



MINUTES

WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Board of Directors Meeting

April 26, 2023

Members Present

Inga Arvin
Oliver Barber
Terri Connolly
Kevin Fields - Virtual
Chris Jones
Troy Miles
Ted Nixon
Kevin Trager – Mayoral Appointee
Joshua Watkins - Virtual
Secretary Gerina Whethers - Virtual

Members Absent

Marianne Butler
Mayor Craig Greenberg
Susan Moss
Kerry Stemler
Purna Veer
President Markus Winkler

Staff Present

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

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Chris Jones at 4:05 p.m. on April 26, 2023. The meeting was held at Waterfront Development Corporation, 129 River Road, Louisville, Kentucky.

Approval of the Minutes

Minutes for the February 22, 2023 meeting were approved.

Executive Director's Report:

Deborah Bilitski did an introduction of Kevin Trager, the Mayor's appointee who will attend board meetings in the Mayor's absence. Kevin works in the Mayor's office as the Press Secretary.

Deborah announced the upcoming Steamboat Race Party, Calliopes & Cocktails, Wednesday, May 3rd at the Waterfront Park offices.

Financials

Cordell Lawrence presented the financials for the third quarter of FY2023. The actual results for our net operating revenue through the third quarter were positive with revenues of \$1,906,789 less expenses of (\$1,660,584) to conclude with net positive operating results of \$246,205. It is projected that we will end the year positively.

Ted Nixon asked how much of the Balance Sheet is Phase IV capital? Cordell responded that it was about \$25 million.

Deborah remarked that we have vacancies for two maintenance positions and possibly office staff as we are under resourced. We are hopeful to receive more support from the Mayor's budget and we continue to work with McCarthy Strategic Solutions to get state funding reinstated.

Events

Catie Nelson made announcements of the return of events such as Bark & Brunch By the Bridge, Waterfront Wednesday concert series, the Kentucky Derby Festival events and the bi-annual Mayor's Hike, Bike & Paddle events that take place on Memorial Day and Labor Day.

Other events coming to Waterfront Park, the Buy Local Fair, Louisville Wine & Food Festival, Funk Fest now a 2-day festival, Pride Parade and Festival, International Food Truck Fest, charity walks returning, Kentucky Humane Society's Waggin' Tail event, the Kentucky Craft Bash and July 4th with the Louisville Orchestra with a special movie showing of Sandlot on July 3rd. More info on July 3rd to come.

Inga Arvin asked what the turnout was for Thunder this year. Deborah reported that it is difficult to measure the audience year over year but likely the turnout was lower this year than last due to weather and that it seemed less crowded.

Operations

Kelley Runyon reported on 2023 concessions and vendors. Returning vendors include Big Four Concessions, Wheel Fun Rentals, which moved to the Purple Lot, and Amiraclade Ade Lemonade. New vendors in the park include Mike's Ice Cream, Snow Queen Shaved Ice, Frosty's Frozen Treats, and The Corn Place. The vendor program has a goal of increasing diversity and has made great progress. Of these seven businesses, four are women-owned, four are black owned, one is Hispanic owned and three are veteran owned.

Terri Connolly asked about the opening of Pig Beach BBQ. Deborah responded that the restaurant plans to open later this summer.

Troy Miles asked how Kelley tracks the 10% of sales owed by vendors. Kelley explained that she receives sales reports from the vendors and an audit can be conducted per the agreement.

Kevin Trager asked how temporary vendors are managed. Deborah explained that independently produced events manage permitting and vendor coordination and pay the park user fees to operate their event on-site.

Park Maintenance

Gary Pepper reported on new projects in the park and new staff member that was introduced at the February board meeting.

Belle of Louisville Riverboats

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

Friends of the Waterfront

Joshua Watkins announced the return of the Hot Brown Showdown on Sunday, October 22nd and that FOW applied with Fifth Third Bank to receive a debit card to make transactions easier when charging expenses for the event. Joshua is currently serving as Interim Treasurer until a replacement is identified.

Development/ Fundraising

Ashley Smith presented an update on the Board Member Challenge which has met its goal of receiving 100% board member participation. This year's 4th of July event has six labor unions confirmed with sponsorship and Waterfront Park hosted a volunteer day with the group.

Waterfront Park is hosting two summer camps with LVA this year, one celebrating the 10-year anniversary of the Big Four Bridge and the annual Juneteenth art camp which is scholarship

based. The Ripple Effects Photo Contest returns this year, the winner will be announced at the State Fair and Waterfront Park is hosting a photography workshop with John Nation at the Community Boat House.

Phase IV Update

Deborah Bilitski reported the team submitted a \$10 million request through the ORLP grant program, we should know the outcome in September. We are onto the next phase of consideration for PNC's Grow Up Great grant. The Phase IV team is continuing to cultivate relationships for future funding opportunities as we pivot our focus towards community engagement. We are working hard to get shovels in the ground on the first phase of construction.

Terri asked if we could program pop-up events on the site of Phase IV. Deborah responded that at the currently the site is fenced off to prevent encampments and that the team currently only offers tours of the site upon request.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Belle of Louisville Report:

- **Slow start to the season due to river staying too high for a while and/or bad weather (wind, cold) forced us to cancel or change cruises...**
 - Affected a total of 17 cruises in total
 - 12 cruises completely cancelled, plus 5 moved to the Mary or made dockside.
 - Passenger # down 15% from same point in season last year. Had those cruises not been cancelled, passenger numbers would have been up about 14% over same period last year.
 - GOOD NEWS: When you look at cash receipts Jan through April this year compared to same period last year, receipts are up 16%

 - **New ticketing system, Fare Harbor, launched in February**

 - **New website built for Fare Harbor launched in March**

 - **So far this season...**
 - Moonlight Cruises
 - Kids Cruises
 - Picnic Lunches
 - Bubbly Brunch
 - Captain's Dinner
 - Field trips
 - SPECIAL EVENTS... Juleps & Jazz, Derby/Drinks/Dessert and Thunder so far
 - Great attendance at our Thunder dockside event 225 (90%)
 - Great Steamboat Race next week
 - COMING UP
 - Murder Mystery
 - "On the River" Eat/Drink/Discover
 - More lock cruises
 - More narrated cruises

- **Annual Pass is huge! Sold 71 in 8 weeks. Took us months to get to sell that many memberships**
- **New interpretation of our branding-- more fun, vintage circus/Vaudeville sort of vibe**
- **There are several grants we've applied for that we hope to hear back about in the next month or so.**

Hoping for a kids cruise sponsor!