Waterfront Park

MINUTES

WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Board of Directors Meeting

April 1, 2026

Members Present

Chris Jones, Chair
Susan Moss, Vice Chair (Virtual)
Kevin Fields, Secretary
Ollie Barber (Virtual)
Secretary Casebier (Virtual)
Terri Connolly (Virtual)
Ken Herndon
Kris Kiser
Troy Miles
Pat Miller
Brian Meurer
Ted Nixon

Staff Present

Deborah Bilitski
Alex Laughlin
Cordell Lawrence
Catie Nelson
Kelley Runyon
Ashley Smith
Krista Snider
Alex Vega

Others Present

Members Absent

Inga Arvin
Kerry Stemler, Treasurer (Excused)
Purna Veer

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Chris Jones at 4:07 p.m. on April 1, 2026. The meeting was held at Waterfront Development Corporation, 129 River Road, Louisville, Kentucky.

Approval of the Minutes

Minutes from the February 4, 2026, meeting were approved.

Executive Director's Report:

Deborah Bilitski gave the following updates:

- Welcome new Mayor Designee, Pat Miller, to the WDC Board. Pat introduced herself and gave a brief insight into her role in Mayor Greenberg's Office.
- Waterfront received the Community Service Award from the Louisville Central Community Center (LCCC), as well as commendations from Congressman McGarvey and Senator Neal.
- The TurfMutt Foundation's Power of Parks brochure, featuring Waterfront Park and included as a Washington Post insert on March 8, was distributed.
- General discussion was held regarding park safety with recent issues with juveniles gathering in the park. Ongoing communication will continue with LMPD and the Mayor's Office.

Financials

Cordell Lawrence reported that the quarter has just ended and financials are currently being prepared. He will distribute updated financials when they are completed. Cordell reviewed the Free Cash Flow Analysis, stated FEMA is currently making payments related to the 2025 April Flood, which will be applied to the current negative balance in the Emergency Fund.

Motion was made by Board member Ted Nixon, seconded by Board member Kevin Fields to transfer $1 million into the Waterfront Foundation for the operating endowment. The motion passed unanimously.

Belle of Louisville Riverboats

Krista Snider reported that the Belle of Louisville 2026 season starts next Sunday. She mentioned they have cut half of their staff to reduce overhead costs. Krista also mentioned how sales compared to this time last year have gone up and that the Belle will be doing more advertising and marketing throughout the city.

Events

Catie Nelson reported that the 2026 event season is starting shortly with Kentucky Derby Festival and the Chow Wagon loading into the park in coming weeks. Dates and lineup for Waterfront Wednesdays have been announced in collaboration with LPM. The former restaurant building, 1201 River Road, has been rented out for Thunder over Louisville and the David K. Karem Building has also been rented for the event. Kentucky Derby Festival will be

programming the new PlayPort area during Thunder. Rehlko will be hosting an event to attempt to break the Guinness World Record for cutting football fields worth of grass in the shortest time in May.

Development/ Fundraising

Ashley Smith reported that Waterfront Park is still pushing for Best Riverwalk for 2026 with USA Today. The next operating fundraising effort will be the Spring membership drive. Ashley also mentioned that invitations for the 2026 Great Steamboat race party are coming soon and to be on the lookout.

Park Maintenance

Alex Laughlin reported that the park maintenance crew is working on mulching and seeding areas throughout the park. He also reported that we are working on de-winterizing the park, getting permanent restrooms back open soon. He reported that dredging will soon be complete in our harbor docks marina.

Phase IV Update

Deborah Bilitski announced that the $9.5 million dollar KY Grant has been received and deposited into Waterfront's account towards the Phase IV-B development. We continue to work with the Kentucky Department for Local Government to finalize the ORLP Grant. Board member Ted Nixon states he is communicating with Norfolk Southern CEO regarding a land acquisition deal to secure 3.5 additional acres for the park expansion.

Friends of the Waterfront

Lt. Col. Brian Meurer reported that Friends is gearing up for an exciting event season for volunteering opportunities. He stated Friends tabled at the NuLu Bock Fest this past weekend and that was a great turnout. He also mentioned the Sailing into Summer event presented by Friends is gearing up and are excited for this benefit concert at Waterfront. The new online webstore is finally up and running with the help of Emily Clayton.

Closed Session

At 5:24 p.m., a motion was made by Board member Kevin Fields and seconded by Lt. Col. Brian Meurer to enter closed session pursuant to KRS 61.810(b) and KRS 61.810(c) to discuss a prospective real estate transaction and pending litigation. The motion passed unanimously. The Board reentered open session at 5:38 p.m. and Chair Jones announced that no action was taken during the closed session.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.