



Board of Directors
Public Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 15, 2023 | 5:30 PM
City Council Chambers
312 E. Charles Street, Hammond, LA 70401

I. CALL TO ORDER: John Exnicios

II. Roll Call: Michelle Kendall, Executive Director

Todd Delaune	Present
John Exnicios	Present
Elsbet Hollywood	Present
Chelsea Kessenich	Present
Kali Norton	Present
Cassie Ragan	Present
Evan Singer	Present

Old Business

1. Approval of the February 2023 financial report

Evan Singer made a motion, seconded by Elsbet Hollywood, to approve the February 2023 financial report as written.

Todd Delaune	Yes
John Exnicios	Yes
Elsbet Hollywood	Yes
Chelsea Kessenich	Yes
Kali Norton	Yes
Cassie Ragan	Yes
Evan Singer	Yes

Motion carried. Yes: 7 | No: 0 | Abstain: 0 | Absent: 0

2. Approval of work session minutes from February 15, 2023

Cassie Ragan made a motion, seconded by John Exnicios, to approve the minutes from February 15, 2023 as written.

Todd Delaune	Abstain
John Exnicios	Yes
Elsbet Hollywood	Yes
Chelsea Kessenich	Yes
Kali Norton	Yes
Cassie Ragan	Yes



Evan Singer

Yes

Motion carried. Yes: 6 | No: 0 | Abstain: 1 | Absent: 0

3. Approval of the meeting minutes from February 15, 2023

Elsbet Hollywood made a motion, seconded by Kali Norton, to approve the minutes from February 15, 2023 as written.

Todd Delaune

Abstain

John Exnicios

Yes

Elsbet Hollywood

Yes

Chelsea Kessenich

Yes

Kali Norton

Yes

Cassie Ragan

Yes

Evan Singer

Yes

Motion carried. Yes: 6 | No: 0 | Abstain: 1 | Absent: 0

4. Retreat Recap

Ms. Kendall provided a report produced by Louisiana Economic Development as a result of the Community Competitiveness Assessment that took place at the February board retreat. The report will be used to further the DDD's economic development plan.

New Business:

1. New Board Member Welcome

Todd Delaune was welcomed by the Board as the new East Side Business & Property Owner Seat. Mr. Delaune's resume was available for the Board to view.

2. Presentation of Hammond Welcome Sign (Roy Dufreche)

Ms. Kendall introduced Mr. Roy Dufreche to the Board to give a presentation about the Hammond Welcome Sign and its construction cost estimate breakdown. Mr. Dufreche ensured the Board that he is going to stay within budget of the projected cost of the project which is \$125,750.00. Ms. Kendall discussed the options for the DDD to contribute for either the 2023 fiscal year or for the 2024 fiscal year. Mr. Dufreche stated that a realistic start date for the project would be July 2023. Mr. Dufreche intends to move forward with the design concept completion pending Board approval. Ms. Ragan opened the floor for Board members to voice concerns regarding the project budget and design. Mr. Dufreche stated he would be happy to present the final of design of the project to the Historic Committee. Mr. Singer expressed a few concerns from a budget perspective. Mr. Dufreche reassured the board that the budget total is a projected limit and he would do what is necessary to reduce the size of the structure to offset costs if need be. Mr. Singer believes it is in the Board's best interest to have more time to discuss costs before moving forward on a budgetary decision. Mr. Dufreche encouraged the board to take their time with decision making and he will come up with another design to present a new budget number that will be more agreeable.



3. Events Committee Report (Chelsea Kessenich)

Ms. Kessenich stated that she and Ms. Kendall met Tuesday morning of March 14, 2023 with some local restaurant and bar owners to discuss Hot August Night 2023. An open discussion was held to get insight from business owner's perspectives and what they envision for the next Hot August Night. The following were discussed: potentially moving the event from Friday to Saturday, having the band play at Cate Square Park, and moving the foot traffic from Thomas St. to Charles St. An Events Committee Report was printed and made available for Board members to review that went into further detail. Ms. Hollywood went over the idea of having Cate Square Park being a main stage for music and other areas of downtown such as Railroad Park could host a smaller musical performance for the sake of spreading the event out and incorporate restaurants/bars. The time of Hot August Night was also suggested to change into a day and evening event. The Wine Walk segment of Hot August Night was discussed in regard to whether or not it should remain an activity for the event. Mr. Exnicios inquired to know what a creative way would be to encourage event-goers into businesses outside of providing wine. Ms. Kessenich responded saying that reviving the art portion of the event was an idea discussed at the bar and restaurant meeting but did not receive much traction due to the fact that Starry Night incorporates an art stroll. Ms. Ragan proposed the idea of involving the Hammond Regional Arts Center and Southeastern Louisiana University in some capacity to have varying forms of art for the event. Mr. Exnicios suggested merging with Northshore Arts in Bloom for the event because of their art installations. Ms. Ragan inquired to know about when the decision will be made to either keep the event on Friday or move the event to Saturday. Ms. Kendall responded and stated she would like to have more in-person meetings with other downtown business owners to receive feedback on the date-change suggestion. Some feedback Ms. Kessenich received was that people are open to changing the event to Saturday but if it is not as successful, then it can be moved back to Friday. Mr. Delaune expressed he likes the idea of having the event spread out throughout the day and evening, on either day, to alleviate some of the hot spots and tension on certain areas which would in return create a more profitable Hot August Night for businesses. Mr. Exnicios suggested the idea of having beer booths at the event for continued pressure alleviation. Mr. Delaune explained a beer booth would create competition. Ms. Kendall exclaimed she was not in favor for beer booths. Ms. Norton suggested having more structured time blocks with corresponding activities throughout Hot August Night

4. Design Committee Report (Cassie Ragan)

Ms. Ragan began by stating the last meeting was on February 17th and was a relatively short meeting. At the meeting, they reviewed Rocky's Premier Car Wash and requested they reevaluate their metallic paint selection for the building design. Another topic of discussion was façade grants and if that could cover graffiti vandalism in Hammond.

5. Railroad Park

a. History Exhibit

Ms. Kendall explained that the History Exhibit that will be a part of Railroad Park will feature photos with short text messages below them. Ms. Kendall presented this information at the City Council Meeting the day before, March 14, 2023, to



ensure City Council members were aware of what was going on. Ms. Kendall then discussed Public Input Sessions that are made available to all Hammond citizens.

b. Brick and Bench Revenue

Ms. Kendall stated that all Brick sales for Railroad Park are closed and that final sales for this period is 179 text bricks and 17 logo bricks. Ms. Kendall intends on sending brick orders off to the manufacturer once she receives one or two more logos to finalize the order. Once submitted, the bricks have a two week lead time then installations can begin. Ms. Kendall recognized that the DDD didn't quite reach the anticipated goal of selling 300 bricks for the period but, in total, there are about 900 engraved bricks overall.

6. Creating Annual Partner Sponsorship Package

Mr. Exnicios began by saying that himself, Ms. Ragan and Ms. Kendall met with members of North Oaks Health System to discuss the opportunity of a long-term sponsorship package. Ms. Kendall presented a draft of an Annual Partner Sponsorship Package for board members to review. Ms. Kendall went over each sponsorship level, pricing, and what perks each sponsorship level entails with the board. Ms. Hollywood inquired to know if Ms. Kendall created the package draft from the ground-up or if she took elements of packages that other development districts use. Ms. Kendall informed that elements were not taken from other development districts but she took research and compare packages from other entities such as the Tangipahoa Chamber and from St. Tammany Parish. Ms. Kendall further explained that the drafted price per package would cover marketing costs. Mr. Exnicios also assisted with creating a draft price amount per package. Ms. Kendall stated that the prices per package can be reevaluated so long as the package perks are not undervalued. Mr. Singer exclaimed that he does not believe the drafted prices are too much for a large company and he feels it is an excellent idea. Ms. Kessenich stated her agreeance. Ms. Ragan implored to know more regarding the restrictions of only having one company/business per package level. Ms. Kendall explained that she did not want to DDD to over-promise sponsors and that having more than one per level would limit what could be offered. More sponsors per level would mean increasing budget. Ms. Norton stated that limiting the number of sponsors per level would maintain that level's value and exclusivity to the investor.

7. Staff Report

Ms. Kendall introduced the DDD's newest full time employee, Katie Taylor, to the board. Ms. Kendall told the board that advertising for a part-time Hammond Farmers Market & Artisans Manager has begun and applicant turn-out has been low. Mr. Singer suggested that if the DDD does not receive more meaningful applicants, then the title of the job could be revisited to create more appeal and attraction to the position.

Ms. Kendall then discussed meeting with Mr. Singer to go over the loan program and some areas that could be restructured. Mr. Singer briefly mentioned the USDA policies that must be followed and the DDD's discretion it has within that. Ms. Norton stated that those who would like to be involved with the DDD loan program should be given a more structured and personable application process. She continued on to say that said loan applicants should have to present themselves in front of the board to accentuate a more personal factor to the process.



Ms. Kendall shifted the conversation to Main Street updates. She informed the board of her attendance to the Main Street Annual Conference being held in Boston, MA at the end of March which is a requirement to maintain Main Street accreditation. She also briefed everyone that she will be attending the State Historic Recreation Conference in Lake Charles, LA in April.

Ms. Kendall then informed the board of the Picnic in the Park event dates and that they are advertised to the public. She was able to receive support from the Hammond City Council for approval for all alcohol resolutions and open container allowance.

Ms. Kendall moved on to discuss the Northshore Arts in Bloom Chalk Walk event and that the DDD is primarily responsible for creating a registration form for the event and marketing/advertising. Ms. Kendall made a connection with Erica Turner, an associate with the Louisiana Workforce Commission, to come up with ways that local business owners could post job listings through their established website. Then, that could potentially linked to the DDD website so that there can be a tailored list of downtown jobs that can be easily accessible to the public.

Ms. Kendall then informed the Board that there are loans available for any Hurricane Ida related damage that happened in 2021 to downtown business owners.

Ms. Kendall overviewed a Walkability Action Institute that the DDD was invited to participate in with Tangipahoa government for City of Hammond representation. It includes discussions of safe intersections, sidewalks, and more.

Lastly, Ms. Kendall reviewed the Greaux the Good Snap benefit incentive program that is new with the Hammond Farmers & Artisans Market.

-Adjourned

Michelle Kendall, DDD Executive Director
Hammond Downtown Development District Authority
#2 West Thomas Street, Hammond, LA 70401 985-277-5683