

PROCEEDINGS OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TAKEN AT A SPECIAL MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2024, at 7:45 AM.

Roll Call, Present: Denice Skinner, Jaci Russo, Miles Matt, Will LaBar, and Marie Centanni

Roll Call, Absent: None (two board positions open)

The meeting was called to order by Matt.

Public comment process is attached to the end of the agenda for individuals wishing to address the Board on agenda items. Request to speak must be submitted prior to the discussion of the item. Individuals are allowed three minutes for comments.

Public Comment

Jeff Johnson told the Board that he appreciated the opportunity to comment publicly and that he planned on reaching out to individual board members to speak with them about downtown.

Administrative Approvals/Reports

Minutes of the Oct. 16, 2024 meeting were presented for approval. Skinner moved to approve as presented. Russo seconded. All voted in favor (5-0).

Blanchard discussed September and October Financials with Board of Directors, but advised that because of staff turnover, there would be a delay in having the financials reviewed by an accountant. September financials should be ready for the December meeting. No vote necessary.

With unanimous consent from the Board of Directors, Matt moved the Election of Officers to the end of the agenda.

#1 - Resolution of the Board Authorizing a Request for Proposals for a Downtown Ambassador Program and Authorizing the Negotiation of an Agreement with the Downtown Lafayette Economic Development District to Fund the Ambassador Program

The Downtown Lafayette EDD has approved the program at \$375,000 a year for three (3) years. The RFP has been drafted and is ready to be published. A review committee of the EDD Administrator, DDA, and LCG Public Works will select the provider to negotiate with. Russo moved to adopt with an amendment to add Blanchard as an authorized executor; Skinner second. All voted in favor, as amended (5-0).

#2 – Resolution of the Board Authorizing the Chair to Execute an Agreement with the Downtown Lafayette Economic Development District Regarding Public Furnishings

This will fund \$200,000 worth of improvements, the plan is to invoice the EDD directly (as opposed to a reimbursement). Centanni moved to adopt with an amendment to add Blanchard as an authorized executor; Russo seconded. All voted in favor, as amended (5-0).

#3 – Resolution of the Board Authorizing the Chair to Execute an Agreement with the Downtown Lafayette Economic Development District Regarding Design of Lee Avenue Streetscape

This will be a reimbursement program, to up \$167,000 total, work is kicking off in December. LaBar and Skinner recused from discussion or vote on this matter. As a result, because of two other vacancies on Board of Directors, only three (3) Directors were available to vote, one short of the necessary four (4) votes to approve a measure. Matt deferred the resolution for a future meeting.

#4 - Resolution of the Board Authorizing the Chair to Execute an Agreement with the Downtown Lafayette Economic Development District Regarding Design of Parc de Lafayette
This is a reimbursement of up to \$85,000. Centanni moved to adopt with an amendment to add Blanchard as an authorized executor; Russo seconded. All voted in favor, as amended (5-0).

#5 - Resolution of the Board Authorizing the Chair to Execute an Agreement with the Downtown Lafayette Economic Development District Regarding Planning for Coburn's Property and Railroad District
This will be a reimbursement of up to \$20,000. Centanni moved to adopt with an amendment to add Blanchard as an authorized executor; Russo seconded. All voted in favor, as amended (5-0).

#6 - Resolution of the Board Authorizing the Chair to Execute an Agreement with the Downtown Lafayette Economic Development District Regarding Design of Landscaping on Jefferson Street
This will be a reimbursement of up to \$25,000. Centanni moved to adopt with an amendment to add Blanchard as an authorized executor; Russo seconded. All voted in favor, as amended (5-0).

#7 - Resolution of the Board Authorizing the Chair to Execute an Agreement with the Downtown Lafayette Economic Development District Regarding Design and Construction of Taylor Street Plaza
This project will fund up to \$325,000 for the design and construction of Taylor Street Plaza, likely in conjunction with LCG. LaBar recused himself from the discussion and debate of the measure. Centanni moved to adopt with an amendment to add Blanchard as an authorized executor; Russo second. All voted in favor, as amended (4-0) (LaBar recused).

#8 - Resolution of the Board Amending and Re-Adopting the FY2025 Budget and Forwarding the Budget to the City Council for Ratification
This is a readoption of the FY2025 Budget first approved in October. This amendment adds the revenue and capital expense line items to reflect the EDD funded items approved in this November meeting. The budget also includes a new job—Events Manager. The budget will be ratified by the City Council in December 2024. Centanni moved to adopt; Russo seconded. All voted in favor (5-0).

Election of Officers

Miles Matt opened nominations for officers. Centanni nominated Russo for Chair; LaBar seconded. Russo accepted the nomination. All voted in favor (5-0). Russo opened nominations for Secretary-Treasurer. LaBar nominated Matt; Centanni seconded. Matt accepted the nomination. All voted in favor (5-0).

CEO Report

Blanchard updated the board on administration task transitions. Blanchard also let the board know that the Zoning Commission would be debating a rezoning issue in the downtown area that

had been contentious and that the staff had supported the city's position on the issue. The Board also discussed the recent rain event, noting that none of the usual "problem areas" had flooded.

Director's Report

Holland let the board know that the Lee Avenue Streetscape project will be kicking off in December; she explained the planning and design process.

DLU update

Farm to Table(aux) was a big success. We are having a special Christmas Downtown Alive! with Chubby Carrier – Merry and Bright will engage several downtown businesses and help drive foot traffic to downtown during the holiday shopping season. Small Business Saturday press conference later this week.

Police Update

Capt. LeBlanc said that there is a need for additional cameras. Arrests have been made in recent vandalism cases.

EDD Administrator / LPTFA

The EDDs are moving to a quarterly meeting schedule with application deadlines for each meeting, this should insure proper vetting of future proposals.

One Acadiana

Insurance Commission coming to speak. Regional celebration in December, there are tickets still available.

Acadiana Center for the Arts

Sam Oliver said the Louisiana Music Museum project is progressing very well; the Board is invited to review and comment on the ideas and plans as they come in. Cathy Webre and Jody Nederveld will be honored.

Public Comment

Maggi Bienvenu said that there are a lot of dark areas along Convent and in some of the parking lots. Staff mentioned they would bring up that issue to the church and public works.

Jeff Johnson asked for someone to write for him a "plain English" summary of each of the resolutions and then to put those executive summaries of each on a website. He would also like someone to put zoning maps discussed earlier in the meeting on a website.

Other Business

There was no further business, and the meeting was adjourned.