



MINUTES OF THE DOWNTOWN MEMPHIS COMMISSION

Thursday, December 17, 2020

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: Deni Reilly, John Zeanah (for Mayor Harris), Joann Massey (for Mayor Strickland), Benjamin Orgel, Mauricio Calvo, Cheyenne Johnson, Commissioner Mickell Lowery, Demar Roberts Williams Brack, Julie Ellis, Cheryl Pesce, and Elizabeth Low

Board Members Not Present: John Pontius, Representative Barbara Cooper, Terry Woodard, and Senator Raumesh Akbari

Staff Present: Jennifer Oswald, Christine Taylor, Brett Roler, Penelope Springer, Penelope Huston, Erik Stevenson, Katie Flynn, Abram Lueders, Kaeyla Willis, Jonathan Mosley and Debra Streeter

Guests: James McLaren (Counsel), Doug Carpenter, Christopher Hearn, Micaela Watts, James Stokes, Jayme Stokes, and Member of Public

Deni Reilly determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM. Christine Taylor called roll for board members and staff. After reviewing meeting protocols, Chairman Reilly called for approval of the minutes from November 19, 2020 meeting. Benjamin Orgel motioned to approve the minutes as presented, Cheryl Pesce seconded the motion, after roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

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

Chairman Reilly reviewed board updates for all board activity from DMC sister boards. Chairman Reilly, Penelope Springer and Penelope Huston, on behalf of the DMC board thanked Jennifer Oswald for her leadership and presented her a gift from our Open on Main business, Mary Ann Kelly. This will be Jennifer's last DMC meeting and she will be greatly missed.

Chairman Reilly called for agenda item IV: Financial Update

Penelope Springer presented monthly financial report and reviewed FY20 highlights from sister boards. Penelope Springer answered questions from board. Joann Massey would like to add a PILOT report to the financial report. (NOTE: A correction will be made on financial report and also updated on website.)

Chairman Reilly called for agenda item V: Audit Report

Chairman Reilly introduced Chris Hearn to present the DMC FY20 Audit report. Joann Massey made a brief comment to commend the staff on a stellar audit report. Joann Massey made a motion to accept the Audit Report as presented, Cheyenne Johnson seconded the motion, after roll call, the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Reilly called for agenda item VI: President Search Update

Chairman Reilly updated board on the current search for the next DMC President. The job announcement has been posted to the DMC website and the RFQ for a search firm will be posted soon. Questions and comments were made from board members Joann Massey, John Zenah, Julie Ellis and Cheryl Pesce concerning the search committee members, the search deadline and also encourage board to use a local search firm. Chairman Reilly and board counsel James McLaren addressed questions and comments. After a lengthy board discussion, Julie Ellis motioned that the board set a 45-day goal (February 25th) for search for DMC President and seek a local search firm and a possible local candidate, Joann Massey second the motion, after roll call, the motion passed. The board has also requested to be more involved and receive regular updates of the search progress.

Chairman Reilly called for agenda item VII: President's Report

Jennifer Oswalt urged board members to review the State of Downtown and also share the document. Also made a brief update on the Downtown parking projects.

Chairman Reilly called for agenda item VIII: New Business/ Adjournment

Chairman Reilly made brief closing remarks and meeting was adjourned.