



Downtown Investment Authority

**Ed Ball Training Room
214 North Hogan Street, first Floor
Wednesday, September 12, 2013 – 3:00 p.m.**

MEETING MINUTES

Board Members Present: Chairman O. Barakat, T. Allegretti, J. Bailey, M. Saylor, D. Harris and K. Harper-Williams

Board Members Not Present: M. Bishop, P. Perez and R. Clements

Office of General Counsel: Jason Gabriel

Council Members: Councilmember Lori Boyer

Attendees: Paul Crawford, OED Deputy Director; and Karen Underwood, Recording Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Barakat called the meeting to order at approximately 3:05 p.m.

II. ACTION ITEMS/INFORMATION ITEMS

The Special Meeting of the Downtown Investment Authority (DIA) was called in order for the Board to determine what message was to be developed regarding the Downtown Economic Development Trust Fund as well as the operating budget.

Aundra Wallace, DIA CEO, explained the budget process. He met with the Finance Committee and presented a \$1.7 million operating budget. The Finance Committee approved \$1.5 million as the baseline to start developing the DIA Budget. A table or organization for five individuals was presented and City Council agreed to remove one position. Mr. Wallace met with the council members regarding whether the board could survive without that position. An amendment would be allowed to add the position back into the budget. Provided the DIA stay within \$1.5 million budget. September 24, 2013 is the final meeting for city council to adopt the budget.

Mr. Wallace discussed the capital side, the \$9 million that was provided for downtown to invest into projects. City Council made a decision to reduce the Downtown Economic Development Fund from \$9 million to \$4.1 million. Results must be shown with the funding received for the DIA. In having conversations with other council members, he is not certain that the \$4.1 million is where it is going to remain.

Chairman Barakat stated that he has also met with nine City Council members and Paul Crawford. Having a one-on-one meeting with City Council, gaining an understanding of what challenges the board has, and understanding what the board's relationships are with various City departments will be a learning curve for the board.

Aundra Wallace stated that the game is not over. City Council has a tough job to do and the board has to utilize every day between now and September 24, 2013 to stay focused and have the resources to do things that the board has been tasked to do. To move forward, the board needs to make sure the strategy is one that is endorsed by this entire board.

Chairman Barakat opened the floor for comments.

Board Member Tony Allegretti stated that the board would like as many board members to meet with City Council, along with Aundra Wallace.

Board Member Don Harris commented about the budget of \$4.1 million. He thinks that the tasks may be changed as far as priorities for the project. He asked what projects the board should focus on. Chairman Barakat responded he did not know if the developers are ready to communicate them publicly. Aundra Wallace stated that it might be premature to discuss projects at this particular time.

Chairman Barakat noted that he did not foresee any projects that require incentives beyond \$9 million. He pointed out that the message should have a sense of urgency.

Board Member Saylor asked that if the board is not going to focus on projects specifically, can the board do a prototype analysis of what the \$4.1 million and the other leveraged dollars would be if combined. So when people ask the board a question, if \$4.1 million enough, the board would have an answer. Aundra Wallace responded that that model could be presented.

Council Member Boyer commented that the number is \$5.6 million. The \$1.5 million from the Southbank TIF was allocated in the budget for this year. She stated that that has never been in it before and was always applied to the general fund before.

Vice Chairman Jim Bailey commented with regard to October 2012, when the organization was first structured. The Mayor stated that he wanted someone that would think about downtown every time they woke up in the morning. City Council created the legislation on what was needed to be done to make downtown work. He also pointed out that it is not about what projects the board has, what the board is able to do and where to spend money.

Vice Chairman Jim Bailey stated the following:

- The board has never gotten their arms around what to work with about downtown and how easy it could be.
- Ted Carter stated during his presentation that 80 percent of your time, 50 percent of somebody else's, and 90 percent of somebody else's was used at the DIA since 2012.
- He has the greatest respect for OED and what they do.

- DVI, Cultural Council, Downtown Marketing Collaborative, and the JaxPack Merchant Associations all have budgets and are raising money.
- He mentioned in the past that he asked for an inventory list. He wants to know how many buildings are available and what could the board take and do something with.
- He mentioned who is responsible for the garbage cans, banners hanging on the signs
- Our goal is to try to create an environment downtown where you do not have to provide funding.
- This organization has the ability, legislatively; to do anything it wants to with the support of the OED.
- Landlords don't need a business plan; they need first and last month's rent.
- He feels the merchants are important. He commented what is needed is for the DIA to say that they are going to be the clearinghouse, hold everyone accountable, take advantage of what is brought to the table, how they can do it, and show City Council next Tuesday that this board has a game plan.
- This board needs to be knowledgeable, understand what the board has, what the inventory is, and all of the things that we own in downtown that we could take advantage of.
- All of the organizations are valuable by bringing something different to the table.
- The DIA has to have that funnel for everything to go through for everyone to understand right now where to go, what is the first step, first place they are supposed to go.
- There is value in an organization that has all of the retail spaces on the ground floor.
- He commented that we had the best garbage pickup a couple of years ago and they are trying to change the garbage plan for a \$10,000 shortfall.
- The board needs to look at water taxis to make downtown operate well.

Jason Gabriel commented to Vice Chairman Bailey that any proposal or changes requested could be made to the ordinance code.

Vice Chairman Bailey commented that it does not make sense that the park is in the condition it is in and the board should provide investment funding to build the Laura Street Trio

- Lastly, Vice Chairman Bailey commented that he felt that the DIA needs to be on the same page with what we have, could do, and what the OED can support.
- Council Member Boyer stated that whenever you are looking at developing a plan, you look at what you have first to be able to see where you want to go. Once the business investment plan is approved, the DIA will have the authority to lease, sell, or do other things with properties and it would important to know what those properties are. The Council has directed Council Member Boyer to work with the DIA on creating entertainment zone legislation for downtown and she is dealing with what districts the board will come up with in the plan.
- Michael Saylor asked Vice Chairman Bailey regarding having a plan that goes beyond the CRA Plan. He stated that there is nothing to stop the board from going beyond that and having an organizational plan that brings all of the silos together. As things start to evolve,

they are going to gravitate to the office of the CEO and expect him to provide the direction and coordination.

Chairman Barakat commented regarding the three or four ongoing projects. He does not know legislatively or legally if the board could force the grassroots groups to come through the board in the conduit. It would have to be their choice.

Board Member Don Harris agrees with Michael Saylor. It is going to take staff and a group of five, including the COO, to pull the plan together. It would take an organizational plan and a marketing plan. The CRA plan is being worked on right now.

Vice Chairman Bailey is grateful to have Aundra Wallace on board and he has the support of the OED.

Board Member Tony Allegretti commented that he introduced the Late Bloomers Garden Club to Daniel Davis, President of Jax. Chamber, so that they can discuss lobbying to help that effort.

Chairman Oliver Barakat asked Council Member Boyer and Jason Gabriel if the board wanted to alter the board structure or create a mechanism to connect with these silos. Council Member Boyer responded that under the board's bylaws, there would be no reason that there couldn't be an advisory committee where you could appoint people and ask them to attend all of the meetings.

Jason Gabriel responded to that and mentioned a variety of ways you can divide it. It will all depend on how the board wants to do it. Council Member Boyer noted that there has to be a mechanism. It could be done through Aundra Wallace and the board members to funnel in reports of meetings to him and he distributes them to the board. .

Jason Gabriel pointed out unilateral information funneling through Mr. Wallace or Ms. Underwood would be the best way to do it because then the information could be distributed to the group.

Board Member Kay Harper-Williams commented on the mission statement that was drafted by Vice Chairman Bailey. She pointed out that the word "clearinghouse" is in there. There is an expectation of the board to be the clearinghouse, and the board agrees. Vice Chairman Bailey responded that he presented the mission statement; it was tabled for later and was never voted on. He stated that the problem is that the DIA does not have a mission statement, game plan and never agreed to it.

Chairman Barakat stated that through the business improvement development plan, changes will be made to the structure to become the clearinghouse for downtown. What is the mechanism to implement these great ideas? He believes the mechanism is to include a section of the business development plan regarding board governance or board structure. Councilmember Boyer commented that she would not do it by a board structure change, which would require legislation.

Board Member Harris stated that the board wanted to wait until the CEO came on board so that he can be a part of the process. The board needs to be strategic, organized, and well-planned through

the CEO. There is a limited amount of staff to get projects done. Chairman Barakat said to let Aundra Wallace and the consultants work out how and when these issues can be addressed.

Board Member Kay Harper-Williams commented that Lara Dietrich and Tony Robbins are working diligently on the amendment to update the plan.

Aundra Wallace stated that the board has to be as creative as they can be by looking at all of the sources that are available on the public side, incentives on the private side, and bringing together the best possible transactions that could move a project forward. Vice Chairman Bailey stated that if the board were all on the same page about the clearinghouse and what he can do, he would do a good job with it. Therefore, this board needs to give him what he needs to be able to do that.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The floor was open for public comments.

- John Nooney: He welcomed Mr. Wallace, DIA CEO. Public access to the floating dock needs to be open now.
- Lara Dietrich: TIF dollars can be spent on projects that are in boundaries of the plan.
- Margie Seaman: She commented on the Downtown Investment Authority funds for retail.

Council Member Boyer updated the board on new legislation that is going through Council:

1. Waiving some of the limousine rules, which stems from a request to use the Uber iPhone, which is a car service app that many large cities use.
2. Downtown BRT segment. JTA legislation involves streetscape changes to several downtown streets. The portion on the Southbank that had a dedicated lane has been eliminated on Riverplace Boulevard.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Barakat adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:37 p.m.

The written minutes for this meeting are only an overview of what was discussed. For verbatim comments of this meeting, an audio CD is available upon request. Please contact Karen Underwood, Downtown Investment Authority at (904) 255-7567 or by email at karenu@coj.net.