

Lancaster Downtown Investment District Authority

Board Meeting Minutes

August 28, 2024 – 12 Noon

115 East King Street – Room 2F

Members present: Crystal Weaver, Teddy Boucard, Nancy Neff, Alicia Byler, Joe Donaldson, Chris Delfs, Sara Tuscher, Megan Fessler-McCarthy, Ryan Keates, Mark Stoner, Reverend David Peck and Marcie Natale.

Members not in attendance: Jim Wagner.

Staff present: David Aichele, Executive Director; Marshall Snively, Lancaster City Alliance; Lori Herr, Lancaster City Alliance; Fran Denlinger, Lancaster City Alliance and Bill McCarty, Solicitor.

Guests: Lauren Fenner with Brown Plus; Kelsey Kman and Ole Hongvanthong.

Quorum

A quorum was met.

Legal Notice

It was noted that the 2024 Board of Directors meeting dates, times and location were properly advertised in the LNP Newspaper on Thursday, December 21, 2023 and properly posted on the Lancaster City Alliance/DID website and the City of Lancaster's website.

Act 65

In accordance with the guidelines of Act 65, today's meeting agenda was posted on the City of Lancaster's website, along with the Lancaster DID's website on Monday, August 26, 2024.

Call to Order

Chair Crystal Weaver welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

Minutes

Crystal Weaver asked for approval of the minutes from the May 22, 2024 meeting. Chris Delfs motioned, Megan Fessler-McCarthy seconded, and all were in favor. Minutes were approved.

Approval of Financial Reports – May 2024 through July 2024

Financial Statements for May 1, 2024 through July 31, 2024 were distributed prior to the meeting. A motion was made by Teddy Boucard, seconded by Ryan Keates and approved unanimously to approve the financial reports for May 2024 through July 2024 as presented.

The Fulton Bank account check report was distributed prior to the meeting. Ryan Keates motioned, Chris Delfs seconded, and all were in favor of approving checks #5902 through #5969 drawn on the Fulton Bank checking account for May 1, 2024 through July 31, 2024.

FY 2023-2024 Audit Presentation – Brown Plus

Lauren Fenner, CPA and Principal with Brown Plus introduced herself to the group. This was the first year for Brown Plus to conduct the DID Authority's audit. She reported that the audit went very smoothly and efficiently. She appreciated working with Dave Aichele and Fran Denlinger during the transition this year.

Lauren reviewed the audit report and noted that a clean opinion was given for the audit. They did not find any issues or concerns. Lauren reviewed the financial statements which showed the total liabilities and net position of \$632,729, an increase of \$137,587 over last year due to collecting some past assessments and liens. Operating revenues increased \$114,896 over last year due to an increase in assessment fees, contributions and contracted services. Net cash provided by operations was \$126,581 for the year. Operating expenses increased due to hiring a security guard and outreach worker.

Lauren reviewed the professional standards letter which is required by the government. They identified two risks: existence and cutoff of revenue and receivables and completeness and cutoff of accounts payable. There was one minor journal entry of approximately \$6,200.

She reported there is over eight months of reserves accumulated which is a strong number. The average for most companies is three months.

Crystal Weaver asked for any questions related to the audit. Marcie Natale asked who made the contributions? Dave Aichele reported that the County of Lancaster paid \$65,900, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church contributed \$5,000 and HDC Mid-Atlantic provided \$17,000.

With no further questions or discussion, a motion to ratify the Executive Committee's motion of July 31, 2024 was made by Teddy Boucard, seconded by Joe Donaldson, and approved unanimously to approve the FY 2023-2024 audit as presented.

Following the discussion, Laura excused herself from the meeting.

Old Business

2023-2024 Delinquent List

Dave Aichele reviewed the list of fourteen (14) delinquent properties who have not paid their assessment as of April 30, 2024. He will be sending the property owners letters to encourage making payment so we will not place a lien on the property. Some of the properties are repeat delinquent properties from the past.

FY 2024-2025 Assessment Payments To Date

Dave Aichele reported that as of August, assessments totaling \$481,452 have been paid. This represents 520 of 644 total properties that have paid or 85% of the total budget.

New Business

Discussion of Committees and Assignments

Teddy Boucard reviewed the Advisory Committee listing for FY 2024-2025. He recommended adding David Peck to the Nominating and Governance Committee.

Dave Aichele shared that we are hoping to add two new board members. If anyone has any suggestions, please contact Teddy Boucard. Dave Aichele suggested a representative from the Zamagias Properties organization.

Board Participation in Tax Exempt Properties Payment Requests

Dave Aichele reviewed the list of 2024-2025 tax-exempt properties. He will be creating letters to be mailed to each of the organizations listed.

Crystal Weaver suggested if any Board Member has a connection with anyone on the list, contact Dave so he can include you on the letter signing.

Lancaster County Commissioners' PLOA Request

Dave Aichele reported that he will be preparing our request to present to the Commissioners in October. If any board member would like to accompany him, please let him know. Teddy Boucard and Joe Donaldson have accompanied Dave in the past.

Executive Director's Report

LEADS Flower Basket Program

Dave Aichele reported that Joel Henry with LEADS has shared that their organization is struggling to get volunteers for their annual summer flower basket program. Joel has inquired if the DID would be interested in taking over the flower basket program. He will be attending a future Executive Committee meeting to share details about the program and provide more information that can be shared with the Board.

Crystal Weaver asked if we have any idea the costs to run the program. Dave shared that he expects to get more details when Joel Henry attends the Executive Committee meeting. Dave emphasized that their need seems centered on getting volunteers to hang and take down the flower baskets. They hire someone to water the plants. Many board members voiced their support of the program because of the beauty it adds to the Downtown area. Crystal Weaver suggested the Programming and Beautification Committee could review their proposal, provide budgeted expenses and bring to the Board for consideration.

First Friday Merchant Sandwich Board Signs

Dave Aichele reported that Lancaster City Alliance has worked with the City of Lancaster to promote First Fridays and have purchased fourteen sandwich board signs. We have coordinated with business owners to put the signs out prior to First Friday and to be responsible for the signs. Due to the success of this, Dave is suggesting the DID purchase fourteen new signs and include the DID logo on the signs. The cost for fourteen signs is \$2,000.

Ryan Keates suggested we consider advertising outside the city using billboards. Sara Tuscher added we could highlight different businesses, along with promoting First Fridays. Megan Fessler-McCartney suggested a bus wrap to promote First Friday events. Marshall Snively recommended providing the billboard idea to Lancaster City Alliance's Marketing ELT. Chris Delfs offered to discuss with the City's LOOP team.

Concerning the sandwich board signs, Mark Stoner asked if the paper sign could be changed out for different events. Dave Aichele shared that the sign adheres to the board so removing it could cause damage.

Following the discussion, a motion was made by Ryan Keates, seconded by Mark Stoner to approve the DID Authority purchasing fourteen sandwich board signs at a cost of \$2,000. The motion was unanimously approved.

Discussion on Other Uses of Reserve Funds

Crystal Weaver opened the discussion by sharing that based on the audit, we have approximately \$150,000 in reserve funds to use for projects within the DID. In the past, we have discussed the need for new trash receptacles to replace the ones that are in bad shape.

Dave Aichele added that he has been in conversations with the City concerning replacing the trash receptacles and learned that the City is considering new units – “Bigbelly Smart Max” which are GPS monitored to sense and report fullness levels. This would alert the City staff when the units need to be emptied and could save on labor costs. A new BigBelly 50-gallon unit with no GPS costs \$2,000 and a 50 gallon unit with GPS costs \$2,887.30. A compacting feature is also available.

Dave suggested the DID could allocate \$50,000 to start replacing the trash receptacles in the DID and work with the City to continue a replacement plan. Nancy Neff inquired if we could put our DID logo on the new units. Dave shared that custom wraps are available.

Several board members shared they do not like the look of the proposed BigBelly units due to their industrial-like appearance. Sara Tuscher felt the historic charm of the city is not being taken into consideration. David Peck added that consideration should be given to the Historic District and trash receptacles should have a more aesthetically pleasing look to fit in. The BigBelly style unit could be used in non-historic areas. Crystal Weaver acknowledged the efficiency the new unit could provide but their appearance is not appealing.

Marshall Snively asked if the City is having a pilot program to try-out the new units. If so, it provides the opportunity for the DID board to talk to the City and share these concerns. Chris Delfs appreciated the comments and feedback and will share with the City and noted that seeing the units in-person may be helpful.

Velocity

Marshall Snively was pleased to report the VIP tickets are sold out for the September 19th event. There are plenty of GA tickets available for \$25 which allows access to the cocktail competition at 6:30 pm. He invited everyone to attend this fundraiser for Lancaster City Alliance and the DID.

Home Rule

Marcie Natale asked if the Home Rule charter will have a significant impact on the DID. Chris Delfs shared that the charter will have an impact on City residents. The Mayor has championed this initiative to allow for changes in the earned income tax to provide additional tax revenue rather than increasing the property tax. Marshall Snively added that Mayor Sorace and a Home Rule Commissioner will be attending the upcoming Lancaster City Alliance board meeting to discuss the charter. Attorney McCarty reminded the Board that only the DID Authority Board sets the assessment rate for properties in the DID.

Update on Homeless Population

Nancy Neff inquired how things are going in the Downtown since the homeless congregants were moved from in front of the County Government Building. Dave Aichele shared the outreach workers are trying to locate where they went. Some relocated to areas off of Route 30. Sara Tuscher noted she is seeing some people in doorways and alleys.

Board Member Suggestion

Sara Tuscher questioned whether monitoring bikes on sidewalks and on streets is taking place. She has noted an increase and shared that having bikes on the sidewalks is a safety hazard. Crystal Weaver questioned if they can be stopped. Chris Delfs felt it could be enforced. Crystal Weaver suggested we put a decal or something on the sidewalk as a reminder to not ride on sidewalks.

There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Teddy Boucard, seconded by Ryan Keates and approve unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 1:18 pm.

Next Board Meeting: November 13, 2024

Respectfully submitted,

David Aichele
Executive Director