



MINUTES

WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Annual Board of Directors Meeting

February 24, 2021

Members Present

Ollie Barber
Marianne Butler
Terri Connolly
Greg Fischer
David James
Chris Jones
Susan Moss
Ted Nixon
Kerry Stemler
Nicole Walton
Gerina Whethers

Members Absent

Sam Aguiar
Jerilan Greene
Frank Ward

Others Present

David Nichols
Jeff O'Brien

Staff Present

Deborah Bilitski
David Karem
Cordell Lawrence
Catie Nelson
Gary Pepper
Kelley Runyon
Ashley Smith
Krista Snider



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Chris Jones at 4:03p.m. on February 24, 2021. The meeting was held via WebEx.

Chris Jones commended staff for their work during the pandemic. Waterfront Park is dependent on event revenue to operate, but they are keeping the park open and beautiful despite the lack of events and revenue and increased usage of the park over the last year.

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes from the December 2, 2020 Board meeting were approved.

Pursuant to KRS 61.878, the Board entered closed session at 4:04pm to discuss real estate actions.

No formal vote or action were taken, and the Board resumed open session at 4:20pm.

Executive Director's Report:

Deborah Bilitski gave the following updates:

- USA Today Top Ten Best Riverwalks will be announced February 26
- Business First listed Waterfront Park #1 tourist attraction in Louisville
- National Geographic article featured Ed Hamilton – included in board packet
- Long time maintenance crew member, Greg January, is retiring at the end of the month. He has been an amazing member of the team and wonderful ambassador to the park.
- Antonio Petty-Malone, new maintenance crew member, began in January.

Deborah asked David Karem to speak about a pending WRO. Humana is renovating their Main Street building. A small portion will be seen externally and is subject to WRO. He has asked for Board assistance in reviewing the design plans. Kerry Stemler, Nicole Walton, and Ted Nixon volunteered to assist.

Social Media/ Marketing Update

David Nichols of A&H Marketing reported to the Board results of increased social media and marketing activity for Waterfront Park. Facebook reach is down in 2020 compared with 2019 but reach on Instagram is up in 2020 compared with 2019. Facebook is event based, so the lack of events in Waterfront Park affects that reach. Instagram has been beneficial to showcase the beauty of the park. The social media plan for 2020 took the pandemic into account and the focus was on showcasing the park and increasing post frequency. Deborah reinforced that 2019 and 2020 are not a fair comparison due to the pandemic. The marketing team has also assisted with

putting out our new messaging re: being a donor supported park and keeping the park active. The groundwork is laid for later in the year when events begin to come back online.

Financials

Cordell Lawrence presented the financials for the second quarter of FY2021 and explained variances on the income statement and balance sheet. Chris Jones pointed out that in the first six months of the fiscal year, revenue exceeded budget of \$180,000, with full credit going to staff for that accomplishment. Cordell is also working on and will distribute end of year revenue and expense projections in mid-March. Deborah mentioned that the Kentucky State legislature has not yet released a budget, but staff and board members are working hard to have Waterfront Park funding reinstated for FY2022.

Phase IV Update

Deborah Bilitski gave an update on Waterfront Park Phase IV. The community engagement survey is still live and taking responses through the end of this month. There have been close to 1000 responses total coming from every zip code in the county, surrounding counties and out of state. A summary will be available at the next meeting. The support rating is currently 8.4 out of 10, which is very strong. There is a lot of excitement surrounding the project. A work group for Phase IV fundraising is reconvening this week. Ted Nixon, Nicole Walton, Terri Connolly and Chris Jones are currently part of that work group.

Development/ Fundraising

Ashley Smith gave an update on development and fundraising. Ashley gave a status update on the annual fundraising campaign. Thus far \$332,000 has been raised. She thanked the board for their support in this effort as well. The fund development work group is also meeting regularly to coordinate various fundraising efforts.

Friends of the Waterfront

Nicole Walton gave an update on behalf of Friends of the Waterfront. The FOTW workgroups have been meeting regularly and those groups will be reaching out to WDC Board members to join and provide input.

Events

Catie Nelson gave an update on events at Waterfront Park. Event staff is diligently working to safely bring events back to Waterfront Park. Some events are planning to return this summer, but most major events will wait for fall. Planning is ongoing to produce two food truck concepts – Fridays at the Front and Brunch by the Bridge. Deborah mentioned how difficult it has been to navigate the changing event landscape.

Operations

Kelley Runyon gave an update on park operations. Staff is continuing to implement and reinforce Covid-19 safety precautions. She is continuing to plan and coordinate with park vendors for the upcoming Spring season. There will be an update on park vendors at the April meeting.

Park Maintenance

Gary Pepper gave an update on park maintenance. The park is ready to go for spring. The great weather yesterday has brought many park visitors back to the park. Staff is working on reactivating the park and repairing recent vandalism. He also offered to board members to take a tour of the park at their convenience.

Belle of Louisville Riverboats

Krista Snider gave an update for the Belle of Louisville Riverboats. They had an 88% percent decrease in passengers in 2020 from the previous year. She is making an emergency request for funding from Metro Council to balance the budget this fiscal year. Cruising on the Mary M. Miller will begin in March and the Belle will start cruising in April. Everyone is hopeful for a better 2021 season.

Open Discussion on Revenue Generation

Chris has asked for any board and staff members to bring ideas for revenue generation to the table. Ashley gave an update on the revenue generation work group. The group is poised to be a mainstay of support for fundraising. The goal is to help coordinate both capital and operating fundraising campaigns while working on ways to increase the donor base and exploring additional fundraising ideas.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m.