



MINUTES

WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Board of Directors Meeting

August 24, 2022

Members Present

Inga Arvin
Oliver Barber – via Webex
Marianne Butler – via Webex
Terri Connolly
Kevin Fields
Mayor Greg Fischer
David James
Chris Jones
Troy Miles
Kerry Stemler
Purna Veer
Joshua Watkins
Gerina Whethers

Others Present

Jeff O'Brien

Staff Present

Deborah Bilitski
Emily Clayton
Ryan Johnson
David Karem
Alex Laughlin
Cordell Lawrence
Catie Nelson – via Webex
Gary Pepper
Ashley Smith
Krista Snider

Members Absent

Susan Moss
Ted Nixon



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Chris Jones at 4:01 p.m. on August 24, 2022. The meeting was held at Waterfront Development Corporation, 129 River Road, Louisville, Kentucky.

Open Discussion

Chris Jones welcomed new board members Inga Arvin, Purna Veer and Joshua Watkins and the city has reappointed Kevin Fields while the state has reappointed Oliver Barber, Terri Connolly, and Chris Jones for another term.

HB 453 Changes to Open Meetings Act

Board members can no longer attend board meetings solely by phone. If attending a meeting virtually, members must always have their cameras and audio on.

Approval of the Minutes

Minutes for the June 22, 2022 meetings were approved.

Minutes for the August 5, 2022 meetings were approved.

Executive Director's Report:

Deborah Bilitski gave the following updates: City Parks Alliance is hosting a mayoral forum in partnership with park and civic organizations, including Waterfront Park. The forum will be Thursday, September 15th, Deborah asked that any board members interested in attending should RSVP by Thursday, August 25th before the invite is shared with the public. Attendance is likely to reach capacity.

Financials

Cordell Lawrence presented the FYE22 financials. Our total revenue was (\$519,317) under budget primarily as a result of an annual budget gap of Other Revenue (\$423,864), downsized July 4th event (\$85,000) and a non-cash item, Unrealized Gain/Loss (\$134,927) due to the volatility of the current interest rate markets, shortfall from Waterfront Wednesday (\$14,934) and Donations under budget by (\$10,953). The various offsetting revenue sources above budget were a result of excess performance in various categories which included Commonwealth of KY KYTC maintenance services \$7,140, Rentals & Licensing of \$80,627, Event Income of \$45,042, and additional Interest Income of \$17,552. Our total operating revenues were \$2,305,683.

Our total expenses were under budget by \$498,437 or 18% primarily resulting from the maintenance staff vacancy, conservative budgeting and expense controls of Repairs & Maintenance, Utilities & Telephone, Equipment & Fuel, Computer & Software, Waterfront July 4th, Waterfront Wednesday and Damage Deposit & Other expenses.

The actual net operating results for fiscal year 2022 were negative with revenues of \$2,305,683 and expenses of (\$2,326,563) to conclude with net operating loss of (\$20,880).

WRO: Waterfront Botanical Gardens

David Karem presented the WRO master plan request for the Waterfront Botanical Gardens, Japanese Garden project. Staff recommends approval. A motion to approve was made by David James and seconded by Terri Connolly. The master plan was unanimously approved.

The Mayor gave a note of appreciation and expressed his strong support of the project.

WRO: Pickle & Hops

David Karem presented the WRO plan and lease for Pickle & Hops project within the parking lot at the Poe Development. Staff recommends approval. A motion to approve the plan was made by David James and seconded by Terri Connolly. The motion passed by a vote of 12 in favor (Board members Arvin, Butler, Connolly, Fields, Jones, Miles, Stemler, Veer, Watkins, Secretary Whethers, President James, and Mayor Fischer) and one opposed (Board member Barber).

The Mayor asked about the location of the courts, location will be in a flood plain, but maintenance and upkeep will be included in the lease agreement.

Kevin Fields asked about the reception of pickle ball in the inner cities and how this is being marketed. Deborah agreed on the importance of this being well-received among the public and how we will help with cross-promotion.

Phase IV Update

Deborah Bilitski gave an update on Waterfront Park Phase IV. The team has been working to get the first phase of Phase IV out to bid. The amount raised for the project is \$26 million towards the \$50 million project budget total. Staff has continued to meet regularly with potential major donors and continuing to push fundraising while preparing the bid package to go out in September. The bid process will begin in September and the plan is to have a groundbreaking later this year, date to be determined.

Belle of Louisville Riverboats

Krista Snider gave an update for the Belle of Louisville Riverboats; notes are attached to these minutes.

Development/ Fundraising

Ashley Smith gave an update on development and fundraising. Give for Good Louisville returns September 15th, the goal is \$60,000 and 250 unique donors. Ashley asks each board member to reach out to ten people to support the park, there is a \$10 minimum donation amount.

Ashley also reminded the board of the Anonymous Board Member Challenge Grant that is still active, and we have a small portion left to reach our goal and receive the \$25,000 match. This match now includes staff contributions, our goal is to have 100% participation.

Events

Catie Nelson gave an update on events. There are two more Waterfront Wednesdays this year and we encourage board members to attend. There's many exciting events returning this year including Venardos Circus and new events such as the Hot Brown Showdown and Bourbon & Barbeque Louisville at the Big Four Lawn.

Park Maintenance

Gary Pepper gave an update on park maintenance. With events slowing down after a busy season the crew has been able to focus on horticulture and fall maintenance. There is an opening to hire new Maintenance Supervisor, the application was attached to the board packet.

Friends of the Waterfront

Joshua Watkins gave an update for Friends of Waterfront Park. This year Friends of Waterfront Park has created a new event to replace the Silver Anchor Awards, fundraising event. October 23rd will be the first Hot Brown Showdown at Festival Plaza. Board volunteers are working to recruit 20 restaurants and caterers to provide 2-ounce portions for sampling. There will be a panel of judges and people's choice of the favorite Hot Brown dish. The event has already garnered it's title sponsor and has raised a total of \$16,000 in sponsorships to date.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:21 p.m.

Belle of Louisville Report:

- 25th anniversary of the Belle's sinking... WAVE 3 interview with Historian & Belle employee Kadie Engstrom that will be on the news this evening
- Lost Ollie show which features the Belle is now on Netflix!
- When comparing 2022 to 2019, YTD, we had a 35% increase in passengers overall, with a 77% increase in children ages 14 and under; 6% decrease in seniors
- We closed out FY22 with a deficit, but from a cash standpoint, we're in an okay spot. This is primarily due to maintenance projects that finally had to be done, updating concession stand equipment, getting a new onboard Point of Sale System and the required WiFi, etc.
- Several projects on the Belle (engine room & mechanical) and Broaddus (roof, office flooring, ticket office, generator project, etc.)
- Also costs just went up-- fuel in particular, and cost of goods across the board
- This FY23 we need to increase our gross margin by 12% and hold expenses to same level.
- We expect to make budget by increasing ticket prices in 2023 on most cruises, as well as charter rates, along with onboard concession & bar prices, which haven't been substantially raised in years
- We're also aggressively seeking out grant opportunities
- Next month will be our first GIVE FOR GOOD (with Friends of the Belle) as well

Upcoming events through September-

- Roaring 20s
- Locks cruise
- Historic Louisville -- special 2-hour narration
- Port of Lou Bourbon experience
- Pirate cruises