



Board of Directors
Public Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 21, 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	Absent
John Exnicios	Present
Elsbet Hollywood	Present
Chelsea Kessenich	Absent
Kali Norton	Present
Cassie Ragan	Present
Evan Singer	Present

Old Business

1. Approval of the May 2023 financial report

Evan Singer made a motion, seconded by Cassie Ragan, to approve the May 2023 financial report as written.

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

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

2. Approval of the meeting minutes from May 17, 2023

Elsbet Hollywood made a motion, seconded by Kali Norton, to approve the minutes from May 17, 2023 as written.

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



Motion failed. Yes: 3 | No: 0 | Abstain: 1 | Absent: 2

3. Fiscal Year 2024 Budget

Ms. Kendall proposed a budget to the Hammond City Council in June during a work session. The budget will be approved at the next City Council meeting and will go into effect July 1, 2023.

4. Discussion of DDD Loan Program and Application

Ms. Kendall reviewed with the board that the interest rates are adjusted for different loan types from the previous meeting. The adjustment does not affect existing loans and are applicable to future loans.

New Business:

1. Railroad Park

a. History Exhibit

Ms. Kendall presented draft narratives to the board. She overviewed a few of the next steps in the project with the group such as Antoine Marketing + Design creating final panel designs. They will be reviewed once more by the design committee, the DDD board and the historic district in July. Mr. Exnicios relayed he would like Ms. Kendall to ensure that the panels do not become dated and suggested mentioning specific years in conjunction with modern buildings that are mentioned in the panels.

b. Courtyard Furniture Options

Ms. Kendall presented courtyard furniture options previously reviewed by the design committee. The company being considered for the courtyard picnic tables is the same company that produced the park benches. They reviewed bench options that have umbrellas as an option.

John Exnicios made a motion, seconded by Kali Norton, to approve the Gretchen picnic tables recommended by the design committee for courtyard furniture in Railroad Park.

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

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

2. Design Committee Report (Cassie Ragan)

a. Review of Sidewalk Reimbursement Program Guidelines and Application

The group reviewed the updated application which reflected changes from the design committee. Ms. Ragan mentioned that design fees are excluded moving forward. Mr. Singer asked if an application can get denied. Ms. Ragan confirmed this can happen, since the paperwork is an application seeking approval. Members discussed budgeting of the sidewalk projects, and Ms. Ragan stated that in the situation there were not sufficient funds available there is no commitment due to a first-come first-served awards availability. Mr. Exnicios proceeded to



know if sidewalk reimbursements needed to come before the historic commission. Ms. Ragan answered that it did not.

b. Approval of Façade Grant for 209 E Charles St

John Exnicios made a motion, seconded by Kali Norton, to approve the Façade Grant for 209 E Charles St in the amount of \$2,000.

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

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

c. Approval of Façade Grant for 305 E Charles St

Cassie Ragan made a motion, seconded by Elsbet Hollywood, to approve the Façade Grant for 305 E Charles St in the amount of \$625.

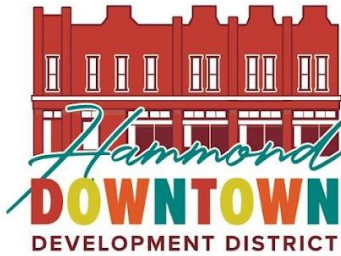
Todd Delaune	Absent
John Exnicios	Yes
Elsbet Hollywood	Yes
Chelsea Kessenich	Absent
Kali Norton	Yes
Cassie Ragan	Yes
Evan Singer	Yes

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

3. Events Committee Report

a. Hot August Stroll

The board reviewed the Hot August Stroll website, poster and press release to be debuted on June 22nd. Ms. Kendall discussed that the name change from Hot August Night to Hot August Stroll emerged due to a merchant meeting that the DDD hosted at the end of May. Local DDD business owners merited that a name change coincided with the event day change. Ms. Kendall further discussed the confusion regarding opportunities for outside food trucks and food vendors. There is no application developed for outside food vendors. While reviewing the poster, Ms. Ragan suggested that the downtown dining hours should extend to when restaurants closed as opposed to what is written on the graphic. Ms. Kendall mentioned that during the merchant meeting, retail business owners wanted to see something more in particular geared towards highlighting their business during that time frame which was why lunch was advertised from 12pm – 2 pm and the retail programmed time slot would be from 2pm – 4 pm. Ms. Kendall did not want to give the impression that lunch dining was only available from noon to 2 pm and she is open to correcting that false illusion. It was



discussed to provide a more general statement of time frames instead of giving something specific since different types of businesses operate different hours from each other. Ms. Norton suggested gathering dining specials and other relevant information from downtown restaurants and promoting that material on the DDD website, while the poster would reflect a general statement such as “Dining specials all day long.” Ms. Ragan added to Ms. Norton’s suggestion and said the poster should be simplified to mention dining and shopping specials all day. Ms. Kendall noted that she would make those changes.

Next, the group discussed food trucks during the event. Mr. Exnicios verbally expressed that he is in favor of food trucks but in a limited environment such as during live music at Cate Square Park. Ms. Norton also felt in favor of food trucks be reiterating that downtown restaurants cannot undertake the customer demand during such a high volume event. Although limited outside vendors would be a provided relief for downtown restaurants, the group agreed that the purpose of Hot August Stroll is to showcase downtown merchants first and foremost. Ms. Katie Taylor, Ms. Kendall’s Administrative Assistant, spoke up to inquire if downtown restaurants that have their own food trucks and/or means of having a booth would be given that type of vending opportunity first before sourcing outside establishments. Ms. Kendall stated that any food or drink vendors welcomed to the event will be hand-selected by the DDD. Mr. Exnicios agreed to that method of approach. Mr. Singer inquired to know how vendors would be selected if there is an excess of interested vendors. Ms. Kendall anticipates selecting about 3 food trucks if needed but downtown businesses will be hand-selected first before reaching out to outside vendors. Mr. Exnicios asked Ms. Kendall if a merchant within the DDD would need to pay for their booth opportunity. Ms. Kendall responded by saying that decision is up to the board and what they think is best. Mr. Exnicios felt that if the board decided to charge a business for a booth opportunity at the event, then that vendor would be charged at a special rate and any outside vendors would pay a full price. Mr. Exnicios went on to inquire about raising the rate to participate in the event. Ms. Kendall stated she is entirely opposed to advertising any food vendor application and that the decision on who to extend an event invitation to will be entirely up to them on an internal level. Ms. Hollywood and Ms. Ragan both verbalized that they do not feel outside food trucks should be at the event. Ms. Ragan pointed out that since the event hours will be extended and not condensed in a certain time frame like previous years, downtown restaurants may be able to handle the demands. Mr. Exnicios expressed having quick grab-and-go options near the music for added basic conveniences. Ms. Kendall agreed to have options for event-goers to help with conveniences. She believes that those options can be covered by businesses within the district and there would only be a need for two or three outside vendors. Mr. Exnicios mentioned ensuring having quick beverage options at the park. Mr. Singer added that brick and mortar businesses should have a first opportunity with no cost of setting up. Mr. Exnicios requested to know where these booth opportunities will be set up and Ms. Kendall informed that the placement will be on the one hundred block and two hundred block of West Charles Street.

Mr. Exnicios questioned where art tents will be set up. Ms. Kendall informed that the Hammond Regional Art Center will handle pairing artists with local businesses for the event, so long as a business has specified they would like to host an artist.

She also noted that the Wine & Cheese Stroll pairing will also be handled through the HRAC via their website. This is in effort to cross-promote with a local business.

b. Picnic in the Park



The next Picnic in the Park will be Friday, June 23rd with Zachary McLain and Nouveau Soul. This is the final concert for the spring series. Mr. Exnicios proposed a few new ideas to improve the PITP series which included hosting the event less while bumping up the budget for music to draw more people. The event was compared to Ponchatoula's Live After Five event which Mr. Exnicios noted has successful turn outs. For comparative reasons, Ms. Taylor viewed their event page and noted they do not offer anything in particular that creates an edge for their gathering. Ms. Kendall identified their event has more support as far as aesthetics go such as having string lights to create a better atmosphere. Cost-wise, Ms. Kendall said she tries to budget between \$1,000-\$1,500 for the event. Ms. Ragan suggested doing more research on the event to assess what could be improved for PITP. Ms. Hollywood expressed she would like to see more focus on Hot August Stroll than smaller non-events.

4. Staff Report

Ms. Kendall will be placing a final order on Railroad Park benches. The water fountain and the fence are anticipated to be fixed by the end of next week. The farmers market needed to reassess parking for vendors during market hours to share parking with businesses and market customers. Eight new circuits will be installed inside the planter walls of Railroad Park. Ms. Kendall presented information about a business loan program to businesses affected by hurricanes. She also discussed a Louisiana Restoration Grant opportunity for properties that are in need of revitalization. She then mentioned that the DDD has been attending Southeastern Orientations over the summer to inform students and families of the DDD, its purpose, events to look forward to, and informational items to give out. She noted that Hammond's smallest park, Morrison Park, was awarded a \$25,000 grant from AARP.

Adjournment

