



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

August 19, 2026 ~8:30am
Downtown Tempe Authority

ATTENDING: Louisa Falline James Neal Dana Gillis
Michael Martin Angela Topolosek (virtual) Julian Wright (virtual)
Jon Addy (virtual) Jenna Borcharding (virtual) Kaitlyn Myers (virtual)
Charles Goffnett (virtual) Charles Huellmantel (virtual) Robin Arredondo-Savage (virtual)
Rosa Inchausti

STAFF: Lori Foster Anthony Strait Kim DeMeritt

ABSENT: Eric Sather Bryan Decker Doreen Garlid Tim Gomez
Thomas Isaac

GUEST: Josh Rutherford, City of Tempe Economic Development

Meeting called to order at 8:30 am.

A. CONSENT PACKET – Charles Goffnett motioned approval, seconded by Rosa Inchausti. Motion carried.

B. CITY OF TEMPE UPDATE – (Rosa)

Rosa

- First time in two years no Tara and Eric since Mill construction is complete. Thank you for everyone's patience on Mill Ave. Met the timeline that was promised. Brought Josh to the meeting. He is usually showing properties, working with Lori to fill vacancies downtown.

Josh: Works for COT Economic Development – worked in Economic Development for 4 years, focused on the downtown for the past 2 years, has been with the city 26 years. Assigned to downtown to help with restaurant and retail vacancies and has made a lot of progress

- 15-16 new openings coming soon – COT looks for local businesses
 - Glai Baan
 - Level 1 Arcade Bar
 - Jeni's Ice Cream
 - SLAB City
 - Republic – may be operating under a different name
 - Capriotti's
 - Sushi by Boll
 - Phantom Fox / Goat & Ram
 - Carmen
 - Culinary Gangster
 - Shawarmatti (Union Building)
 - Burnt Flour (VIB Hotel)
 - SIP
 - Rally House
 - Novel Ice Cream
- Welcome: Roman
- Closures:

- Low Key
- Poke2U
- Rodeo Ranch – turning to a new concept
- Glow – new concept
- The city acquired the bank building and hardware building. The city is in the process of filling the last suite at the hardware building. The bank building is completely empty, but close to having 1 – 3 concepts in that building
- The city will also be activating the church building – a shell with no utilities with the goal to put a restaurant there.
- Hayden Flour Mill: city will take this on to phase the renovations. We have cleaned up the Mill to get things out. One of the biggest tasks right now is to move the equipment out based on a structural assessment. Space and infrastructure planning done. Some of the equipment needs to be moved to finish the testing. The next biggest task is what do you do with the removed equipment.
- Working on enhancing the trail head – need the funding to move forward. ADA acceptable to the first terrace / rock pile. The plan includes restrooms. Uplighting the silos and programming the space with events.
- James Neal offered a connection to a photographer to take pictures before the equipment comes out and afterward.
- The funding that has been provided is focused on the Mill building, not the silos at this time

C. **PARKING UPDATE/PARKING BENEFITS DISTRICT – Anthony Strait**

- Benefits District: DTA exploring the possibilities of a Parking Benefits District. What is a parking benefits district?
 - A Parking Benefits District would take a portion of net profit generated from metered parking and invest it back into the place it was generated (downtown), rather than the general fund. Downtown is one of the main economic drivers for the city and funds from a benefits district could be used to fund things like validations, signage, parking etc. DTA will continue to research and explore this vehicle to enhance the economic vitality of the district.

D. **PRESIDENT’S UPDATE**

- a. **James Neal to Executive Committee vote:** Charles Goffnett motioned approval, seconded by Dana Gillis. Motion carried.
- b. **Brooks Wintemute vote to replace seat for George Oliver:** James Neal motioned approval, seconded by Charles Goffnett. Motion carried.
- c. **Executive Committee recommendation for Audit Process vote:** Charles Huellmantel motioned approval, seconded by Charles Goffnett. Motion carried.
- d. **State of Downtown, October 20**
 - i. Ave the Date: CLA Connection Center
 - ii. If anyone is interested in being on the awards committee let Lori know
- e. **Meet Me on Mill, October 23**
 - i. Save the Date: Invite people back to downtown to show off improvements, showcase existing and new businesses, live music component w/ Tempe Music Walk music plaque installation
- f. **Mill Ave Coalition**
 - i. Group of merchants that have come together after hard summers and two years of construction to give the merchants a voice, which would be welcomed by DTA.
 - ii. We are talking to merchants to determine what pain points there are and we might be able to help and where we might be able to help advocate on their behalf. Parking is a big concern as it was in previous coalition attempts over the past years.
- g. **District Updates**

- i. Looking forward to a new activation downtown by a new farmer's market producer– a weekly farmers market called Tempe City Hall Farmer's Market around City Hall starting October 11
- ii. Tempe Blooms has won another national award – Arizona Flower Market Society of American Florists – Marketer of the Year

E. PARTNER UPDATES –

- i. Michael Martin/Tempe Tourism: Year to date, doing better than 2025; Year to date up in occupancy by 4.5%; Strong market, even through the summer; American Express released an article for best business travel and Tempe was in the top 5 of destinations; Taste of Tempe promotion ended and so far, very good results from the participating restaurants that have completed the survey; Hired a PR firm to promote Taste of Tempe
- ii. Robin Areedonda Savage/Tempe Chamber: (shared by Lori) - ASU Kickoff lunch is next Friday and tickets are still available

F. NEW BUSINESS –

- i. Initiative on the ballot in November to increase sales tax to support public safety, transportation and PreK, does DTA want to take a stance on the tax increase? Board discussed the importance of public safety downtown since that is one of our core functions and we do not want to see any cuts in police coverage for downtown; cuts to transportation would also be a concern as accessibility into/out of downtown is a big driver for economic vitality.
- ii. If you have additional comments, reach out to the Executive Committee; committee will take into consideration and discuss further.

G. ADJOURN – 9:59 am Louisa Falline motioned approval, seconded by James Neal. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING – October 21, 2026, 8:30am