



Board of Directors Regular Meeting
Wednesday, October 19, 2022 | 5:30 PM
City Council Chambers
312 E. Charles Street, Hammond, LA 70401

Roll Call: Chelsea Tallo Little, Executive Director

Frank Di Vittorio	Present
John Daniel Guerin	Present
John Exnicios	Absent
Elsbet Hollywood	Present
Cassie Ragan	Present
Evan Singer	Present
Bryan Wong	Absent

Old Business

1. Approval of the September 2022 financial report

John Daniel Guerin made a motion, seconded by Cassie Ragan, to approve the September 2022 financial report as written.

Frank Di Vittorio	Yes
John Daniel Guerin	Yes
John Exnicios	Absent
Elsbet Hollywood	Yes
Cassie Ragan	Yes
Evan Singer	Yes
Bryan Wong	Absent

Motion carried. Yes: 5 | No: 0 | Abstain: 0 | Absent: 2

2. Approval of minutes from September 20, 2022

Cassie Ragan made a motion, seconded by Frank Di Vittorio, to approve the minutes from September 20, 2022 as written.

Frank Di Vittorio	Yes
John Daniel Guerin	Abstain
John Exnicios	Absent
Elsbet Hollywood	Abstain
Cassie Ragan	Yes
Evan Singer	Yes
Bryan Wong	Absent

Motion carried. Yes: 3 | No: 0 | Abstain: 2 | Absent: 2



3. Approval of minutes from September 21, 2022

Cassie Ragan made a motion, seconded by Elsbet Hollywood, to approve the September 21, 2022 meeting minutes as written.

Frank Di Vittorio	Yes
John Daniel Guerin	Abstain
John Exnicios	Absent
Elsbet Hollywood	Yes
Cassie Ragan	Yes
Evan Singer	Yes
Bryan Wong	Absent

Motion carried. Yes: 4 | No: 0 | Abstain: 1 | Absent: 2

New Business:

1. Review and discussion of video and audio recordings from August 29, 2022, and written statements, and memo generated on September 30, 2022.

Mr. Frank Di Vittorio provided context of his request to access the DDD database, and what the information the database contained. He clarified his purpose in retrieving the database was to check contact information for stakeholders within the district – property owners, business owners, residents, market vendors, etc. He relayed that complaints have been delivered to several board members about lack of communication from the DDD office, namely emails. He stated the board felt it was a priority to review the database to have as many people receive the Hot August Night post-event evaluations as possible.

Mrs. Elsbet Hollywood gave an overview of preparing the memo generated on September 20, 2022. Mr. Evan Singer prompted to view the video and listen to the audio. Mr. Di Vittorio clarified the video came from the DDD office building surveillance cameras and he recorded the incident on a personal audio recorder.

Mr. Evan Singer described the process he and Mrs. Hollywood took to understand the situation, collect information, and provide recommendations out laid out in the memo moving forward, including no solo meetings with staff or board members, clarity on the chain of command for staff to the board, and sharing of the information in DDD database. Ms. Ragan mentioned that when the incident first occurred staff members reached out to most board members about the incident and staff was asked if they are ok. She furthered that all the information has been made available and open for discussion.

Erika Hemphill, owner of EnG Construction & Design, inquired about Mr. Di Vittorio's intention of taking information out of the DDD office and the behavior that took place. She felt it was inappropriate for a board member to continue with a request despite staff saying no to a request. Ms. Ragan clarified that one of the recommendations provided in the memo is to look at the sharing of DDD information at future meetings. Ms. Hemphill furthered that Mr. Di Vittorio's intentions were concerning by recording the incident, and urged the board to take action to address the turmoil between staff and board members. Christine Monistere, 208 Camellia Ave, Hammond, inquired about what action the board would take.



Mr. Di Vittorio made a statement pertaining to the full scope of the incident, stating false statements were made online and in-person to him. He stated he is “regretful” of how actions have transpired and consumed the time of board members and DDD staff. Mr. Di Vittorio felt it was important to clear the air on the issue and move on for the work the DDD should be doing.

A discussion was had about the database between board members and staff. Ms. Ragan stated that typically this incident would be handled in-house, and with the incident being on social media, the board felt it important to make the information available.

Ms. Hemphill inquired about the board plans to implement the recommendations provided in the memo, and how they plan to mend the relationship between Chairman, Frank DiVittorio and Executive Director, Chelsea Little. Mr. Singer stated that he felt that was on them to resolved and that the board would continue to provide a safe workspace and assure that meetings would have multiple parties. Ms. Hemphill felt that was going to be difficult to implement and unrealistic.

Dan Lambert, 116 N Cate St, Hammond, mentioned the board has not addressed that staff is scared to be around Mr. DiVittorio and urged the board to ask Mr. DiVittorio to step down.

Devon Wells, Councilman of District 3, urged the board to work together.

Mrs. Chelsea Little made a statement regarding the incident and relayed that she was previously instructed to not share the database information by the City Attorney, Andre Coudrain. She stated she was not comfortable working with Frank and felt his actions were inappropriate and disrespectful.

Ms. Michelle Kendall made a statement about the incident and relayed that the incident was a failure of the board and staff, and urged for stronger leadership moving forward.

Justin Thornhill, 110 E Thomas St, wanted to address statements pertaining to misinformation being share, and clarified that he shared what was given to him. He asked for all statements from Mr. Di Vittorio, Mrs. Little, and Ms. Kendall to be read. Ms. Kendall said she had no interest in further commenting on this matter.

Mr. John Daniel Guerin asked about the board going into Executive Session. City Attorney, Andre Coudrain provided an overview of the legalities of how the board can act. Mrs. Hollywood mentioned that copies of the report would be made available. Ms. Ragan was urged to move to the next agenda item by Mr. Di Vittorio. Ms. Hemphill asked what is the resolution of the agenda item. Ms. Ragan attempted to clarified the legal aspects of removing a board member.

Rhonda Bishop, owner of Salon Nuo Vo, insisted the board can action to take to create a safe workplace. Mr. Di Vittorio urged Ms. Ragan to continue with the next agenda item.

Ms. Hemphill asked if the board would take this issue to the city council and ask for Mr. Di Vittorio’s removal. Ms. Ragan attempted to clarified that to add anything to the agenda, it would need a unanimous



vote to be discussed. She invited Mr. Andre Coudrain to comment on a board member's resignation or removal.

2. Design Committee Report

a. Approval of a contract with Roy Dufreche to create a design for the welcome sign located on Coleman Street.

Cassie Ragan provided a summary of the Design Committee meeting including downtown lighting funding via capital outlay and gateway signage on Coleman Ave. She presented a proposal by Roy Dufreche to design the welcome sign.

Cassie Ragan made a motion, seconded by Elsbet Hollywood, to accept the contract with Roy Dufreche to create a design for the welcome sign located on Coleman Avenue.

Frank Di Vittorio	Yes
John Daniel Guerin	Yes
John Exnicios	Absent
Elsbet Hollywood	Yes
Cassie Ragan	Yes
Evan Singer	Yes
Bryan Wong	Absent

Motion carried. Yes: 5 | No: 0 | Abstain: 0 | Absent: 2

3. Railroad Park

a. Brick and bench sales

Mrs. Little presented the document with update numbers for brick sales. She mentioned one bench is still for sale.

b. Approval of topics for History Exhibit panels

Ms. Kendall summarized the work done thus far for the project and provided an overview of the topics presented. She requested approval of the topics by the board to move the project forward strategically with the development of narratives and community outreach.

Ms. Tanya Turner, 211 Kansas St, inquired about elements of history for African Americans pertaining to the Railroad Park. Ms. Kendall addressed Ms. Turner's questions.

Cassie Ragan made a motion, seconded by John Daniel Guerin, to approve the nine overall topics to develop narratives for history exhibits to be installed in Railroad Park.

Frank Di Vittorio	Yes
John Daniel Guerin	Yes
John Exnicios	Absent
Elsbet Hollywood	Yes
Cassie Ragan	Yes
Evan Singer	Yes



Bryan Wong

Absent

Motion carried. Yes: 5 | No: 0 | Abstain: 0 | Absent: 2

4. Farmers Market Report

Ms. Kendall provided an update for moving the market, market logistics, and programming.

a. Approval of market logo

Mrs. Little presented the market logo presentation. Members discussed the logo and changes to be made including changing fonts on the tagline.

John Daniel Guerin made a motion, seconded by Frank Di Vittorio, to approve the logo for the Hammond Farmers & Artisans market with modifications as discussed.

Frank Di Vittorio	Yes
John Daniel Guerin	Yes
John Exnicios	Absent
Elsbet Hollywood	Yes
Cassie Ragan	Yes
Evan Singer	Yes
Bryan Wong	Absent

Motion carried. Yes: 5 | No: 0 | Abstain: 0 | Absent: 2

4. Events Report

a. Trick or Treat

Mrs. Little provide an update for the event on Thursday, October 27th and its programming including 34 participating businesses, music in Railroad Park, and the Lt. Governor being present to recognize the DDD for winning GAMSA.

b. Picnic in the Park

Mrs. Little provided an update for the event planned for Friday, November 4th.

c. Starry November Day & Night

Mrs. Little presented the event poster, including reopening of the farmers & artisans market from 8AM-12PM, search for Santa from 12PM-3PM, a wine & cheese walk from 3PM-6PM, and programming in Cate Square Park from 6PM-8PM. Members discussed the train rides and presale tickets. Ms. Kendall mentioned the rides are free and there are activities to entertain while guests wait in line.

5. Staff Report

Mrs. Little reported on the following items: BATTER loan – loan closing October 10th; Furniture delivered; Ribbon cuttings: Lucky Dogs - 213 E. Morris Ave., Bayou Boudin – 213 E. Morris Ave., Wonder Collective – 109 W. Thomas St., Keller Williams - 201 NW Railroad Ave, Ste 100; Main Street; Maestro Town Hall Presentation, Education Committee, Quarterly Reports; Staff Reporting; and office closures.



Chelsea Little, DDD Executive Director
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