

**MINUTES**  
**LDDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**DOWNTOWN CRA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**  
**City Commission Conference Room**  
**Thursday, September 6, 2007**  
**8:00 AM**

**PRESENT:** Ford Heacock, Joe Mawhinney, Janet Tucker, Jerry Herring, Jim Verplanck, Chris McLaughlin, David Hallock, Becky Abel, LeRoy Bradley, Heather Huebner, Holly Parrish, Justin Wilson, Jason Willey, Eric Belvins, Tom Elliot, Glen Higgins

**ABSENT:** Anne Furr

**CALL TO ORDER:** Vice Chairman David Hallock called the meeting to order.

**MINUTES:** Janet Tucker moved approval of the Minutes of the August 16, 2007 regular LDDA Board of Directors Meeting. Motion seconded by Jim Verplanck. Motion passed 4-0.

Joe Mawhinney arrived.  
Chris McLaughlin arrived.  
Ford Heacock arrived.

**TROLLEY:** Danny Ours, Citrus Connection Director, stated that at the Public Hearing for LAMTD on September 17<sup>th</sup>, he will recommend formally that the Trolley be taken out of service, the last day on the road being September 22<sup>nd</sup>. The standard ridership benchmark for justifying the expense of any bus route is 10 people per hour. The Trolley never was able to attract very many riders. The vehicle has been on the road since 1999 and has been on at least four different routes in an effort to encourage people to ride. The federal government required that the vehicle be in service for ten years or 350,000 miles and if it is sold, the government must be reimbursed a prorated amount for the remaining months in that contract (about 15 months). A second option to selling the Trolley outright would be to find an entity comparable to the Citrus Connection elsewhere in the state who can assume the responsibility and fulfill the requirements of the Federal Government.

In response to a question, Danny stated that there was never a time since the beginning when ridership of the Trolley was any better than 2-4 per day on average. Jerry Herring, Trolley Committee Chairman, stated that for some time it had been obvious to him that the Trolley operation was not viable. He said that taking it out of service almost feels like a burden off the shoulders. It is a great idea that may work better when there is more residential density Downtown. The Board expressed appreciation to Danny and his staff for their efforts at trying lots of options to increase the ridership.

**COMMITTEES:**

**Design Review since August 16, 2007 Meeting:**

402 S. Kentucky Avenue, Fifth Third Bank, wall signs, approved.

**DOWNTOWN CRA ADVISORY BOARD BUSINESS:**

**Enterprise Zone Update** – Jason Willey, Economic Development Coordinator, presented an update on the Enterprise Zone. He clarified options for job tax credits, property tax credits, equipment incentives and more. He is considering sending out a 4” x 6” card to businesses in the zone (which includes most of the Downtown CRA area) so they will be aware of what is eligible. Jason has already targeted information to the commercial real estate community, speaking at one of their monthly meetings. It was suggested that he offer himself as a speaker for the Downtown Lakeland Partnership’s General Meetings.

**215 E MAIN STREET:** Tom Elliot and Eric Belvins were present to discuss the proposed sports bar that will be in the location of the former Lillian’s Music Store. The plan will go to the Planning & Zoning Board next

week. The property is larger than the original model, so Tom has planned to use the mezzanine area for private party functions – like holiday office parties, etc. Any food served for such events would be catered food as the bar does not plan to serve food. If approval is obtained from P & Z and approved by the Commission (the first and third Mondays in October), then the expected date to take possession of the property is November 15<sup>th</sup> and the anticipated opening would be in January 2008. They plan to spend “a couple hundred thousand dollars” to renovate the property. The Brenner family will still own the property, while it may eventually be sold to Mr. Elliot’s enterprise. (A prior approval for this bar in another location contained the requirement that Mr. Elliot own the property. He thinks that will no longer be an issue with this location.) The Board wished Mr. Elliot and his partner well with this venture.

#### **COMMITTEES (con’t)**

**Downtown Farmers Curb Market** – Janet Tucker, Chairman, stated that Anne and she met with Jim Luna to discuss the renewal of his contract. There is one change: the location reference was removed. His salary will remain at \$1,500 per month. **Janet Tucker moved approval of Jim Luna’s contract as Market Manager for FY 2008. Motion passed 7-0.**

**Retail Recruitment Committee Update** – David Hallock shared that at the public meeting, a lot was learned about trying to brand Downtown. The group was in agreement that Downtown should attempt to attract a “creative class” and young professionals. The proposed “center for the arts” was not embraced by the attendees. There was an impressively good turnout and committee members felt that it was a good start.

**DLP REPORT:** Holly Parrish, DLP President, stated that the CSX petition drive now has over 1,000 signatures. People may still access the petition and add their signature online at [www.downtownlakelandfl.com](http://www.downtownlakelandfl.com). The DLP’s budget passed and they are pleased to announce that they have obtained sponsorships for First Fridays (from Diversified Retirement Solutions) and for the Holiday Walkabout (Pansler Law Group). First Friday on September 7<sup>th</sup> will be a “Salute to Educators”. The new Downtown Brochure will be out in early October, in time for the Annual Auction and Luncheon on October 3. The speaker is a motivational speaker. The meal will be catered by Texas Cattle Company and hosted by First Presbyterian Church. Corporate tables for eight people are available. Invitations are being sent out this week. Award nomination forms for The Dudley Uphoff Award, the Partnership Award and the Golden Swan Awards were distributed. The deadline for nominations is Friday, September 14<sup>th</sup>. On September 19<sup>th</sup> a selection committee composed of former recipients of these awards will meet at 8 a.m., at Citrus and Chemical Bank.

**CITY COMMISSION REPORT:** There was no report.

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT:** Ford Heacock reminded Board Members of the Final Budget Hearing set for Tuesday, September 18, 2007. He stated also that he attended the City Commission meeting where Holly Parrish presented the DLP’s position on the CSX issue. He said that at that time he publicly offered LDDA’s support to their efforts.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None.

**Meeting was adjourned at 9:10 a.m.**

**The next LDDA Board Meeting will be Thursday, September 20, 2007 in the City Commission Conference Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, City Hall at 8:00 a.m.**