

DRAFT

Downtown Providence District Management Authority

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 15, 2012

1. Roll Call

Chairman Lappin called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

Directors present: Umberto Crenca, Joseph DiBattista, Wendy Doyle-Spatcher, Robert Gagliardi, Susan LaPidus, Richard Lappin, and Christopher Placco.

Ex Officio Members present: Joe Wilson, Jr. and Sgt. David Tejada

Others present: Dan Baudouin, Executive Director of The Providence Foundation; Joelle Kanter, The Providence Foundation Program Manager; Frank LaTorre, DID Director of Public Space; Frank Zammarelli, Block By Block Operations Manager, and Robin Remy, DID Accounting Manager.

2. Report from the City of Providence

Sgt. David Tejada reported that the 3:00 a.m. club closings seem to be running smoothly. Dan Baudouin asked Sgt. Tejada to deliver the message back to the Providence Police Department that the Downtown Improvement District is extremely concerned about the

ongoing violence occurring in and around downtown nightclubs. Frank LaTorre questioned the status of police presence at Kennedy Plaza; Sgt. Tejada stated there is currently one officer and some car patrol. Dan Baudouin stated that Burnside Park appears to be unsupervised by police.

3. Approval of the minutes for the February 9, 2012, meeting

Director Crenca motioned to approve the minutes from the February 9, 2012, Board meeting. Director Placco seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was held as follows:

Director Crenca	Yes
Director DiBattista	Yes
Director Doyle-Spatcher	Yes
Director Gagliardi	Yes
Director LaPidus	Yes
Director Lappin	Yes
Director Placco	Yes

Therefore the motion passed.

4. Financial Report

Monthly Financial Reports

Robin Remy presented the financials for February 2012. The Statement of Financial Position continues to show solid operating reserves. The Statement of Operations shows year to date revenue

and expenses to be in line with the FY 2012 budget. The Collections Report shows typical high collection percentages.

Director Gagliardi motioned to accept the February 2012 financials as presented, Director Crenca seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was held as follows:

Director Crenca	Yes
Director DiBattista	Yes
Director Doyle-Spatcher	Yes
Director Gagliardi	Yes
Director LaPidus	Yes
Director Lappin	Yes
Director Placco	Yes

Therefore the motion passed.

4. Economic Development Joint Initiative

Dan Baudouin presented a draft of a proposed business interview/survey. Dan proposed to send the survey out to participating companies in advance of a scheduled meeting to allow the companies to research questions and prepare for the interview. Director Placco mentioned the enormous amount of surveys that companies receive; he also suggested the interview be tied in to tax issues. Directors Doyle and Gagliardi suggest not contacting Human Resources departments; also, they recommend a much shorter

format with limited questions. Director Crenca stated we would need to collect enough data to ensure the survey has significance; he recommends an online checklist, and also suggests board members participate in a test survey. Director Gagliardi feels one-on-one meetings will create better connections with business. Director Placco suggests face-to-face meeting with CEO and then asking, “Who should we follow up with?” Director Lappin questioned whether the data gathered will provide any significant information that will enable us to solve problems, or is this more of a PR/relationship building exercise. Dan Baudouin responded that it is really both.

Dan Baudouin discussed the city of Providence’s fiscal situation. He stated that Cliff Wood met with Michael D’Amico, Director of Administration for the city, and discussed having another meeting with the tax group. Cliff Wood and Dan Baudouin plan to meet with staff at the Chamber of Commerce to discuss tax issues. We should create a unified business voice against future tax increases.

Director Gagliardi stated the need for a predictable experience for the tax appeal process; he also referred to companies such as Fidelity leaving the city of Providence due to high taxes and relocating to Lincoln.

5. Report from the Director of Public Space

Frank LaTorre has met with city and DOT officials regarding the

upcoming paving, sidewalk, and lighting repair projects on both sides of Westminster and Weybosset from Dorrance to Exchange and will work to bring all parties together to speed up the completion of the work.

Frank reported on the meeting with Traffic Administrator Leo Perrotta and city merchants. New meter heads are working; the city is considering investing approximately \$750,000 for new parking meters. Leo Perrotta, Parking Administrator, says the new meter heads are so much more convenient to use, he expects revenues for meters will be up across the city. The meters are also programmable, so legal times for parking can be extended beyond the two hour limit.

The Hospitality Resource Partnership (HRP) is scheduled to meet on April 5; Commissioner Pare, Sergio Spaziano, Assistant City Solicitor, Andrew Analdo and all License Board members, and Jewelry District Association are all invited. Items for discussion will include law regarding violence outside club (club is responsible); possible show cause hearing; difficulty in getting victim testimony; recommended changes to charter.

Dan Baudouin suggested requiring a special use permit from the zoning department will raise the bar for prospective club operators. The Providence Foundation plans to submit this request. The goal is to tie in the property owner to the penalty if the club operator misbehaves. Director Crenca stated there is a noticeable difference

in operation and crowd behavior between clubs with DJs or recorded music and clubs that feature live music; how club patrons are handled at the point of entry (with under-21 group typically showing up high or intoxicated.)

Director Placco reported on Johnson & Wales University's plans to build a parking garage to serve its students. The garage will hold 750-850 cars; the first floor of the building will include some retail space on Richmond Street. In response to the problems in nightclub areas, JWU has increased late-night runs by outsourcing to a professional transportation service. JWU Safe Van usage has also increased due to efforts to pick up possible "problem" individuals.

Mr. LaTorre discussed his review of "quality of life" ordinances. The items reviewed by Mr. LaTorre included sidewalks, parking, litter, snow removal, signs, outdoor seating, vending and noise control. After his thorough evaluation, Mr. LaTorre determined most of the quality of life ordinances are sufficient; however, we will continue to monitor these ordinances closely and make suggestions for amendments where needed. He further stated that we have the ear of police, public works, etc. to get better enforcement. Director Lappin stated there is no city standard for replacement of sidewalks.

Director DiBattista motioned to have the DID support establishing a special use permit for nightclubs, Director Doyle seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was held as follows:

Director Crenca	Yes
Director DiBattista	Yes
Director Doyle-Spatcher	Yes
Director Gagliardi	Yes
Director LaPidus	Yes
Director Lappin	Yes
Director Placco	Abstained

Therefore the motion passed.

6. Marketing Report

Joelle Kanter reported on the first eNewsletter mailing. The mailing was sent to 570 addresses, and 232 actually opened the email (this is a high rate of according to Ms. Kanter.) In all, the eNewsletter has been opened over 600 times to date. Wayfinding sign design is complete; the next phase of the project is fundraising.

7. Report from Block-By-Block

Frank Zammarelli reported on the newly purchased dump truck. Frank recently attended Block By Block's Operations Managers Annual Meeting. The meeting's focus was on uniform training throughout the company and country. Future training will be more structured and consistent. Employees will participate in CPR retraining. The Providence DID is in great shape for upcoming spring planting.

8. Other business

A meeting sponsored by DID and the Providence Foundation to discuss the Core Connector/Streetcar proposal developed four points: 1) The streetcar is a good long-term idea, but short-term actions, such as the enhanced bus, should be considered 2) RIPTA needs to rethink the route, particularly service to the AMTRAK station, 3) Property owners are against funding involving property assessment, and 4) Rails are not the entire answer for generating investment and economic development.

Dan Baudouin stated he thinks RIPTA wants to conclude this phase of the project and say “the streetcar is the answer & this route is the answer.” Director Gagliardi is concerned about the lack of support by the city of Providence and the state of RI. If the largest stakeholders are not supporting this, why is the DID working on it? The feeling is that RIPTA is trying to push this on everyone. Director Crenca asked why we are being politic about it—why can’t the DID just say we don’t support it? Dan Baudouin mentioned a Providence Foundation meeting where Buff Chase urged people to think big in the long-term. Director Gagliardi thinks the DID board is sending mixed signals when we say we support it but won’t fund it or it’s a good idea but we don’t want property owners assessed. Director Lappin question whether the route really works. Ex officio Director Wilson stated he felt it was important to maintain the integrity of the DID board. The overall sentiment is to express to RIPTA the lack of

consensus at this point and that more analysis needs to be done. A meeting will be scheduled with Foundation/DID Core Connector leadership and RIPTA.

DID staff are preparing a proposal to the I-195 Commission for maintenance of the commission land, and we continue to work with the Jewelry District.

On another matter, Dan Baudouin discussed the results of the Assessment Committee, which met numerous times to review the methodology used to calculate DID assessments. The committee ultimately decided it was not feasible to change the method from basing assessments on a property's valuation as determined by the City of Providence. The committee as well as DID management agreed to devote additional focus and financial support to issues specific to the Financial District.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:22 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin J. Remy

Accounting Manager, Downtown Improvement District