



**Downtown Fort Worth, Inc.
Fort Worth Public Improvement District #1
Advisory Board Meeting
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2022
MINUTES**

The Advisory Board for the Fort Worth Public Improvement District #1 met on Wednesday, October 19, 2022 in the Conference Room at Downtown Fort Worth, Inc., located at 777 Taylor Street, Suite 100, Fort Worth, Texas 76102.

Advisory Board Members in Attendance: Larry Auth (via proxy); Laura Bird, Johnny Campbell, Gary Cumbie, Carlos De La Torre, Drew Hayden, Marie Holliday, Ashlee Johnson, Ed Kraus, Walter Littlejohn, Michelle Lynn, Renee Massey, Mark Michalski, Don Perfect (via proxy); and Jed Wagenknecht.

Board Members unable to attend: Shantella Dahl, Amber Finley, Whit Kelly, Carissa Taylor, and Courtney Towson.

DFWI Staff present: Matt Beard, Brandi Ervin, KayLee Pratt, Melissa Konur, Shane Smith, Andy Taft and Barbara Sprabary.

City Staff: Vicky Moss, PID Administrator.

CALL TO ORDER – Jed Wagenknecht presided over today’s meeting. With a quorum being present, Mr. Wagenknecht called the PID #1 Advisory Committee meeting to order.

CONSIDERATION OF THE JULY 27, 2022 MINUTES – Mr. Wagenknecht called the Advisory Committee’s attention to the July 27, 2022 minutes. The minutes were emailed prior to today’s meeting.

UPON A MOTION BY Drew Hayden and duly seconded, the PID #1 Advisory Committee unanimously approved the July 27, 2022 meeting minutes.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 4th QUARTER OF FY 2021-2022

- **PID Property Assessments** – There is a variance of almost \$40K. This is due to a timing issue of when the PID generated revenue, \$145, 581, was sent back to the city on September 30.
- **PID Banner Revenue** – Banner revenue came in under budget by a little over \$8K. (Budgeted \$63K; revenue was \$55K.) Mr. Wagenknecht asked about auctioning old banners to raise additional revenue. Many of the banners are not in great condition, but Mr. Taft said that staff can take a look at them.
- **Expenses** – Operations ended at 98% of the budget.
- **Transportation and Planning** ended the year at 96%.
- **Marketing** was at 88% of the budget, due to personnel changes and we saved money with graphic design.
- **Research** was at 78%. This was due to a personnel change and not printing the State of Downtown report.
- **Administration** ended the year at 100% of the budgeted amount.
- **Overall total expenses** ended at 96%.

Ms. Ervin said that the above numbers are not yet audited. The audit will begin on Monday.

UPON A MOTION BY Drew Hayden and duly seconded by Marie Holliday, the PID #1 Advisory Committee unanimously approved the 4th Quarter FY 2021-2022 financial report as presented.

PID #1 REPORT

Maintenance, Landscaping & Ambassador Program Update – The public hearings for tax assessments were held in September. There were no objections for PID 1 or PID 14 and the budgets were approved unanimously by City Council. The new fiscal year started on October 1. Beard thanked everyone for their support leading up to the public hearings. Mr. Beard also mentioned that the PD's H.O.P.E. Unit budget more than doubled from 2022 to 2023. They will increase their force from 6 people to 12.

Landscaping – Mr. Beard stated that we have entered into the contract drafting with the City and will be looking at how the City handles the street trees. The Fort Worth code states: *"All trees, plants, and shrubs growing between the sidewalk and the curb are the property of the City and shall be under the control of the Department of Parks & Recreation."* (Everything from the sidewalk to the building is the responsibility of the adjacent building owner.) The Committee suggested it would be helpful to reiterate to the membership what the ordinance states, so that the owners know that they are responsible for maintaining and repairing everything from the sidewalk to the building.

There are over 1,000 street trees in downtown managed by the Parks department. Contractually, the PID is obligated to maintain 160 of those trees in the core along Main, Houston, and Throckmorton Streets. The City will review how the maintenance is handled in the years to come. The PID manages the trimming of all the trees. There are 1,400 within the district that we manage for clearance and site line issues. At the City's request, we updated our tree inventory from 2017.

- **2017** – There were 1,262 trees, with 44 missing trees (damaged by a vehicle or disease).
- **2022** – There are 1,489 designated street trees, with 79 missing trees.

Since 2017, for every tree missing, we have added 6.5 trees. The Frost Tower project installed 12 new trees and as other new developments come in, code requires that they plant new trees. Mr. Taft said that we need a definitive answer as to who is officially responsible for the missing trees. It would be a significant expansion of duties and budgets if we are responsible for them. If the City would look to us to do that, then we would look to the City for funding. Mr. Beard stated that if we use the trees from the tree farm, there is no cost. However, the average cost for a more mature tree is approximately \$2K.

Next week, Charlie's team will be installing pansies, dusty miller, and kale in the PID flower beds (11K square feet).

Update on Negotiations between the City, DFWI and Sundance - Over the summer, the City asked that DFWI formalize the informal agreement with Sundance. We sent Sundance a proposed agreement requesting them to reinstall lighting, remove the wax ligustrums that are harmful to the trees, and future plantings would be coordinated with DFWI. Sundance returned a heavily revised, redlined copy and removed some of the items we requested. We are now waiting for the City's legal department to weigh in. (The plantings that will be taking place next week will be in the planter beds that are not adjacent to Sundance property.)

Ambassador Program Update – The Ambassadors handed out water during the month of August. The team was consistent with motorist and hospitality assists from October 2021-September 2022. The big bumps occurred in April due to the MAIN ST. Fort Worth Arts Festival and in December when NFR was in Fort Worth. Hospitality assists are trending upwards coming out of COVID. The Ambassadors are doing a great job helping people.

Homelessness – We are seeing new faces in downtown that were not in our top 10. In March, the H.O.P.E. Unit began shutting down homeless camps outside the district which caused some of the population to migrate

downtown. There is a longer term strategy that is now being employed using COVID funds to purchase hotels and affordable apartments for permanent supportive housing, with a big emphasis on families with children. We tend to see more faces in the spring time than in the summer and winter. The hot spots are the parks, Water Gardens, CVS, 7-11, and the Library. Mr. Beard said the stats of the Ambassadors engaging more does not mean there is an increased homeless population.

The PID and/or DFWI will host a session that will bring in the H.O.P.E. Unit leadership and service providers to inform them on how to handle theft of service, e.g. "dine and dash". Mr. Beard will send a resource list to everyone and a calendar invite to host a homelessness session. If you are interested in learning more about the Ambassadors services, contact Mr. Beard at Matt@dfwi.org.

Work Plan Committee – If you are interested in being on the Work Plan Committee or have any ideas or items that you would like staff to look at, please contact Matt@dfwi.org. Mr. Beard suggested the committee do three walks. He proposed walks around the future city hall area, Commerce Street, the gateways in and out of downtown, and a night walk to get a sense of safety and lighting. Mr. Campbell suggested doing a walk at night time as more people will be visiting downtown during that time and a day time walk in the spring. Mr. Wagenknecht added that if anyone sees items that need to be repaired (infrastructure, graffiti) to report it on the **myfw app**.

MARKETING – KayLee Pratt talked about events held in Burnett Park:

- Weekly yoga in the Park through October;
- Lunchtime music series at noon every Wednesday also through October;
- We hosted free Salsa dance lessons in September on Thursday nights;
- Movie Nights included: *Grease* on September 16; *Encanto* on October 7; *Elf* will be airing on December 2.

Social Media – Ms. Pratt reported that we are revamping and reworking the way we are approaching social media. The highest performing posts are reels and videos on Instagram and Facebook. Burnett Park's Instagram following is smaller compared to DFWI's. While it has a less reach, it is growing. Burnett Park's Instagram is more informational about programming and scheduling, but does not have a lot of engagement. This information is also shared on DFWI's page. We are getting the same viewership. Impressions and engagements are growing and Facebook is thriving. Ms. Pratt said that we are trying to engage people on Twitter, but isn't sure about what information people want to see on Twitter.

Mr. Taft said that the Burnett Foundation granted DFWI \$4.5M for the perpetual maintenance of Burnett Park. This gives DFWI the opportunity for Burnett Park to play a bigger role in the community.

TRANSPORTATION AND PLANNING UPDATE

Strategic Action Plan, Plan 2033 – We are in the final stages of the Strategic Action Plan, Plan 2033. We had additional outreach over the course of the summer with a movie night, and an outreach with the young professionals. Mr. Taft also presented to the Black and Hispanic Chambers. In September, we looked at the draft recommendations and met with the Steering and sub-committees to hear the summary of the findings. Staff will review the draft report over the next few months. Once it is cleaned up, we will get additional input from the public and then present the plan to the city.

Heritage Park – The schematic design for Heritage Park was presented to City Council on October 4. Mr. Taft presented to the Arts Council on Monday. Ms. Konur showed images of what we hope to achieve with a true promenade to the bluff, safe access, a canopy walk, and river stairs. The schematic design and budget have been approved. Once we get to 30% design, we can present to TXDOT, the historic commission, and the Army Corps.

Staff met with Randy Gideon and Louise Appleman to look at what the private funding campaign looks like. Mr. Taft added that this will be a \$10M lift: \$5M endowment for maintenance, matched by the city; and another \$5M to bridge the gap and what we are going to need for the construction.

General Worth Square – There is quite a bit of conversation about activating General Worth Square on the east side, just behind the JFK Tribute. This space is across from Deco 969. They are interested in partnering with DFWI and the Parks department to make this happen. Ms. Konur added that the owner of the space (that used to be the Old Brass Tap) would like to put in a coffee shop that would open up to the park. We are coordinating with both owners for these two projects.

City Hall Annex – The most dynamic project is the new City Hall annex. They are looking at how to use the green space. This project is full steam ahead and has made it through the Design Review process.

RESEARCH – Shane Smith informed the Committee that the digital version of the State of Downtown is available online. If you have any questions or concerns, contact him at Shane@dfwi.org. The report will be updated and available in print at the State of Downtown breakfast in February.

Mr. Smith showed a grid zone outline in PID 1 with spaces that are planned development, existing development, and non-developable, and underutilized space. There currently exists in PID 1, 15.5M sf of usable space and 4.4M sf usable, surface space that is underutilized. The underutilized spaces include open parking lots and buildings not being used or lightly used. Johnny Campbell commented that it is great to see what is still available in the central business district and suggested that this needs to be pointed out – what is left to be done in the CBD – before opening up high density in Panther Island. Mr. Taft said that while there is a degree of subjectivity, it is important to understand, as the Panther Island conversation moves forward, that downtown has 33% of surface re-developable land available in downtown (28% of that is within the boundaries of PID 1).

- **Apartments** – There is a strong uptrend for apartment space since COVID. The vacancy rate is at 10% but that is because of new additions being added. The absorption rate is very strong. Multi-family developments is very strong.
- **Office Space** - \$28 per sf. Sub-lease space is less expensive for Class A and B office space. There are assumptions that the office space is being redefined with a huge migration to Class A or Class AA and converting to more mixed use.
- **Hospitality** – Post COVID, room rates have gone up. The revenue per available room shows luxury hotel rooms earning a higher revenue. The occupancy rate for luxury hotel rooms is at 60%.

OTHER MATTERS – Drew Hayden talked about the new outdoor rooftop cinema that sits on top of The Worthington Hotel. The cinema opens on November 1. It is one of seven in the country and features: 185 seats (adirondak chairs with cushions), blue tooth headphones, a beer garden, and a full bar and menu. Bring your own blankets. This attraction is an exciting opportunity to bring people downtown. The marquee entrance is on Throckmorton.

Mr. Hayden said the Worthington Hotel will be hosting a Dia De Las Muertos brunch on Saturday. World renowned chef Richard Sandoval will be there along with Natalie Cruz.

REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS – There were no requests for future agenda items.

PRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC – There were no presentations by the public.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING – With no further business to come before the PID #1 Advisory Committee, the PID #1 meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Larry Auth, PID #1 Chairman