



MINUTES
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING
Monday, September 14, 2026 – 12:00pm – 3:00PM
CITY HALL COMMISSION CHAMBERS
100 NW 1st Ave, Delray Beach, FL 33444

Call to Order of the September 14th, 2026 BOARD MEETING – 12:00 PM

Members Present: Alan Costilo, Jason Lakow, Brian Rosen, Jim Knight, Cole Devitt, Bob Cantwell.

Members Absent: Jule Guagliardi.

Ex-Officio Members present: None.

Staff: Laura Simon, Liliana Fino, Emily Oliveras, Shelly Likosar, Marusca Gatto, Victoria DeSilvio, Quentin Morgan.

The Pledge of Allegiance is recited.

Chair Knight offers thoughts and prayers in remembrance of the 25th anniversary of September 11. He notes that, in addition to the approximately 3,000 lives lost, many others continue to experience serious health conditions as a result of the events and their aftermath.

1. AGENDA APPROVAL – Additions or Deletions

Motion by Alan Costilo seconded by Bob Cantwell to approve the September 14, 2026 Board meeting Agenda as presented.

Motion carries (6 - 0). All in favor (Jule Guagliardi not present).

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS & PARTNERS REPORTS – limited to 3 Minutes

Comments by Partners:

- Report by Stephanie Immelman, Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce, Chief Executive Officer.
- Report by Sgt. Lugo, City of Delray Beach, Police Department, Sergeant.

Comments by Public:

DDA Executive Director Simon advises that participating restaurants in the DDA's Downtown Delray Beach "Restaurant Month" initiative (happening during the month of September) were invited to attend the meeting to share their experiences with the program and to take the opportunity to invite the public to visit their establishments. Three restaurant representatives are present and available to address the Board.

Mr. Max Lennon, representing Lulu's, Avalon Beach House, and Campi Italian restaurants, shares his experience with the DDA's "Restaurant Month" initiative. He notes that the DDA's marketing efforts provide a significant promotional benefit compared to individual restaurant marketing efforts and help increase customer traffic, which in turn supports additional employee hours. He further notes that September performance continues to improve each year when compared with prior years.

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Mr. Nicholas Kurban, representing Amar Mediterranean Kitchen & Bar and Amar Sandwich Shop, expresses appreciation for the DDA's continued support and highlights the benefits of the "Restaurant Month" initiative during the slowest commercial time of the year. He reports that his restaurants experienced an approximately 30 percent increase in business during the first two weeks of September. He further notes that the Downtown Delray Beach "Restaurant Month" initiative is always received positively by the customers and mentions that the initiative provides value to customers and encourages them to explore a variety of menu offerings.

Ms. Suzanne Perrotto, representing Rose's Daughter, Brulé Gastro-Kitchen, and The Pantry, advises that although her restaurants are closed during September, they are participating in the initiative by hosting two wine-pairing dinners, one at Brulé Gastro-Kitchen and one at Rose's Daughter. She notes that, as a result of the DDA's promotional support, both events are nearly sold out. Ms. Perrotto expresses her appreciation to the DDA for its continued support of local restaurants and merchants. She acknowledges the DDA's ongoing efforts to support the business community and expresses her gratitude for the organization's assistance throughout her 20 years as a restaurant owner in Delray Beach.

Mr. Alan Costilo, representing Big Al's Steaks, reports that despite a slight increase in business during September, the restaurant is experiencing its most difficult summer in 20 years in Downtown Delray Beach. He attributes the decline in part to extreme heat and parking costs and notes that nearby shopping malls are attracting customers with air-conditioned facilities and free parking. He expresses concern regarding the removal of free Wednesday parking and encourages the Board to consider the impact of parking policies on businesses along the Atlantic Avenue corridor.

Mr. Lloyd Stanbury, representing the Spady Cultural Heritage Museum, thanks the DDA for its support of the inaugural Palm Beach Reggae Music and Arts Festival held in March. He reports that more than 50 percent of attendees were from outside Palm Beach County and advises that the Cultural Council for Palm Beach County has committed to supporting the festival for a second year. He expresses appreciation to the DDA, Laura, and her team for their continued support.

3. CONSENT AGENDA for Approval

3A: Board Meeting Minutes Approval:

- 1.) August 10, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes
- 2.) Approve Resolution 03-2026 on the Agreement with Bluevly Communications for Social Media Services for Old School Square
- 3.) Approve Resolution 04-2026 on the Grimes Events & Party Tents, Inc. – Annual Services Agreement

Motion by Alan Costilo seconded by Jason Lakow to approve the Consent Agenda items *August 10, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes, Resolution 03-2026 on the Agreement with Bluevly Communications for Social Media Services for Old School Square and Resolution 04-2026 on the Grimes Events & Party Tents, Inc. – Annual Services Agreement* as presented.

Motion carries (6 - 0). All in favor (Jule Guaglardi not present).

4. PRESENTATIONS:

4A: DDA Recognition - L. Simon

DDA Executive Director Simon notes that the organization recognizes its restaurant partners as a vital part of the community. She highlights that, with more than 60 restaurants participating in Restaurant Month, the strong support for the program demonstrates the value of the initiative. She expresses gratitude for seeing the restaurants support one another and work collaboratively to make the program successful.

DDA Executive Director Simon recognizes Ms. Victoria DeSilvio for her nearly decade-long contribution to the DDA and her role as Special Event Manager for Old School Square. She notes that their partnership begun with "I Do in Delray Beach," which showcased Delray Beach as a wedding destination, and have grown to include support for major events such as Delray Beach Fashion Week. DDA Executive Director Simon highlights Ms. DeSilvio's extensive experience in large-scale event production, venue management, and special events, as well as her genuine care for performers, volunteers, vendors, event organizers, and attendees. She also recognizes Ms. DeSilvio's diligent oversight of the Old School Square campus, including venue operations, traffic flow, vendors, and enforcement of rules, and expresses gratitude for her dedication to the City-owned venue and the community.

The Agenda follows with items under "New Business" due to technical issues.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5A: DDA Art & Activation Grant Request: Annual Haunted House & Block Party - Space of Mind

Mr. Tom Joule (representing Space of Mind - Community Classroom Project) gives an overview of the Annual Haunted House & Block Party and mentions that the annual family-friendly event promotes student-led creativity and project-based learning while bringing families, community groups, vendors, and local businesses together. He notes that the approximately \$16,000 event generally breaks even due to its affordable admission, but generates significant community engagement, visibility, and foot traffic. He states that the event supports the DDA's placemaking goals through partnerships with local organizations and businesses and concludes by thanking the DDA for its continued support.

Board Member Lakow requests a more detailed breakdown of the event budget. Mr. Joule explains that the majority of the expenses are associated with fencing, which is required due to alcohol being served at the event, as well as tent rentals and décor.

Board Vice Chair Rosen expresses appreciation for the organization's collaboration with the neighboring Delray Beach Historical Society, particularly given that the Historical Society is holding an event on the same day and at approximately the same time. He notes that coordinating the two events is especially important in consideration of potential challenges for visitors, including parking and other logistical matters.

Several members of the Board voice their agreement in support of approving the grant as requested.

Motion by Alan Costilo, seconded by Jason Lakow to approve the DDA Art & Activation Grant Request for the Annual Haunted House & Block Party by Space of Mind as presented.

Motion carries (6 - 0). All in favor (Jule Guagliardi not present).

5B: Old School Square Fee Waiver Request: Delray in White 2026 – Delray Concours Foundation

Mr. James Boylan (Delray Beach Concours Foundation, Member and Treasurer), states that the organization is hosting its third annual Delray and White Dinner at Old School Square to support youth and police charities. He explains that the event promotes downtown Delray Beach and encourages attendees to patronize local businesses. He notes that Geronimo Tequila Bar, Southwest Grill, and Dada are official restaurant partners. Mr. Boylan requests a fee waiver, stating that all event profits support the organization's toy drive, the Community Classroom Project, and other youth nonprofits.

DDA Executive Director Simon confirms whether the fees waiver request is only involving the facility fee of \$2,000 and Mr. Boylan confirms it.

Board Member Cantwell speaks favorably of the event, noting that it is well received by participants and provides a meaningful benefit to the community.

Board Treasurer Devitt also supports approval of the request, noting that events of this nature help activate the Old School Square campus.

Motion by Alan Costilo, seconded by Bob Cantwell to approve the Old School Square Fee Waiver Request for the Delray in White 2026 event by the Delray Concours Foundation waiving the \$2,000 facility rental fee and allowing the DDA organization to recoup \$1,500 in hard costs.

Motion carries (6 - 0). All in favor (Jule Guagliardi not present).

The agenda returns to the previously skipped item.

4B: City of Delray Beach to Present details on the Entertainment District proposed changes for Downtown: Presented by the Assistant City Manager, Jeff Oris

Assistant City Manager Jeff Oris provides an overview of the proposed changes to the Entertainment District and discusses the zoning provisions governing entertainment-related businesses. He explains that the current regulations establish where entertainment businesses may operate and include requirements addressing their proximity to residential properties, churches, and schools. He further explains that public meetings were held to solicit community feedback regarding three proposed options for the expansion of the Entertainment District.

Board Member Lakow states that, based on his attendance at aforementioned public meetings and at *The Elders' Table* meetings, he perceived that the public expressed generally favorable views regarding the proposed expansion of the Entertainment District into the West Atlantic area. He notes that such an expansion could provide an opportunity to support and promote economic development within the area.

Assistant City Manager Oris mentions the need to balance economic development with potential impacts on nearby residents and businesses and therefore mentions that the city is encouraging public input.

Ms. Renee Jadusingh (Community Redevelopment Agency, Executive Director) reports that multiple proposals are being considered. She further explains that the proposals remain under consideration and are not yet final. Additional alternatives may be presented, including proposals that would permit entertainment uses subject to specific conditions, such as varying decibel limits, operating hours, or other restrictions that differ from those currently applicable within the Entertainment District east of Swinton Avenue.

Board Member Costilo notes that the differences between the entertainment business uses currently permitted in the West Atlantic area and those that would be permitted if the Entertainment District were expanded into the area are not expected to be substantial. Accordingly, he expresses the view that the

expansion of the Entertainment District should be implemented at this time, with any necessary modifications or adjustments to be considered and incorporated at a later date.

Ms. Jadusingh explains that, should the Entertainment District be expanded at this time, the expansion would initially be implemented in accordance with the regulations and uses currently permitted within the established Entertainment District east of Swinton Avenue. She further notes that public input is being sought to identify the specific needs and considerations of the West Atlantic area and to ensure that the most appropriate approach is developed for the area.

Board Vice Chair Rosen adds that additional matters should be considered as part of a comprehensive approach to economic development and planning for the West Atlantic area, including potential revisions to the parking in-lieu program. He further states that he independently conducted several sound-level tests in the area to obtain additional background information. He notes that, during his testing, one of the loudest locations was near a storefront business that was not operating at the time. Accordingly, he observed that the noise appeared to be primarily attributable to vehicular traffic rather than business operations. Board Vice Chair Rosen then reviews the areas proposed for expansion of the Entertainment District and suggests that the expansion include the blocks immediately adjacent to Atlantic Avenue and extend westward to Interstate 95.

Board Treasurer Devitt states that, to his knowledge, The Set community has expressed a strong desire for economic development within the area. He suggests that planning efforts should focus on creating an environment that is attractive to prospective businesses and encourages their establishment and investment in the area. He further emphasizes the importance of advancing the development of an area that, in his view, has remained largely underdeveloped for an extended period of time.

Upon inquiry from Board Member Cantwell regarding the project's next steps, Ms. Jadusingh notes that another meeting will be gathering members of *The Elders Table* and Pompey Park to discuss the subject on October 1st, after which all final proposals will be submitted to the City Commission for formal review.

Board Member Cantwell and Chair Knight support maintaining momentum on the matter, noting the approaching busy season and the importance of continuing the process rather than delaying consideration.

Board Chair Knight refers to the different options for expansion of the Entertainment District discussed before the public and asks Ms. Jadusingh which proposal received more acceptance from the public.

Ms. Jadusingh answers that the public leaned towards option A (which includes all Commercial Business District on West Atlantic area, as mentioned previously during presentation by Assistant City Manager Oris). She further notes that members of the public expressed an interest in having the opportunity to provide input as the proposed regulations are developed.

Board Member Lakow inquires why the regulations governing the Entertainment District would differ for the West Atlantic area. Assistant City Manager Oris explains that the West Atlantic area is more heavily residential in nature.

The Agenda resumes as posted.

6. NEW BUSINESS

6A: Parking updates – Free Parking Wednesdays Review

Executive Director Simon informs the Board that the Free Parking Wednesdays initiative concluded on August 31st, noting that the DDA received positive feedback, but the public expressed disappointment that the program did not extend through September, the slowest commercial month. She adds that during the Delray Beach Business Owner's Roundtable between the City and the DDA, the public highlighted specific concerns regarding parking issues on NE 3rd Avenue and restrictive short-term parking limits.

Board Member Costilo refers to the introduction of metered parking in 2018, maintaining that the meters exist to resolve high-season parking shortages by promoting vehicle turnover rather than to serve as a revenue-generation tool. He argues that the current system operates primarily as a funding opportunity for the City, which ultimately impacts the downtown economic dynamic negatively during the slower months, and he asserts that parking should be free during this off-season.

Board Vice Chair Rosen agrees that the City needs to support the community during the slower months, and he emphasizes that the growing parking issues on NE 3rd Avenue present potential constraints for emergency vehicles. He suggests that the meters become dynamic to allow for different rates between the low and high seasons.

Following these statements, Board Members Rosen and Costilo suggest that the City provide a regular report to the DDA regarding local parking data.

01:54pm – Cole Devitt leaves the room.

Assistant City Manager Jeff Oris answers that he will reconvene with the municipal team to provide the requested information.

01:56pm – Cole Devitt returns to the room.

6B: FY2026/2027 DDA Proposed Budget for approval - L. Simon

- Resolution 05-2026 FY26-27 DDA Adopted Budget

Executive Director Simon reports that the City Commission officially approved the DDA millage rate during its most recent session. She outlines the strategic priorities for Fiscal Year 2026/2027, conducts a comprehensive review of the proposed expenditures, and provides an overview of the DDA's upcoming initiatives. Executive Director Simon then shifts the focus to the management of the Old School Square campus, detailing the operational priorities, anticipated revenues, and projected expenses for the upcoming fiscal period.

Board Vice Chair Rosen notes a significant decline in new development within the DDA's downtown district, pointing out that activity decreased from 94 million to 25 million relative to the previous year. He recommends allocating funds to mitigate issues surrounding vacant storefronts, suggesting the implementation of a window-covering program. In response, Director Simon clarifies that funding for such initiatives is already designated within the existing placemaking budget allocation.

Board Vice Chair Rosen further proposes that the DDA assist local businesses navigating code enforcement issues with the City of Delray Beach.

Board Member Costilo recommends that the DDA seek financial collaboration from both the Community Redevelopment Agency and the City of Delray Beach to co-fund the DDA's Safety Ambassador

program. He notes that reducing internal expenditures on this initiative allows the DDA to offset potential budgetary reductions elsewhere.

Board Chair Knight expresses his support for Member Costilo's proposal, emphasizing that the Safety Ambassador program provides vital benefits to the downtown area and advocating for an expansion of its geographic footprint.

Board Member Lakow agrees with the strategy of leveraging community partnerships, but he cautions that the DDA must remain focused on its primary aim to market the downtown district, asserting that budget allocations must prioritize initiatives aligned with the organization's core mission statement.

Motion by Cole Devitt, seconded by Bob Cantwell to approve the Fiscal Year 2026/27 proposed budget as presented.

Motion carries (6 - 0). All in favor (Jule Guaglardi not present).

DDA Counsel Morgan suggests that the Board proceed with action items on the agenda before initiating further general discussion and the Board concurs.

6D: DDA Monthly Financials - L. Simon

DDA executive Director Simon gives an overview of the DDA and Old School Square financial highlights for the month of July of 2026.

Motion by Alan Costilo, seconded by Cole Devitt to approve the July 2026 Financials as presented.

Motion carries (6 - 0). All in favor (Jule Guaglardi not present).

6C: DDA/OSS Program Updates for August and upcoming – DDA Team

Ms. Emily Oliveras provides an overview of the DDA's marketing activities and highlights for the month of August. She reviews the performance data for the "Feel Good Summer" campaign and provides brief updates on the Sounds of the SET and Delray's Hottest Party events. She also provides information regarding the "Restaurant Month" campaign scheduled for September.

Ms. Shelly Likosar presents highlights from the Visitor Information Center for the month of August and provides an update on the DDA/Old School Square volunteer management program.

Ms. Gatto presents the Cornell Art Museum's August report, highlighting museum attendance, donations, store and art sales, and various programs and initiatives, including art talks and workshops hosted by the Museum. She also provides an overview of upcoming Museum exhibitions and initiatives.

DDA Executive Director Simon concludes with an overview of the data and results associated with the "Party in Paradise: Tribute to Jimmy Buffett" event held in August.

7. COMMENTS

DDA Executive Director Simon informs the Board that the second public hearing for the City's budget is scheduled for October 22, at which time the budget is expected to be formally adopted. She also advises that the October DDA Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 13, due to the Columbus Day holiday.

Executive Director Simon reports that she and Board Member Cantwell recently attended the International Downtown Association conference in Toronto, which had approximately 1,300 attendees representing downtown organizations from around the world. She notes that the conference provides an opportunity to exchange information and experiences regarding common challenges facing downtown

organizations. She advises that the next regional conference is scheduled for May in Columbia, South Carolina, and states that information regarding the conference and related newsletters will be provided to Board members.

Board Member Cantwell commends Laura for her presentation to the City Commission regarding the DDA budget and notes that the presentation received unanimous approval. He also shares his experience attending the International Downtown Association conference and reports that many downtown organizations are experiencing budget constraints and are focused on maximizing their resources to attract visitors and support local businesses. He notes that the conference emphasized the importance of identifying and utilizing underused downtown assets. He identifies Veterans Park as a significant underutilized asset in Downtown Delray Beach and expresses support for exploring grants and other funding opportunities to improve and activate the park. He states that improvements to Veterans Park could help connect the areas east and west of the Intracoastal Waterway. He also identifies the Crest Theatre as another potential asset that could contribute to downtown activity. Board Member Cantwell expresses appreciation for the opportunity to attend the conference.

Board Vice Chair Rosen shares his experience attending a previous International Downtown Association conference in Chicago and notes that downtown organizations of various sizes face many similar challenges. He encourages Board members who have not attended the conference to consider participating in the future. Board Vice Chair Rosen also raises the issue of code enforcement and encourages continued coordination between the DDA and the City's Code Enforcement Department. He notes improvements in the City's current code enforcement efforts, including increased communication, education, and outreach to businesses and property owners. He suggests that the DDA work collaboratively with Code Enforcement and utilize its block captain program to assist businesses and property owners within the downtown district in addressing compliance issues.

Board Member Lakow expresses appreciation to the DDA staff for their continued efforts and support of the Board and the community.

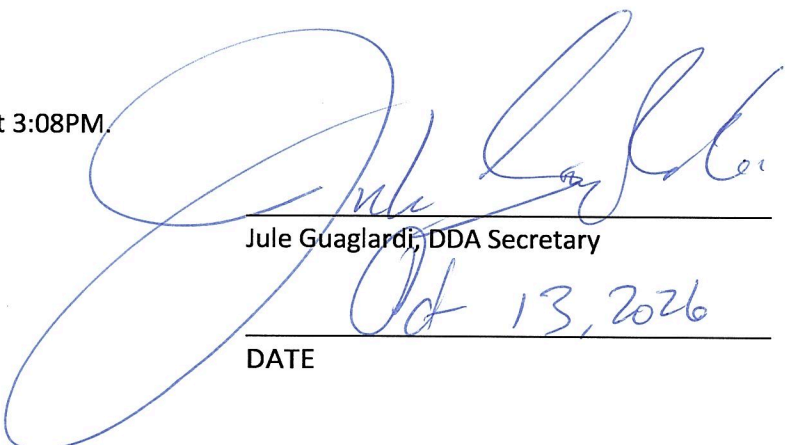
Board Member Costilo expresses support for the discussion regarding Veterans Park and notes the park's significant location and potential value as a downtown asset. He encourages the exploration of funding opportunities to improve and activate the park. Board Member Costilo also commends the recent "Party in Paradise" tribute event and emphasizes the importance of Board members actively participating in DDA events and City Commission meetings. He encourages Board members to provide greater support to DDA staff and attend meetings where matters affecting the DDA are presented to the City Commission.

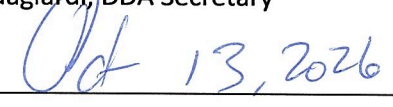
Board Chair Knight acknowledges the importance of Board participation and support of the DDA. He commends the DDA staff for their continued efforts and expresses appreciation to City staff, specifically Assistant City Manager Jeff, for attending DDA Board meetings and providing updates to the Board.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting is adjourned at 3:08PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Liliana Fino


Jule Guaglardi, DDA Secretary


DATE