

**Downtown Development Board Work Session
June 23, 2020**

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of tonight's work session is for the Downtown Development Board to generate ideas that will be used to develop a draft budget and annual work plan for board members and the public to comment on at the regular July meeting.

Downtown Development Board Goals (DDB ordinance adopted in February 2020)

1. Serve as a voice for property owners, businesses, residents and organizations in the District;
2. Create a sense of community that supports existing businesses and residents and attracts new businesses and residents to the District;
3. Assist the city and the CRA in implementation of the Clearwater Downtown Redevelopment Plan;
4. Assist the city and CRA to guide and accomplish the coordinated, balanced and harmonious development of the District in accordance with existing and future needs; and
5. Assist the city and CRA to provide a way of life which combines the conveniences and amenities of modern living with the traditions and pleasures of the past.

The Board shall perform the following functions:

1. Adopt an annual budget and accompany work plan for the purpose of identifying means to achieve the goals and purposes of the ordinance.
2. Convene Freeholders, businesses, residents and other District stakeholders to establish a shared vision for District redevelopment and preservation.
3. Assist the city and CRA with developing short-term and long-term plans for the district.
4. Advise the city and CRA on policies and procedures that will support existing businesses and bring in new businesses and residents to the District.
5. Enter into public-private partnerships to improve the District's economic conditions.
6. Plan, fund and implement marketing activities.
7. Any lawful projects and undertakings related to the District as the City/CRA may request, projects identified in adopted plans and other activities that will improve the tax base or revitalize and preserve the District.

DDB FY19-20 Budget

The current budget is attached. Funding that is non-fixed can be used to fund grants, projects and programs throughout the fiscal year. Fixed costs are costs that the DDB must pay annually for staff, insurance, legal services etc. The DDB has approximately \$270,000 it may spend annually on non-fixed expenses. Those expenses are categorized under three budget areas: Marketing, Business Assistance and Policy/Projects.

Definitions of Marketing, Business Assistance, Policy/Projects

- **Marketing Assistance** – This category includes activities that promote awareness of the District as a whole. It does not include marketing for individual businesses. Examples of expenditures in this category include - advertising, market research, videos and print media campaigns, development of materials for advertising campaigns and special events that are held in the District.
- **Business Assistance** - This category includes activities related to the retention and attraction of businesses as well as ancillary services, like transportation services, that bring more customers to the District. For example, funding the Jolley Trolley Downtown Loop or providing outdoor dining furniture. This could also include training for businesses on various topics that would enhance their operations or grants for new signs.
- **Policy and Project Work** – This category includes *Policy* which is the time that DDB members would like to spend researching, developing and recommending ideas to change how the city/CRA operates in downtown. For example, the DDB may want to advocate a change to the local ordinance to allow food trucks outside of special events. *Projects* are time limited activities, typically capital improvements, conducted by the DDB or another entity designed to achieve a stated outcome. Two examples of projects are updating the DDB ordinance and the Cleveland Street Lighting Project.

Examples of past DDB Budget Expenditures

In the past few years, the DDB has provided grants for more than 40 projects. Selected examples of special events and services include:

2019:

- Jolley Trolley
- Holiday Lighting in Downtown
- Clearwater Jazz Festival

2018:

- Achieva Box Car Rally
- Movies in the Park- Station Square
- Dali Tours
- Santa and Suds 5K Run

2017:

- Taste of Downtown
- Garden Avenue Garage Grill

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- Latino Anniversary Party
- Sidewalk Sales
- Art Bazar- Station Square Park
- Crusin' at the Cap

Other Projects:

PR Video Campaign

Construction of the boat slips

Design recommendations for Imagine Clearwater

Level of Awareness about the DDB

Howard Smith, CRA Business Assistance Administrator, conducted in person and electronic surveys of all the businesses in the DDB District over the past seven months. He has found that most businesses have:

- General lack of or no knowledge of what the DDB is and their primary purpose
- Lack of or no knowledge of how the DDB supports business
- Lack of or no knowledge of how the DDB is Funded
- Limited or no knowledge of who the current DDB members are

The DDB is well known by merchants located on the 400-700 blocks of Cleveland Street. This information combined with the persistent low voter turnout in DDB elections is something that the DDB should consider addressing in their next work plan. This reflects the DDB's previous focus on the downtown core, its commitment to providing annual funding to many of the same events and its limited outreach efforts.

With the recent change in grant funding policies, the DDB should consider increasing its outreach activities to increase awareness of the Board and the services it provides.