

## **DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT BOARD**

### **MINUTES**

**Tuesday, September 5, 2023**

A regular meeting of the Downtown Redevelopment Board was held Tuesday, September 5, 2023, at 12:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Commission Chambers, 301 S. Ridgewood Avenue, Daytona Beach, Florida. The following people were present:

#### **Board Members Present:**

Mr. Pete Zahn, Chair  
Mr. Kenneth Hunt, Vice- Chair  
Mr. Tibor Benke  
Ms. Sheryl Cook  
Mr. John Kamchan

#### **Board Members Absent:**

Mr. Jake Nicely

#### **Staff Members Present:**

Mr. Ken Thomas, Redevelopment Director  
Ms. Kira Honse, Assistant City Attorney  
Ms. Michele Toliver, Redevelopment Project Manager  
Ms. Mandana Carry, Board Secretary

#### **1. Call to Order:**

Mr. Zahn called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

#### **2. Roll Call:**

Ms. Carry called the roll and noted members present as stated above.

#### **3. Pledge of Allegiance:**

The Pledge of Allegiance was stated by the board.

#### **4. Approval of the minutes:** May 2, 2023 & August 1, 2023

A motion was made to approve the May & August minutes by Ms. Cook, was seconded by Mr. Hunt. The motion carried (6-0).

## **5. Election of Chair and Vice- Chair**

Mr. Thomas stated that it was time to re-elect Chair and Vice Chair, that Mr. Zahn had fulfilled his requirements and could not assume Chair position again for another year. The board then discussed the vote.

A motion to elect Mr. Hunt as Chair was made by Mr. Zahn, was seconded by Ms. Cook and the motion carried (6-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Hunt to elect Mr. Zahn as Vice-Chair, the vote was seconded by Ms. Cook. The motion carried (6-0).

## **6. Presentation:**

### **6a. City Manager- Deric C. Feacher**

Mr. Feacher, city manager, expressed his thanks to the new Chair, and stated to the Board that when he first arrived, he said that he would do his best to give an annual update before the budget process happened and share some insights with the Redevelopment Boards. Mr. Feacher stated that, with many of you I talk to offline, in the respect that we meet at an event, and you share some of your insights with me, you are willing to come up to me, unafraid to share, thank you. I came to this board to share with you items I think are beneficial for this board in particular as well as for the future. I have many items to share but let's go over the highlights I have found. We have a budget coming up for approval of \$332 million, what is unique is that the money we collect for the year does not even cover the Police budget. What folks do not realize is the value and importance of our commercial groups and redevelopment that needs to take place, in particular Downtown. So, an example is that we take in \$43 million from our property taxes, yet we have a public safety budget of \$53 million. We depend strictly on the amount of funds that we collect and our property tax, it will be hard for us to operate on just the funds we collect. That is why our stormwater utility funds and special event type things take place, so we keep our community going. You would be shocked as citizens we receive a lot of services that we don't really pay for, that is why I believe we are doing a great for all those free services. So, I just wanted to share that our budget will get approved by our next commissioners over the next two meetings. It will also include more money for transportation, infrastructure improvements, lighting cameras, and activities in our community. These items are the type of concerns our mayor and our elected officials have really wanted to focus on for the community. We are doing a Parks and Rec master plan and I bring this up because of the Orange Ave Rec center; we are going after for funds. Yet we are not just here to go after money for one project, but the whole review of not just one fund but multiple. We try to do things simple but in review of looking at whole package of what we need to provide in our City of Daytona Beach for all of our facilities. We will bring in experts to look not only at one project but to look at all the parks and rec facilities to see the entirety of what we need for Daytona Beach. We are submitting some requests for transform 386, Public works and Redevelopment have been going after funds, and we too have asked for some key funds that are related to the Downtown area. We need assistance for those businesses that have been impacted due to flooding as well, so in total we are going after these funds from the county which are over 300 million and how to tap into

these funds. More than that, we also need to rehabilitate flood damaged commercial buildings and corridors as well. So many of you who own Downtown businesses, we are hoping that will help you as well in what you do. The process is tough but when we submit these requests for funds we may need your help, either individual calls or letters. We ask that you help in this matter because, with 90% of tourism and investment coming through our corridors, we need all your support not just with businesses but residents as well. These corridors include Midtown, Daytona pier, Main Street, and Beach safety, Seabreeze and Orange avenue. The development will include multi-family housing, acquiring buildings and rebuilding single family homes. I have been meeting with different folks Downtown about our safety, also with DDA about safety and security about the undesirables in Downtown area, and different options, including the panhandling injunction. We have been working with Esplanade and their security. I met with Ken in Redevelopment, and we are looking for how to partner better. We have an Ambassador Program, and it would allow that if you see something say something. The program would have people in the Downtown area all the time and can connect with law enforcement all the time, they would wear ambassador shirts letting everyone know who they are, they would be a presence.

We have over 44 thousand college students, six colleges and universities in our area. We want college students to come down and not only go out, but we want them to stay and live here too, not close everything down. You can go from Pre- K to PhD. without leaving International Speedway Blvd. There is no need for us as a community to shut down our doors and stop all activity. We want them to stroll down Magnolia and go to Bistro, or buy jewelry, or have a glass of wine at Madeline's. We have the number one aeronautical university in the world, training pilots and engineers, so we want them here working. At Bethune Cookman in the nursing program, we are at 98% graduation rate for those nurses graduating, I would like them to want to work here in Daytona. The residents that live here should have a quality environment, quality entertainment, accommodations, and life. We need to make sure we don't stop with the improvements here in Downtown, let's make these connections take place.

We are making a concerted effort to have lighting and cameras for safety, I know that was an issue, so we are investing more. We will need to work with partnerships and business owners for the Downtown area to succeed. I came from a very successful sidewalk café community, we have been sharing information with this café community and will be able to put undesirables out of areas asking for funds or food because we have cornered off the area for dining, people will feel comfortable these are what we are covering.

Mr. Zahn stated he was surprised about the students, and wondered what he meant by destination.

Mr. Feacher stated, we have one of the largest insurance companies here, a great medical community, tourism programs, we have plenty of colleges so let's keep them here working for our Hard Rock café not Sarasota, but also the Condo's and hotels. How do I get the agricultural program from UF not just have IFAs in our community. We are a college town even if some do not realize it, this is what we are trying to figure out, a quality place. The idea of keeping these students here is not that far off, we have six universities within Daytona proper alone. We should be working with these programs so that when they graduate, they will have jobs already.

Ms. Cook stated I do not have a question, but I have been involved for 43 years in Downtown. I have seen so much go on and never have I seen the enthusiasm that you have shown since you have been in the position, no other past manager has done that or with other staff, it is such a delight.

**7. Police Report**

Captain Jeremy Nikolow was not present to provide the report due to scheduling problems.

**8. Staff Reports:**

None.

**9. Public Comments:**

Mr. Benavente, 614 S. Beach Street, stated he loved the presentation by Mr. Feacher, and gave him a shout out for making the Downtown a more desirable area. Mr. Benavente also stated that the benches that are out along Beach Street used to be used by vagrants sleeping by the boat works, but not any longer, thank you. The idea of a grocery store in the area would be great, we do not have any. Any investment in this area would be nice, improving the Downtown area, for the tourists as well. I would hope that the City would own some of that new property, it would give us more leverage. Especially since we heard there is a boat storage company coming to look at North Beach Street behind the marina, this would not be good for investment but not appropriate property. This area should be for residential use, not boat storage and motors, not a very nice image for Downtown, thanks.

**10. Board Comments:**

None.

**11. Adjournment:**

It was moved by Mr. Zahn to adjourn the meeting at 12:31 p.m.



Pete Zahn, Chair



Mandana Carry, Board Secretary