

Downtown Development District Board of Commissioners Meeting
Ronald E. Gardner Board Room
Tuesday, December 2, 2025– 3:00 PM
In Person
201 St. Charles Avenue, Suite 3912

Meeting called to order at 3:10 p.m. Roll taken, Quorum present.

Members' Present: Chair Chris Ross, Vice-Chair Alex Glaser, Secretary Ryan King, Commissioner Edwin Murray, Commissioner David Piscola, Commissioner Frank Zumbo and Commissioner Scott Polakoff

Members Absent: Treasurer William Bradshaw, Commissioner Frank Zumbo, Commissioner Kenny Rubenstein, Commissioner Miles Tully, Commissioner Gregory Curtis

Staff/Counsel Present: Michael McKnight, CFO, Christopher Kane, Counsel, Adams & Reese, Troy Henry, Henry Consulting, Rudy Courseault, Henry Consulting

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

Call for Public Input Cards: N/A

Public Comments: N/A

Action Items:

Approval of Meeting Minutes from November 4, 2025, Board Meeting – **Action Item***

Approval of October 2025 Financial Report – **Action Item***

Approval of 2026 Meeting Schedule – **Action Item***

Jim Cook, CEO of the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, presented an update on the proposed Omni Hotel Development. It will bring an annual impact of 213.6 million dollars with 1400 new permanent jobs and 5.5 million in real estate taxes. The hotel is to be 29 stories with 1000 rooms and 100,000 sq ft. of event space.

Approval of Meeting Minutes November 4, 2025, Board Meeting - Action Item*

Motion to approve November 4, 2025, meeting minutes by Commissioner Zumbo. Second by Commissioner Glaser. Motion carried.

Approval of October 2025 Financial reports – Action Item*

YTD actual totaled \$9,820,277; YTD budget totaled \$7,345,048, a variance of \$2,475,229. The revenue change is due to the delay in collections of Ad Valorem Taxes by the City of New Orleans. Operating Expenses YTD actual totaled \$7,451,839 and the YTD budget totaled \$8,529,810, which is a variance of \$1,077,972.

Motion to approve October 2025, Financial Report by Commissioner Glaser. Second, Commissioner Piscola. Motion carried.

Approval of 2026 Meeting Schedule – Action Item*

Motion to approve by Commissioner Murray. Second, by Commissioner Piscola. Motion carried.

Note: In accordance with the provisions of the Louisiana Open Meetings Law (La. R.S. 42:11 et seq.) the Board of Commissioners of the DDD may go into Executive Session to discuss legal or personnel matters.

Chair's Report:

Congratulated DDD Staff for their efforts in planning the 50th Anniversary Downtown NOLA Awards at Caesars on November 25th.

Presidents Report:

Reviewed the clean team's performance. Seth mentioned the upcoming Legacy Awards in honor of downtown businesses. Strategic Meetings for the DDD Board will occur in the 1st Qtr. Of 2026. Commissioner Polakoff was thanked for his service on the Finance Committee by Chair Chris Ross. Commissioner Zumbo agreed to serve on the Finance Committee. Commissioner Glaser stated that CM Harris is in favor of relocating the Low Barrier Shelter. The Library fencing is completed and continues to have a positive impact in the area. Seth discussed the potential negative effects on the homeless situation with budget cuts at the federal level and the budget cuts occurring at the city. The lack of federal resources and permanent supportive housing vouchers can be dire on Downtown New Orleans. Commissioner Piscola mentioned that DDD doesn't have the budget to tackle the homeless situation alone. Commissioner Polakoff stated that the lack of resources could be an obstacle to getting the millage renewed.

Seth Knudsen discussed the Canal St. repairs of 1.8 million bond funds which was confirmed as a source of funding use by the Board of Liquidation. Dec. 8th is the Notice to Proceed, and payoff of debt projected for 2029. DDD provided input into the City Planning Commission's Canal St. Study Progress Report. Seth discussed that DDD advocated for:

- A coordinated government approach
- Policy changes that support experiential retail
- Public sector support for retail development
- Regulating businesses

DDD continues to hold community engagement with stakeholders by holding Real Estate Happy Hours. Staff participated in a ribbon cutting for the opening of the "Secure the Bag" store. The 3rd Qtr. Report was released by Economic Development staff. Seth has made numerous media appearances in the Biz New Orleans Magazine. Seth thanked Jared, Rene and Tyler for the work behind revamping the Public Notices page of DDD's website and executing the Downtown NOLA Awards. The event was a success. He also mentioned that we are working to produce a mayoral transition report to the Moreno Administration. DDD Public Safety Rangers conducted a food donation drive with Second Harvest Food Bank. Seth mentioned the well-attended annual "Lighting of Canal St." with participation by the Voices of St. Peter Claver. He discussed the DDD's sponsorship of "Second Line In the Sky" along Bourbon St., a tribute to the victims of the January terrorist attack. Also, our sponsorship of the Manning Family Children's Hospital Annual Holiday Parade.

Old Business: N/A

New Business: N/A

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Executive Session:

4:17PM Commissioners moved to go into Executive Session to receive attorney-client communication from counsel regarding the Stormwater CEA with the City of New Orleans and Settlement Agreement. Commissioner Polakoff made the motion, and it was seconded by Commissioner King. Motion was approved unanimously.

5:06PM Commissioners came out of Executive Session. Commissioner Zumbo made the motion, and it was Second by Commissioner Polakoff. Motion Approved unanimously.

Upon exiting Executive Session, Commissioner Ross formed a working group to coordinate with city officials and legal counsel regarding the Stormwater CEA with the City of New Orleans and Settlement Agreement. on addressing CEA matters. The working group consists of Commissioners Murray, Ross and Glaser to assist Mr. Knudsen, Mr. Brossett and Mr. Kane.

Adjournment: Commissioner Piscola made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Ross Second the motion. Motion approved and adjourned at 5:09PM