



MINUTES OF THE DOWNTOWN MEMPHIS COMMISSION

Friday, April 23, 2021

9:00 A.M.

114 North Main Street

Due to the declarations of a State of Emergency by the President of the United States, the Governor of Tennessee, and the Mayor of Memphis relating to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Downtown Memphis Commission (DMC) has determined that it is necessary that the meeting be conducted by electronic or other means of communication in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public, DMC staff, and DMC board members. This meeting of the DMC was held via Zoom virtual meeting. Board members participated by phone with all materials made available to them as well as the public in advance. Procedures were in place to identify all participants on the call including members of the public and allow for questions and public comment.

Board Members Present: Benjamin Orgel (Chairman), John Zeanah (for Mayor Harris), Joann Massey (for Mayor Strickland), Victoria Young, Deni Reilly, Demar Roberts (Vice Chair), Williams Brack (Treasurer), Julie Ellis, Cheryl Pesce, Elizabeth Low (Secretary), Councilwoman Cheyenne Johnson, and Senator Raumesh Akbari

Board Members Not Present: Representative Barbara Cooper and Commissioner Mickell Lowery

Staff Present: Paul Young, Christine Taylor, Brett Roler, Penelope Springer, Penelope Huston, Jaske Goff, Abram Lueders, Katie Flynn, Kaeyla Willis, Lauren Bermudez, Eleslie Walker, and Debra Streeter

Guests: James Stokes, Janice Banks, Corinne Kennedy, Corbin Carpenter, and Member of Public

Benjamin Orgel determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM. Christine Taylor called roll for board members and staff to confirm quorum. After reviewing meeting protocols, Chairman Orgel called for approval of the minutes from March 26, 2021 meeting. Cheryl Pesce motioned to approve the minutes as presented, Demar Roberts seconded the motion, after roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Orgel called for agenda item III: Chair's Report

Chairman Orgel congratulated and welcomed Paul Young as the new incoming DMC President and reviewed a few highlights from the monthly board updates from the Design Review Board and Center City Development Corporation. Chairman Orgel also thanked Brett Roler for his work with the DRB applicant on the 7 Vance project that was approved at a special held DRB meeting and the DMC staff for the presentation at a City and County joint meeting regarding PILOTs, especially Penelope Huston for putting the presentation together, which was excellent.

Chairman Orgel called for agenda item IV: Financial Update

Penelope Springer presented monthly financial report, reviewed financial highlights, and answered questions.

Chairman Orgel called for agenda item V: 4th Quarter Diversity Report

Penelope Springer and Jaske Goff presented the 4th Quarter Diversity Report and answered questions from board members. Joann Massey wanted to know if DMC have plans to fill the position of the EBO Specialist. Penelope Springer explained the plans to fill the position and had a brief discussion of the EBO specialist role. Paul Young commented that filling the role will be a priority, whether through existing staff or filling the position, we will make sure that this function is well covered. Jaske Goff reviewed 4th quarter Diversity highlights and answered questions. Joann Massey requested a breakdown of race and gender on project reports. Staff agreed to include the requested breakdown.

Chairman Orgel called for agenda item VI: President's Report

Paul Young presented the Presidents report, updating board on the past joint City and County meeting regarding PILOT's, Downtown events, DMC staff will return to the office on May 3rd, new program for retail strategy, upcoming budget season and the purchase of 100 North Main.

Chairman Orgel called for agenda item VII: New Business/ Adjournment

Chairman Orgel made brief closing remarks, seeing no other business, the meeting was adjourned.