by Commissioner Moses. Motion carried. Roll Call.

**Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn by Vice Chair Major, seconded by Commissioner Glaser. Motion carried