

Downtown Development Authority Minutes

Thursday, August 8th, 2024

The meeting of the Downtown Development Authority Board (DDA) was held on Thursday August 8th, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. in Rm 149 B, Daytona Beach City Hall, 301 S. Ridgewood Avenue, Daytona Beach, Florida.

Board Members Present

Mr. Michael Sznajstajler, Chair
Mr. Douglas Martin
Commissioner Quanita May

Board Members Absent

Ms. Sheryl Cook, Vice Chair

Staff Members Present

Mr. Ken Thomas, Redevelopment & Neighborhood Services Director
Ms. Michele Toliver, Redevelopment Project Manager
Ms. Phebe Fuqua, Redevelopment Project Manager
Mrs. Angela Armstrong, Redevelopment Project Manager
Mr. Ben Gross, City Attorney
Mrs. Mandana Carry, Office Specialist III

1. Call to Order

Mr. Sznajstajler called the meeting to order at 3:20 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Mrs. Carry called roll and listed members as present above.

3. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes from July 11th, 2024, by Mr. Martin seconded by Commissioner May. The motion was carried 3-0.

4. Reports & Presentations

4.1. DDA Annual Budget

Ms. Fuqua presented the proposed annual budget and the bullseye marketing schedule. She explained that the promo events budget of \$212,500 includes bullseye marketing, BTR, Halifax art, Galerie Elan, and some adjustments.

She added a second page to clarify what's covered in this amount and mentioned that some changes were made to the bullseye marketing events at the board's request. The budget also includes modifications from last year, as detailed in the report.

During the budget review, they discussed the need for a financial cushion to cover unexpected community events without using reserve funds. After meeting with Mr. Fred Coulter and Mr. Thomas, they agreed to include this cushion, as DDA meetings have shown that some companies and events are often underfunded, which is reflected in the report.

Commissioner May asked Ms. Fuqua to clarify if the bullseye events listed in the report have already been allocated funding. Ms. Fuqua confirmed that these events have been modified. She then asked the board if there were any other events they would like to see included that might not be on the report. Commissioner May mentioned that she particularly enjoys the Island Festival. Ms. Fuqua noted that some events could be categorized under marketing, even if they aren't strictly promotional. Commissioner May added that she appreciates the downtown events and is glad they are using excess funds to support them.

Ms. Fuqua mentioned that Mr. Smith is conducting surveys and detailed data tracking and asked if the board would like to see this information. Mr. Sznajstajler suggested approving the budget as usual and reallocating funds later if needed.

Mr. Yarbrough reminded the board that a few months ago, the Esplanade presented two event proposals: one to continue sponsorship for "December to Remember," which is included in the budget, and another for \$15,000 to support the farmer's market. He recalled discussions about getting sponsorship from the Downtown Redevelopment Board, which would free up more funds for the market, and asked if this idea was still on the table.

Mr. Sznajstajler suggested reallocating \$10,000 to the farmers market by reducing the "December to Remember" budget to \$25,000, bringing them closer to their goal. Mr. Yarbrough said he would provide a definitive answer at the next meeting.

Commissioner May asked if CRA funding is available for the market. Ms. Fuqua confirmed that it is, as long as it's classified as disseminating information. Mr. Yarbrough mentioned that he wasn't aware he was supposed to take this directly to the CRA.

Commissioner May expressed that she wouldn't mind reallocating the extra \$5,000 if it was feasible. She acknowledged Mr. Yarbrough's concerns and reiterated that the DDA's goal is to invest in downtown events, when possible, without hoarding funds. While she understands the need for fiscal responsibility, she supported increasing the farmers market budget to the full \$15,000.

Mr. Martin motioned to transfer \$5,000 from the \$14,000 budget cushion and another \$5,000 from the "December to Remember" budget to the market. Commissioner May seconded the motion. The motion was carried 3-0.

Mr. Sznajstajler emphasized the importance of having a quorum present at the DDA board meeting in September when the budget will be passed.

4.2 Staff Report

Anita Pologa from the City Clerk's Office discussed the board member recruitment campaign she initiated. She's been conducting walk-and-talks, and so far, she's received 10 applications, with 5 specifically for the DDA board. Ms. Pologa is handling all the background checks and preparations for Commissioner May to have this on the agenda for the August 21st City Commission meeting. She mentioned that she's attending every board meeting and overseeing all the reappointments. With 31 terms expiring by the end of the year, she's working to ensure most of them are reappointed.

Ms. Fuqua provided an update on First Coast Security, noting that they continue to conduct foot patrols, capture information, take photos, and submit daily reports. She also mentioned that there is funding available for outdoor seating but has yet to receive any applications. She asked the board to encourage any businesses interested in outdoor seating to contact her.

Commissioner May asked if the funding covers façades or just sidewalk updates. Ms. Fuqua clarified that it applies to both façade improvements and outdoor landscaping. She stated that it is also part of the small business incentive grant and other updated funding programs. She noted that businesses can receive barricades through a grant. Mr. Gross added that businesses can provide their own tables and chairs, and the grant specifically covers the barricades. He also explained that the sidewalk café license allows businesses to place furnishings as long as they aren't permanently attached. Additionally, he mentioned that the licensing program has been updated to eliminate fees, with licenses now valid indefinitely without annual renewal.

Mr. Gross further explained that some confusion might arise from businesses on Beach Street that have private property in front of their buildings. These businesses don't need a sidewalk café license to use that space, but they do need one if they want to extend their café onto public property.

Ms. Fuqua provided an update on the triage program, which assesses businesses to determine their needs. She mentioned that they have received 48 applications so far. The program is free, and anyone interested can visit the website or contact her for more information. The triage program will end at the close of this fiscal year, but they hope to enter a second phase where they can develop and implement strategies based on the assessments.

Mr. Thomas added that Mr. Yarbrough sent a memo regarding the farmers market, mentioning that he received a \$5,000 check. They had been negotiating since August 2022 about relocating the farmers market from Magnolia to the Esplanade. However, the contract wasn't finalized until August 2023, even though services had already started earlier. Mr. Yarbrough suggested that the \$5,000 be applied to the 2022-23 fiscal year.

Mr. Yarbrough explained that the minutes reflect when they were hired, and they had seven events that carried over into the next fiscal year, even though they started in the previous fiscal year. He is seeking restitution for this but is unsure where the board will find the funds, as the reserves are limited. He noted that the funding for this year is fully allocated and will follow up on the issue.

Ms. Fuqua shared that in February of this year, they successfully held the Accelerate Business Summit, which provided significant support to many businesses and nonprofit organizations. The city manager has tasked her with developing the 2025 Accelerate Business Summit, and she is currently seeking more vendors and sponsors, with applications available for those interested.

She also mentioned the upcoming "Pitch Your Idea" competition, set for next year, with applications being sent out in a few weeks. They are taking their time to develop this event to ensure they can provide substantial funding and resources to businesses, making the competition more worthwhile. The tentative date for the "Pitch Your Idea" competition is February 2025, and the location is currently planned for the YSG Building, though this is still under discussion. Ms. Fuqua promised to keep the board updated as more information becomes available.

4.3 Joseph Yarbrough- Riverfront Esplanade

Mr. Yarbrough discussed the 4th of July event and mentioned a city service that uses geo-fencing to measure cell phone activity and attendance. Using this data, he was able to determine the attendance for the Riverfront Esplanade. During phase one, which lasted 7 months, there were 43,300 visits. Over a 12-month period covering phase one and part of phase two, attendance increased to 116,000. From January to June of this year alone, there were 74,700 visits.

He emphasized the importance of understanding the esplanade's attendance to gauge its impact on Beach Street. By January of next year, they will have a full 12 months of data for phases one and two, allowing for more accurate attendance figures. Based on current trends, they anticipate a 30% increase in attendance for the upcoming year.

5. Public Comments

None.

6. Board Comments

Mr. Sznajstajler announced that budget meetings will be held on September 4th and 18th. The board agreed to meet on September 18th from 5-6 pm in Room 149-B, while the September 4th meeting will take place during the City Commission meeting.

Commissioner May inquired whether the board needs to meet every month, given that the budget is set. Mr. Gross clarified that the DDA board's charter requires regular meetings at least once a month, as outlined in Section 6.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m.


Michael Sznajstajler, Chairman


Cherecia Campbell, Board Secretary