

CLEARWATER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING

February 3, 2021 – 5:30 PM – City Council Chambers

1. **Call to Order.** Chairman Morfopoulos called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

In attendance: Chairman Paris Morfopoulos
Vice Chairman Ray Cassano
Caitlein Jammo
Keanan Kintzel
Festus Porbeni
Shahab Emrani
Terri Novitsky

Mayor Frank Hibbard
Ex-officio Member Mark Bunker

CRA Director Amanda Thompson
CRA Public Relations and Programs Manager Rosemary D'Amour
DDB Attorney Elise K. Winters

Absent: CRA Program Specialist Anne Lopez
CRA Business Assistance Administrator Howard Smith

2. **Approve minutes of the January 13, 2021, meeting.** Upon motion duly made, seconded, and carried, minutes of the January 13, 2021, meeting were approved.
3. **Citizens to be heard regarding items not on the agenda.**

Carolyn Bradham and Scott Sousa of the DCMA thanked the Board for their support and delivered a report of holiday events: the fourth Sip & Stroll had 90+ participants; Dine Out to Make a Difference (10% of sales) donated \$800 to Salvation Army in December, January's collection will go to SAFE, February to Clearwater Urban Leadership Coalition, and March to Clearwater Free Dental. Sponsors for DCMA events are lined up through May (\$1,000 presently, \$1,500 beginning in May). Zoom meeting planned with banker for small business information regarding next PPP loans.

Ted Reinhard of Cult City tours introduced himself and his business, projects 20 people per tour with three tours per week and is looking forward to working together to bring business to downtown.

4. **New Business Items**

4.1. **December 2020 Financial Statement for Approval**

After discussion, it was agreed that CRA Director Thompson would gather information regarding previous years' Income for comparison to the current report.

Upon motion duly made, seconded, and carried, the December 2020 Financial Statement was approved for filing.

4.2. Request approval of a special event funding request for Clearwater Jazz Holiday (CJH) in the amount of \$30,000.

CRA Director Thompson reviewed the request: five events February 20-March 13; production costs of \$15,000 and sponsorship of \$15,000; cost to CJH \$75,000; would generate approximately 1,000 guests total (200 per event). CRA staff recommends funding, noting a possible downside that tickets must be sold as table of four due to pandemic social-distancing procedures.

CJH CEO Steve Weinberger addressed the Board, clarifying that the “sponsorship” portion of the request was related to the multiple levels of event advertising in which the downtown area would be featured.

Upon motion duly made, seconded, and carried, the funding request was approved.

5. Old Business

5.1. DDB Marketing Update. CRA Public Relations and Programs Manager D’Amour reviewed opportunities including Sunshine Lines monthly newsletter distributed with utility bills and a possible separate mailer (drafted by Emily Johnson of the City’s Public Communications staff) introducing the Board members, items in which the DDB is involved and promoting, with a call to action for contact with the Board.

5.2. Equity Committee Updates. Member Jammo stated that IT is working on the logistics of a virtual meeting for which she will provide a date at the next meeting.

5.3. CRA Updates.

CRA Director Thompson stated that railroad crossing repairs/upgrades continue; investment in Station Square events continues; CRA meeting to include overview of three new business assistance programs and brief presentations from DDB, DCMA, and Amplify Clearwater; CRA partnering with Parks & Rec regarding potential conservancy of waterfront park; early stages of partnership with photographer Clyde Butcher’s presentation of everglades 75th anniversary show and possibly book signing.

6. Chairman’s Report. Chairman Morfopoulos wished for everyone to continue staying safe and well.

7. Board Members to be heard

Member Cassano likes seeing the crowds and new faces downtown, looking forward to those times and opportunities growing.

Member Emrani hopes next year COVID is gone and we can take part in Super Bowl promotions downtown.

Member Porbeni asked for clarification on program opportunities in downtown; CRA Director Thompson stated there is a working plan for the last week in February.

Member Kintzel enjoyed participating in the Zoom call with CRA Director Thompson regarding increased art in downtown and thanked her for making those opportunities happen.

Member Jammo wished everyone to stay well.

Member Novitsky is happy to be participating, and thanked staff for support of the Board and its members.

Mayor Hibbard thanked the DDB for their support of downtown; his meeting with a developer earlier in the day may result in a response to RFP; asking City Council and US Council of Mayors to support request for extension of opportunity zone legislation for one more year.

Ex-officio Member Bunker thanked Ted Reinhard for introducing himself and his company which should bring a lot of business and activity to downtown.

Chairman Morfopoulos asked people to not be deceived, that Cult City Tours promotes divisiveness in downtown by targeting Scientology and Scientologist-owned businesses.

8. Adjourned at 6:39 p.m.