

MINUTES
LDDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
City Commission Conference Room
Thursday, August 5, 2004
8:00 AM

PRESENT: Kevin Jones, Jim Verplanck, Chris McLaughlin, Jerry Herring, Greg Mugg, Janet Tucker, Joe Mawhinney, Anne Furr, Becky Abel, Ford Heacock, Glenn Higgins

ABSENT:

MINUTES: Joe Mawhinney moved to accept the Minutes of the July 15, 2004 Regular Board Meeting. Motion seconded by Jim Verplanck. Motion passed 7-0.

LAKE MIRROR CLASSIC AUTO FESTIVAL UPDATE: Ford Heacock was present to inform the Board of plans for the 2004 Lake Mirror Classic Auto Festival to be held on October 15-17, 2004. The event is gaining a reputation nationally and attracting more and more participants and visitors. The estimated crowd in downtown is more than 25,000 people. The Hot Rod Rendezvous will again occur on Friday night in conjunction with the live music from the Music on the Promenade series. Cars will be around the promenade and the Magnolia Building has been rented for Classic Auto registered participants and sponsors. This year, cars will be parked not only in places where they have been placed in previous shows, but also up to the Pine Street area. There will also be more wooden boats in Lake Mirror. There is a planned activity on Sunday for the participants to join in a breakfast road tour to local attractions. This was planned to encourage people to stay an additional night in Lakeland. Mr. Heacock thanked the LDDA for its support of this event in the past and for support for the upcoming event. The LDDA has committed to the provision of security and port-a-johns.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance Committee – Proposed FY '05 Budget – The recommendation of the Finance Committee was to raise the base salary of the Executive Director to \$72,500. Anne Furr chose to leave the meeting during discussion of salaries so that free discussion could take place. The Committee reported that they had researched salaries of DDA Directors in the state in cities that are similar to Lakeland. After throwing out the two highest salaries in that survey, the average salary paid to Executive Directors is \$72,500. That would bring Anne's pay level in line with the average pay for similar positions in the state. Discussion followed. Concern was voiced that such an increase in the salary could cause the constituency to complain and create a negative feeling among the general public. In support of the increase, several members stated that Anne was doing a "better than average job, so should at least be paid the average wage". All agreed that Anne's performance was very satisfactory and that her presence in this position is a tremendous asset to the LDDA. There was an explanation of the 401(k) retirement benefit. LDDA pays 15% of salary to both Becky and Anne for retirement. If Social Security were paid, it would be 6.2%, so the retirement benefit is equal to 8.8%. Since the City of Lakeland does not pay into Social Security, the LDDA is an entity of the City and we do not pay Social Security either. The vacation benefit, sick days, life, health and disability insurance would remain the same for Anne. LDDA would continue to pay up to \$50 per month for Anne's cell phone.

The proposed salary increase for Becky Abel, Administrative Assistant, is \$14.02 per hour (20 hours per week), up from \$13.02 in 2004, plus the continuation of the 15% 401(k) retirement benefit.

The Board chose to vote on these two salary proposals separately. A roll call vote was taken for both: **Becky's salary to be raised to \$14.02 per hour with continuation of the 15% 401(k) benefit. The Finance Committee Recommendation passed 7-0.**

Anne's salary to be raised to \$72,500 with continuation of the 15% 401(k) benefit. The Finance Committee Recommendation passed 6-1.

Anne Furr returned to the meeting.

Remaining budgetary line items were discussed. Anne negotiated the audit fee for FY 2005 with Baylis & Company, which will be an increase of \$250, and the quarterly business services will increase by \$15 per quarter.

In Marketing, the budget reflects all requests. The events budget is proposed to include three additional hours of trolley service on First Friday evenings. Chris McLaughlin expressed concern that more marketing money should be committed to the DLP from LDDA, in light of the impending impact of Lakeside Village. Janet Tucker shared that decisions had not been made about the placement of the billboards promoting downtown. Commitment from the TDC is not firm for billboards at this time and there has been some discussion about placing the billboards on the Polk Parkway instead of I-4. Other marketing efforts would be best handled by the DLP.

The contracts line item budget is lower for FY '05. Anne stated that at this time, no money is budgeted for wayfinding. The money for the wayfinding project would be allocated at a later date when costs would be firm.

Anne reminded the Board that the LDDA Budget Hearings would be held at 5:01 p.m. on September 8 and September 21, 2004 in the City Commission Chambers.

FIRST FRIDAY TROLLEY SPONSORSHIP: Anne received a call from John Hutto of Smoothie King on Kentucky Avenue. John and others have worked diligently toward marketing the First Friday in downtown. He is requesting that the LDDA sponsor the trolley on the First Friday of each month from 6-9 p.m. It would cost the LDDA \$112.92 per month (August and September) for a total of \$225.84. Money is available in line item 8920.13 – Events Subsidy. The LDDA could consider adding this to the FY '05 budget for additional months. A donor sponsored the trolley for the First Friday in July. Ridership numbers were:

6-7 p.m. – 35 riders

7-8 p.m. – 66 riders

8-8:20 p.m. – 10 riders (scheduled to stop at 8, but riders kept getting on)

Jim Verplanck moved and Greg Mugg seconded the motion to commit \$225.84 for the August and September extended trolley runs on First Fridays in those months. Motion passed 7-0.

CITY COMMISSION REPORT: Jim Verplanck reported that due to budget accommodations within the City, the Lake Mirror Park project may have delayed funding. All projects currently underway will be completed (Peggy Brown Center and Barnett Family Park).

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Janet Tucker stated that she would be present for the LDDA's quarterly report to the City Commission at their meeting on August 16. She reminded the Board that August's First Friday would be tomorrow (August 5) from 6-9 p.m.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Wayfinding Design Consultant Report – The Review Committee ranked the three firms: 1 – Cloud Gehshan Associates out of Philadelphia, PA with Gannett Fleming out of Tampa, 2 – Guidance Pathway Systems, Inc., out of Indian Orchard, MA, and 3 – Coco Raynes Associates out of Boston, MA with Kittleson & Associates out of Orlando. Anne has been in contact with #1 to work out a contract and will bring it to the LDDA Board for approval.

Special Called Meeting Report – Five of our seven Board members were able to attend the special called meeting to determine the millage rate for FY '05. **The rate will be held at 1.9560 mills. Motion passed 5-0.**

315 W. Peachtree Street – Planning & Zoning approved the application for a conditional use to provide conforming zoning status for an existing 44-bed assisted living facility. It is scheduled for the City Commission meeting on August 16 for a second reading. Jim Verplanck stated that a conditional use goes with the owner. He sees no reason not to have the City Commission grant conforming zoning status for this business. He recommends no action at this time by the LDDA.

Janet stated that we should get on a faster track to expand to this area.

Lake Avenue Streetscape – Lake Avenue from Main Street to the last driveway into the Lake Mirror Center is being streetscaped. Since construction is continuing on the Peggy Brown Center and the Barnett Family Park, the remainder of Lake Avenue will be completed at the same time as the entrance to the park.

Smokeless Containers – Two samples are being discussed for use on the downtown garbage containers. One of the two samples was shown to the Board. Anne said that she would like the LDDA to consider at a future date its interest in providing the containers on Kentucky Avenue between Lemon Street and Main Street as a pilot project from the restricted account for streetscape.

DLP Silent Auction – A donor sheet for the auction was included in agenda packets. Please put Wednesday, October 6, 11:30 a.m. on your calendars for the luncheon and silent auction.

Properties in Expanded Area – Anne reported on negotiation progress with three properties in the expanded area. Jock Willers represents two properties, 411 N. Vermont, which is vacant, and 410 N. Vermont, which has a house and an apartment building on it. 411 N. Vermont is assessed at \$10,000 by the Property Appraiser's office. Mr. Willers indicated that he would like to close in 30 days. **Joe Mawhinney moved and Jim Verplanck seconded that we offer \$12,624 for that property, including a non-disclosure clause. Motion passed 6-0.**

410 N. Vermont has a current tenant in the house, and the owner has been using the apartment for temporary housing. The Board did not want to be a landlord. The house is assessed at \$56,990. **Kevin Jones moved and Joe Mawhinney seconded that LDDA offer an annual automatic renewable non-refundable option to purchase at \$68,388, by paying 5% of the purchase price to be deducted from the final settlement, with a nondisclosure clause. Notice should be given to the tenant to move within 60 days of closing. Motion passed 6-0.**

The third property, is the estate of Mary Clary (deceased), 306 N. Gilmore. The property is assessed at \$22,281. No action was taken.

RETAIL NEEDS FOR DOWNTOWN (Brainstorming): To be discussed at a later date.

NEW BUSINESS:

Bumper to Bumper – Anne reported that Bumper to Bumper added the “no parking” sign as requested, but one or two cars are parking to the west of the sign. The sign on the north wall was approved since the “no parking” sign was installed (see May 20, 2004 Minutes).

Purity Ice Building – The Historic Preservation Board has filed an application to nominate the Purity Ice Building as a Local Historic Landmark Designation within the City of Lakeland, Florida.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

The next LDDA Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, August 19, 2004 in the City Commission Conference Room, 3rd Floor, City Hall, at 8 a.m.