

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Special Meeting of the DDA Board
February 16, 2021
Zoom Meeting

The special meeting of the DDA Board was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: *Mayor Brian Turnbull (Bolusia County, FL), DJ Boyd, Margene Buckhave, John Casey (Collier County, FL), Jim Long (Sarasota County, FL), Greg Presley, Mary Starring*

Absent: *Carolann Ayers, Patrick Sullivan, Aaron Cozart, Ryan McKindles, Shawn Riley*

Also Present: *Lori Ward/DDA Executive Director, Jeri Johnson/DDA Marketing & Communications Director, Marilyn Price/City Council, Dave Gutman/Resident, Barbara Morowski-Brown/City Council, Anna Mary Lee Vollick/Resident*

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Turnbull, seconded by Starring to approve the Agenda and Consent Agenda. **Motion carries unanimously.**

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Ward said that the DDA bylaws requires the Board to elect officers every year. This is normally done in January but because there was such a full agenda last month it was postponed until February.

An email was sent to the DDA Board members to announce the scheduling of the election of officers for 2021. Current DDA Board Chair Shawn Riley has indicated he is interested in continuing to serve as Chair. John Casey has indicated that he also is interested in continuing to serve as Vice Chair. Carolann Ayers reached out to notify staff that she will be stepping down as Treasurer. The current Secretary position is held by DDA staff member Jeri Johnson. Ward stated that the Treasurer position on the Board is an honorarium position since we have a paid finance director at the City that handles all our budget transactions.

Ward asked if there are any additional nominations from the audience. Long questioned how long Casey and Riley have been in their officer positions. Ward said she believes 3 or 4 years. Long believes officer positions should change after a term so nominated Boyd for Chair. Boyd was grateful for the nomination but declined because of other outside responsibilities. Buckhave then nominated Boyd to be the Treasurer and he again declined. Turnbull nominated McKindles to be the Treasurer. Ward will follow up with McKindles since he was not present at the meeting.

The new slate of officers for 2021:

Chair – Shawn Riley

Vice Chair – John Casey

Treasurer - Ryan McKindles

Secretary – Jeri Johnson

Motion by Long, seconded by Starring to approve the 2021 slate of DDA Board Officers. **Motion carries unanimously.**

PARKING CREDIT MORATORIUM UPDATE

Casey said the Parking Credit Committee is recommending that a parking study be initiated, however, because of the pandemic any counts collected at this time would most likely provide false data. Also, there is no DDA funding for a parking study at this time. The group has decided to continue meeting to discuss a variety of topics pertaining to parking in the downtown. Ward has agreed to reach out to other communities to see how they handle overnight parking in their lots. Casey suggested there could possibly be a cap of 15% for overnight parking in the lots so Northville doesn't have issues develop like Royal Oak. Ward said the Board does not need to take any action but the moratorium will expire on February 21st.

SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION

Ward presented the draft of the new outdoor dining permit. The changes were highlighted in red on the application. One of the additions to the application is the existing City ordinance per Sec. 74-175 (d) "no food or beverages shall be consumed by a patron at a sidewalk café unless the person is seated at a table". This is required for safety purposes during the pandemic so there is no overcrowding in the individual restaurants outdoor dining area. Even so, this City ordinance was in existence before the pandemic. Long raised the question who would be responsible to enforce this rule. Ward said because the DDA holds the special event application the DDA has been told that they would be responsible to enforce. Presley asked Turnbull if the Social District is going to remain a special event solely responsible by the DDA. Turnbull said the City Council is looking at how we move forward with the Social District with more of a shared responsibility between the DDA and the City. This would eliminate the need to have a special event application. Buckhave suggested the existing City ordinance (Sec. 74-155 (d)) should be included in the application. If an individual restaurant does not want to comply then they could possibly be given a citation by the police. Ward says there has

been ample communication with the business owners about the requirements and she does not want anyone to lose their liquor license by not complying.

Ward also added questions to the application concerning whether the restaurant is part of the Social District or have an additional outdoor bar license. Ward said there is a line added to the application about outdoor structures and fire pits. Beginning March 1st if a restaurant wants to utilize an outdoor fire pit, it must be propane. The reason for the change to propane were related to problems of smoke and ash getting into retail stores and damaging merchandise. Ward said that the fees for outdoor dining have increased due to the expansion of the outdoor dining areas and the extension of the outdoor dining for 12 full months. The DDA will utilize a portion of the revenue generated from the outdoor dining permits to manage the Social District and street closures. Previously these funds were collected and utilized by the City. Businesses can choose an 8-month or 12-month permit.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Starring to approve the changes made to the Special Event Application. **Motion carries unanimously.**

DRAFT DDA BUDGET 2021

Ward stated that the Assessor will have more definitive revenue figures for the budget after the March 10th Board of Review, so this will just be a preliminary discussion of the DDA budget. The number one priority of the DDA this year has been to support the local business community and this will remain the priority this upcoming fiscal year.

Ward said on the revenue side there will be an increase in TIF revenue from new real estate development projects and property/building sales, additional grant funding, Stand rental fees, a portion of the increased outdoor dining application fees. There also could be a contribution from the City's General/Public Improvement Funds. Ward said the DDA could also look at refinancing the bonds that are set to expire in 2025 since interest rates are currently very low.

Ward said there will be several new expenditures for the DDA this year. The DDA will be adding a year-round grounds keeper to maintain the Social District. Ward also said there would be an additional part time employee hired to do misc. clerical work. That position would free up Johnson's time to do more Marketing and Communications for the downtown which is more her skill set. The DDA has had additional expenses incurred with the use of Zoom technology and year-round porta potties. Ward said the DDA has put many of the downtown physical improvements on hold till after the pandemic is over to conserve funds.

Ward said the DDA right now contributes \$50,000 to the City for street lighting. The City plans to contract with ERC to convert all the street lights to LED so this would eliminate the DDA's contribution, creating a very big cost savings. The DDA is also exploring using ERC for the downtown street lights.

RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE CITY'S FEE SCHEDULE

Ward said the DDA Board needs to approve the increase in the fee structure for outdoor dining and retail merchandising. These changes will go before City Council tonight for approval. Outdoor dining with no alcohol service would increase from \$ 0.85/sq ft to \$1/sq ft for the 8-month permit and \$0.85/sq ft to \$1.50 for a 12-month permit. Outdoor dining with alcohol service would increase from \$1.25/sq ft to \$1.50/sq ft for the 8-month permit and \$1.25/sq ft to \$2.25/sq ft for a 12-month permit. Permanent structures on City Property would increase from \$1.85/sq ft to \$2.00/sq ft for the 8-month permit and \$1.85/sq ft to \$3.00/sq ft for the 12month permit.

In addition, through the Special Event License which is the vehicle for the street closures, the City has allowed retail establishments to merchandise and sell products on City sidewalks and rights-of-way. DDA staff is recommending that any retailer that is allowed to place merchandise outdoors be charged the same rate as the outdoor dining with no alcohol service, which is proposed for \$1/sq ft for an 8-month permit and \$1.50/sq ft for a 12-month period.

Buckhave expressed concern that the increased fees are not very significant. Casey said it was a balancing act between generating more revenue for the DDA and continuing to help the businesses recover their COVID -19 losses. Ward said many of the restaurants have increased their square footage for outdoor dining and will also increase the number of months they will be utilizing their outdoor space.

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Starring to approve the increased outdoor dining fees and establish a new fee for outdoor retail merchandising. **Motion carries unanimously.**

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND UPDATES

- a. *Design Committee:*
None
- b. *Marketing Committee:*
None
- c. *Parking Committee:*
None
- d. *Organizational Committee:*
None
- e. *Economic Development Committee:*
None

BOARD AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Ward thanked the Board and sponsors for attending the Heat in the Street celebration.

The next DDA Board meeting is scheduled for March 16, 2021.

Motion by Turnbull, seconded by Buckhave to adjourn the DDA Board meeting.
Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:11 am

Respectfully submitted,
Jeri Johnson, Marketing and Communications Director
Northville DDA