



MINUTES OF THE DOWNTOWN MEMPHIS COMMISSION

**Thursday, June 27, 2024, 9 AM
114 North Main Street**

Board Members Present: Benjamin Orgel (Chair), Williams Brack (Treasurer), Ray Brown, Janice Banks, Lauren Stimac, Surayyah Hasan, Victoria Young, Commissioner Mickell Lowery, Ashley Cash (for Mayor Strickland), John Zeanah (for Mayor Harris), and Senator Raumesh Akbari

Board Members Not Present: Elizabeth Low (Secretary), Councilman JB Smiley, Willie Brooks, Jr. and Ed Stephens III

Staff Present: Chandell Ryan, Penelope Springer, Sara Barrera, Milton Howery, Tori Haliburton, Lawrence Green, Brett Roler, Sam Caldwell, Halle Novarese and Brian Mykulyn.

Guests: Member of Public

Chairman Benjamin Orgel called the meeting to order at 9:06 AM. Brian Mykulyn called roll for board members present to confirm quorum. After quorum was confirmed, Chairman Orgel called for approval of the May 24, 2024 minutes. Williams Brack motioned to approve the minutes as presented, Ray Brown seconded the motion, after roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

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

Chairman Orgel provided a brief explanation of the nominating committee before moving to the next agenda item.

Chairman Benjamin Orgel called for agenda item IV: Appointment of Nominating Committee

Chairman Orgel suggested Williams Brack, Victoria Young and Elizabeth Low be appointed as members of the nominating committee. Janice Banks asked for clarification about what the board was voting for regarding the nominating committee. Chairman Orgel provided additional information on the nominating committee's roles and responsibilities. There were no further questions. Ashley Cash motioned to approve Williams Brack, Victoria Young and Elizabeth Low as members of the Nominating Committee, Janice Banks seconded, after roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Benjamin Orgel called for agenda item V: Financial Update

Penelope Springer gave a report on the financials for the Downtown Memphis Commission and its related boards, including recently closed Center City Development Corporation incentives and Downtown Mobility Authority owned garages. Ray Brown commended Penelope Springer for doing a great job stewarding and presenting the financials. Penelope Springer praised Sam Caldwell for assisting with the financials.

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

Chandell Ryan called on Milton Howery to give an update on upcoming DMC events. Milton Howery presented Alley Dayz, a new pop-up event planned for July 10 at Barboro Alley. The event will feature a live DJ, local vendors and a historian-led presentation on the alleyway's history. Milton Howery also spoke about the 901 Grind Art & Architecture Camp, a weeklong program that teaches youth about the basics of architecture using new technologies like artificial intelligence. Janice Banks asked about future activation events, and Milton shared that Alley Dayz would likely become a recurring event in different neighborhoods across Downtown, with a second event being planned for the Pinch District neighborhood. Janice Banks commended the inclusion of artificial intelligence in the 901 Grind Art & Architecture Camp and asked Milton for information about outreach efforts. Milton spoke about the legacy of the DMC's involvement in architecture camps, and the eagerness of parents to sign their children up for the camp.

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

Ray Brown spoke of hearing construction noises from 100 N Main and congratulated Benjamin Orgel and Brett Roler for their efforts in bringing the longstanding vacant building back to life.

Seeing no other business, the meeting was adjourned.