

Board Workshop of the
Downtown Development Authority of Fort Lauderdale
Friday, March 14, 2014 @ 8:30 a.m.
DDA Office, 305 South Andrews Avenue, Suite 301, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

BOARD PRESENT: John Ropes, Chair
Michael Weymouth, Vice Chair
Dennis F. O'Shea, Secretary
Tim Petrillo, Treasurer
Gregory Durden, Board Member
D. Fredrico Fazio, Board Member
William H. Bodenhamer, Jr., Board Member

OTHERS PRESENT:
John Milledge, Legal Counsel
Chris Wren, Executive Director
Marti Brown
Mark Mattern
John Bertino

The workshop began at 8:30 a.m. Chairman Ropes said he wanted to go over personnel changes and then projects/ideas. He said he wanted the Board to discuss what would happen if and when Mr. Wren decided to retire. Mr. Wren responded saying that he has no immediate plans to retire so the Board felt the discussion was premature.

Chairman Ropes then moved onto the organization itself and said Mr. Wren does not have a dominant person as his backup and asked the Board if there was consensus on replacing the previous position held by Elizabeth. The Board said they would like Mr. Wren to look at his budget and select someone and come back to the Board. He said it's important to have someone they can go to when he is absent or so he can utilize his skills where most favorable and use another person to do other things. **The Board had consensus on replacement of the vacant position as a second in command perhaps an Operations Manager. They also suggested they might want to go to the City in the future to discuss the St Pat's event and the Director and staff time involved.**

Chairman Ropes then brought up for discussion the DDA acquiring Riverwalk Trust with reference to the events. Mr. Petrillo expressed concern about something of this magnitude and the time involved. The Board discussed this issue.

Mr. O'Shea brought up the residential factor and Mr. Milledge discussed how this could be done with the DDA charter in place. He said the charter would need to be amended and a local bill done. If adopted it would need a referendum and that they could do part of all of the DDA area. Mr. Petrillo said he would like to know what the assumptions would be with bringing in residential areas. **Mr. Wren to look into including the residential component into the DDA District.** Mr. Milledge said there may be a penny tax for transportation on the ballot in November and perhaps the DDA could benefit from that. Mr. Wren said some of these studies have been done already and he may be able to run all these numbers internally and come back to the Board. He said this way they can see what makes the most sense.

The Board then discussed the next 5 years and felt branding was very important. Mr. Petrillo said the DDA should be on the logo for the Wave.

The Board also felt having an annual State of the Downtown event was important and making it more of a cocktail party that is fun is key. **Mr. Bodenhamer said he was so impressed with Charlotte's event that they should look at that and create a similar document every year that can be updated. He said he'd be happy to work on getting someone to Charlotte. Mr. Wren said he would organize a trip where Mr. Bodenhamer could join.** Mr. Wren said they could ask Debbie Wasserman Schultz and Secretary Fox to attend the State of the Downtown event. Mr. Bodenhamer suggested they consider looking at getting sponsorship for it.

Mr. Fazio asked if they can get a map of where the DDA district is now for the next meeting. Chairman Ropes said it's important that for each project a Board member take ownership and present to the Board.

Mr. Petrillo said the DDA logo should be on all good things including wraps, the pole program and fencing.

Chairman Ropes said the focus this year should be branding, the State of the Downtown event and the Security Ambassador Program as well as the continued Wave efforts and asked what other projects the Board wants. Mr. Petrillo said the pole wraps. Mr. Wren said after the Riverwalk Connection project is funded they will need to decide what other projects they would like to do with the remaining funds.

Mr. Milledge suggested they consider doing downtown monument signs welcoming people to the downtown area so everyone knows where the downtown is. Mr. Wren said Flagler Village is doing them and he will continue to look at it and that the City is looking at making it Citywide.

Mr. Bodenhamer said we should be referenced as the Downtown Development Authority not just DDA.

Consensus was given that the project of the year is the Security Ambassador Program and that it should get up and running as soon as possible as long as they do it right. Mr. Petrillo said this is a pilot project with a six month window so they can define boundaries and decide how many people are needed. He said they need to put the Police and program together and figure out the cost and funding and then come back to the Board.

Mr. Durden said he feels there are things they don't do in the park such as arts and brought up the Dillard jazz program and doing a free series next year and discussed this.

Mr. Weymouth asked about the activation of Huizenga Plaza project and Mr. Wren said the Riverwalk Connection was the first step and that Broward College and FAU are very interested in activating the area of Las Olas the Board had discussed. He said they are also working with the City on the tunnel top park improvements and that he will mix these projects in with all the others.

Chairman Ropes said he'd like to see a page with bullets of all these projects with the Board member assigned so they can go through it at each Board meeting.

Mr. Petrillo suggested they contact Don Donahue with respect to the Florida Live concert series and perhaps see if there is an opportunity of cobranding with them. He said Chadwick Blue can help on

the ground and that he should reach out to him to let him know we can assist.

Chairman Ropes said he can work with Riverwalk to see if there is a way to have some type of partnership, to see if there could be cost savings for the two organizations.

Mr. Bodenhamer said he'd like Mr. Wren to look at the office lease and consider a different location when it's up. Mr. Weymouth said maybe somewhere the Wave goes through would be an idea to consider. Consensus was that staff begins looking now. Chairman Ropes asked if the Board felt a workshop was more effective with time and they all agreed it worked well, maybe having it quarterly.

As there were no other items to discuss, the workshop ended at 10:30 a.m.