

MINUTES
LDDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
DOWNTOWN CRA ADVISORY BOARD
City Commission Conference Room
September 10, 2009
8:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Janet Tucker, Ford Heacock, Jerry Herring, Patricia Hendler, David Hallock, Joe Mawhinney, Anne Furr, Becky Abel, Tamara Sakagawa, Bruce Kistler, Teresa Maio, Julie Townsend, LeRoy Bradley, Jim Malless, Chuck Welch, Solomon Wassef

ABSENT:

CALL TO ORDER: Janet Tucker, Chairman, called the meeting to order.

MINUTES: Jerry Herring moved to accept the Minutes of the August 6, 2009 regular LDDA Board of Directors / CRA Advisory Board meeting. Motion seconded by Jim Verplanck. Motion passed 6-0.

Patricia Hendler arrived.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer Joe Mawhinney reported that there were no unusual items to point out. Net ordinary income for July is a negative number because LDDA income is concentrated to a few months while expenses are spread more evenly over a year. Income for July was \$716.76 and year-to-date income was \$571,646.60. Expenses for July were \$31,448.77 and year-to-date expenses were \$543,322.29. The Treasurer's Report will be filed for audit.

REQUEST FOR LDDA SPONSORSHIP: Daniel Ballard was present to tell the Board about "The Rocky Horror Experience", an event / fundraiser planned for the Polk Theatre. The Rocky Horror Picture Show has been shown for several years around Halloween and this is the fifth year the event will be used as a fundraiser for both Florida Dance Theatre and the Polk Theatre. Mr. Ballard is a graduate of Harrison School of the Arts and is the producer and director of this event which will include vignettes by dancers and singers along with the movie. The event intends to draw a larger audience than ever before from Tampa, Orlando and surrounding areas, aiming for up to 800 tickets for each of the two evening performances. The pre-show event will begin at 8 p.m. with the movie being shown at midnight. **Patricia Hendler moved and Jerry Herring seconded the motion that LDDA buy an ad in the event program, preferably on the back cover, not to exceed \$500. The dollars would come from 8920.14-Advertising. Motion passed 7-0.**

DOWNTOWN HOOKAH: Chairman Janet Tucker turned the gavel over to Ford Heacock, Vice-Chairman, to chair this part of the meeting, stating that she had a conflict of interest. Solomon Wassef presented his concept for a hookah establishment at 122 S. Kentucky Avenue (the former Idin Oriental Rugs location). He presented a similar concept three years ago, and it was approved by the LDDA and Planning and Zoning, but the plan was withdrawn before it was approved by the City Commission. He proposes that the establishment will be a quiet place where people can have a glass of wine and relax; there will be no loud music or voices and will be a home-style atmosphere. He plans to be open Mondays through Fridays from 12-12 and Friday and Saturday from noon to 3 a.m. He does not plan to serve hard liquor and he will not be cooking on site, but he may have pre-made desserts brought in. He will be closed on Sundays. Bruce Kistler stated that as far as zoning is concerned, it would be treated as a bar, requiring conditional use status. LDDA approval is one of the considerations that are reviewed for approval. Solomon explained that the reason he withdrew the proposal three years ago is that there was resistance from Downtown merchants who at the time did not know him, and he felt that the restaurant concept that he went forward with (Fresh Choice Plus, which was closed after a fire)

would be more accepted. There are no other hookah establishments in Polk County. Most Board members thought LDDA should not stand in the way of new businesses and that Solomon was an active, well-liked Downtown citizen in his former establishment. **Patricia Hendler moved that the LDDA support the concept of the hookah establishment, directing Anne to write a letter of recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Board. Motion seconded by Joe Mawhinney. Motion passed 6-0.** Janet Tucker abstained from voting, stating a conflict of interest.

Joe Mawhinney left the meeting.

DOWNTOWN CRA ADVISORY BOARD: Tamara Sakagawa reported that Julie Townsend had asked her if she would present the updated Downtown plan at the DLP luncheon on October 7, 2009. This will be a great opportunity to get the information out to an audience specifically focused on Downtown to introduce and help them to understand the sub-districts and other ideas in the updated plan. Tamara thought that a brochure should be developed that would be given as a handout and would like to have 2500 brochures printed. The brochures could be used not only at the luncheon, but also as a marketing piece in communications with potential developers and businesses interested in Downtown. Tamara said City Commission would have the update plan and brochure on their agenda for approval on October 5, 2009. Tamara was asked to present it to the LDDA on October 1st. **Jerry Herring moved and David Hallock seconded the motion to fund, with CRA dollars, up to \$1,500 for the printing of the Downtown Plan brochures. Motion passed 6-0.**

Federal Building – Tamara reported that two proposals were received in response to an RFP for the redevelopment of the Federal Building – one from Arabella’s restaurant and the other from MidFlorida Credit Union. A committee has been appointed to review the proposals.

COMMITTEES:

Brand Campaign Committee: Fifteen proposals were received in response to the RFP for the campaign. The Committee will meet on Monday, September 14, 2009 to review the responses. The deadline was 2:00 p.m. on August 31, 2009. Two proposals arrived after 2 p.m. Anne asked the Purchasing Department of the City for advice about whether to accept the two that were late and they recommended that LDDA stick to its deadline. **Following discussion, Ford Heacock moved and David Hallock seconded the motion to adhere to the stated deadline, rejecting the two proposals that arrived after 2 p.m. Motion passed 6-0.**

Design Review Committee:

Design Review Approvals Since August 6, 2009:

225 East Lemon Street, Peterson & Myers, PA wall sign – This sign was approved.

301 S. Florida Avenue, Cleghorn Building – Jim Verplanck stated that the building (on the corner of Orange Street and South Florida Avenue) owner has done a nice job with the repair of the overhangs and the painting, making the architectural details stand out.

DLP REPORT: Julie Townsend, DLP Executive Director, reported that the annual DLP luncheon and auction will be held Wednesday, October 7, 2009. Invitations are in the process of being delivered. The next First Friday theme will be an art walk event. Florida Dance Theatre is working on a production of “Thriller” and there will be a Michael Jackson impersonator. She reported that there will be a new restaurant at the former Quiznos location. SugaRush has completed their move across the street. Chop Shop is expanding to provide more of a separation between the bar area and the general food service area. Pansler Law Firm has volunteered to sponsor the Holiday Walkabout again. Upcoming events include “Terror on Pine Street”, Garden Extravaganza, walking tours, the Lake Mirror Classic Auto Festival and more. Ford shared that auto show participants will get coupons to participating Downtown restaurants to use for their lunches on Saturday. It is felt that would be a benefit to all of the Downtown retailers because it would be an encouragement for participants to shop in the stores they see while getting their lunches.

CITY COMMISSION REPORT: Jim Verplanck said that the Commission, acting as the CRA, approved the TIF agreement for the incubator subsidy at \$4,500 per quarter. The Commission adopted a resolution supporting high speed rail. There will be a public informational meeting concerning the high speed rail initiative on Wednesday, September 16th from 4 – 7 p.m. at the Lakeland Center. The City's FY 2010 budget has the General Fund down about 2% with no pay increases for employees. By attrition, 82 positions have been eliminated. The millage rate set at 3.6538 is .257 higher than the current rate. He said that the City's budget preparation process evaluated 480 core services and ranked them. No one spoke to oppose the rate. The second hearing is scheduled for September 21, 2009 at 6:00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: No report.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Chop Shop Expansion – The electrical plan is going through permitting. The owners are expanding the kitchen and making the restaurant area more family-friendly. They want to obtain a COP4 restaurant liquor license, which would allow a full bar. They do not have to go through Planning and Zoning because the establishment is a restaurant. LDDA would need to approve the COP4 application so the owners may move forward. The owners also plan to have six tables and 24 chairs installed out on the sidewalk. **Patricia Hendler moved and Jerry Herring seconded the motion to approve the application for a COP4 restaurant liquor license. Motion passed 6-0.**

Wayfinding – Anne shared that Kiku Obata & Company has FedExed the changes for the wayfinding sign system that should be delivered today. This will be included in the wayfinding RFP.

Branding - An interested LDDA follower faxed her artwork that included the new Downtown brand with a swan. The artwork was shared with the Board.

301 S. Florida Avenue – It was suggested that this building be used as a pilot project for a sign grant for permanent signage that could be easily changed out as tenants change. **Patricia moved and Jerry Herring seconded the motion to use the sign grant modeled after the program used in the Dixieland CRA. Dollars would come from line item 8920.16-Projects. Motion passed 6-0.** Jim Malless offered to work with Anne on this project. Details for moving forward on the pilot project will be discussed at the next LDDA meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: Janet Tucker requested that Anne investigate the cost to have street signs created with the new Downtown brand on them. A meeting will be scheduled with Don Nix to discuss options using both the color and the black and white images on street signs.

The meeting adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

The next regular LDDA Board of Directors meeting is Thursday, September 17, 2009 at 8:00 a.m. in the City Commission Conference Room.


Janet H. Tucker, Chairman

9-17-09
Date


Becky Abel, Administrative Assistant

9-17-09
Date