

# **APPROVED**

## **Downtown Providence District Management Authority**

### **Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, April 19, 2012**

#### **1. Roll Call**

**Chairman Lappin called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.**

**Directors present: Joseph DiBattista, Wendy Doyle-Spatcher, Robert Gagliardi, Evan Granoff, Susan LaPidus, Richard Lappin, John Macliver, and Christopher Placco.**

**Ex Officio Members present: Diana Burdett, Lisa Paratore**

**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, Robin Remy, DID Accounting Manager, and Cliff Wood, Greater Kennedy Plaza.**

#### **2. City of Providence Update**

**No ex officio member representing the City of Providence was in attendance.**

#### **3. Approval of the minutes for the March 15, 2012, meeting**

**Director Macliver motioned to approve the minutes from the March**

**15, 2012, Board meeting. Director Gagliardi seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was held as follows:**

**Director DiBattista Yes**

**Director Doyle-Spatcher Yes**

**Director Gagliardi Yes**

**Director Granoff Yes**

**Director LaPidus Yes**

**Director Lappin Yes**

**Director Macliver Yes**

**Director Placco Yes**

**Therefore the motion passed.**

#### **4. Financial Report**

##### **Monthly Financial Reports**

**Robin Remy presented the financials for March 2012 and reviewed the Collections Report. Director Granoff discussed the excess cash on hand and suggested that we analyze in depth the use of excess cash/reserves. Chairman Lappin asked for a status report on the FY 2012 Budget process. Ms. Remy reported the draft budget was essentially complete and ready for the Executive Committee to review. Ms. Remy will coordinate scheduling an Executive Committee budget review meeting for the first week in May 2012.**

**Director Granoff motioned to accept the March 2012 financials as**

presented, Director Doyle-Spatcher seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was held as follows:

Director DiBattista Yes

Director Doyle-Spatcher Yes

Director Gagliardi Yes

Director Granoff Yes

Director LaPidus Yes

Director Lappin Yes

Director Macliver Yes

Director Placco Yes

Therefore the motion passed.

#### **4. Greater Kennedy Plaza (GKP)**

Cliff Wood reported on the considerable progress on the GKP effort. There are three main objectives for this year: repositioning Burnside Park, relocating bus berths to free up the central plaza for public space, and strengthening the management and finance of the effort. Mr. Wood reported that Burnside Park is scheduled to re-open the third week of June 2012 after complete re-seeding. GKP plans increased summer programming in the park. Major Thomas Verdi, head of uniformed police for the city of Providence, is the newest member of the GKP working group. Mr. Wood has talked with RIPTA regarding the relocation of buses off the Plaza. Mr. Wood is meeting with the General Services Administration (GSA) to discuss GKP

efforts. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse is on the board of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA); the NEA "Our Town" program awarded \$200,000 for GKP programming. \$10,000 from the television show "Parking Wars," which filmed an episode in Providence, has been committed to GKP programming. Mr. Wood, along with Director DiBattista and DID Director of Public Space, Frank LaTorre, made a presentation to the Providence Preservation Society. Several funding applications have been submitted to various organizations.

Director Gagliardi asked about the timeline for rerouting buses and vehicle congestion in Kennedy Plaza. Dan Baudouin responded that RIPTA is conducting a study that will be complete in three to four months; Mr. Baudouin suggested relocation could start by next spring 2013. RIPTA still has \$700,000 from the federal stimulus program that can be partially used for the relocation project. Director Macliver asked how many buses will ultimately be moved. Mr. Baudouin stated that bus stops, not actual buses, will be relocated; sub-hubs will be established; no final numbers have been confirmed.

Director Macliver voiced concern that the pedestrian tunnels are perceived as dangerous; Mr. Wood stated the tunnels would be included in GKP programming. The aim is to change the social situation, namely influencing the groups of people who use the space. GKP will work to move transit people away from the plaza and move positive program activities into the space.

## **5. Economic Development Joint Initiative**

**Dan Baudouin asked the board to submit a letter to RIDOT requesting they include the downtown sidewalk repair projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); projects in the TIP receive high priority status. This would take care of sidewalks on main roads; side streets are not as eligible for federal funding.**

**Director DiBattista made a motion to submit a letter of support to the RIDOT, Director Macliver seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was held as follows:**

**Director DiBattista Yes**

**Director Doyle-Spatcher Yes**

**Director Gagliardi Yes**

**Director Granoff Yes**

**Director LaPidus Yes**

**Director Lappin Yes**

**Director Macliver Yes**

**Director Placco Yes**

**Therefore the motion passed.**

**Dan Baudouin handed out updated Office Interview/Survey sheets for the board's review. Dan and Cliff Wood are focusing on two initiatives: no increase in the commercial tax rate and streamlining the building permitting process. Cliff and Dan have met with the**

mayor's staff, and Dan encouraged board members to voice their concerns about being unable to afford more taxes directly to the Mayor or Mike D'Amico, Director of Administration. Dan discussed difficulties in obtaining permits due to reduction in fire review personnel. Dan sees this as an opportunity to advocate for locating Building and Fire permitting offices at the same location and hiring qualified plan reviewers.

## **6. Marketing Report**

Joelle Kanter reported the wayfinding design is almost complete. The committee will complete their site visits with Bill Bombard of Providence DPW. The committee is scheduled to meet with a fundraising group, including representatives from Providence Arts, Culture & Tourism, Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the Providence Planning Department. Ms. Kanter expects to send out an eNewsletter in May. Websites improvements continue. Updated Neighborhood Guides have been developed and should be available in time for the RI Business Expo.

## **7. Report from the Director of Public Space**

Frank LaTorre is attending the International Downtown Association (IDA) Spring Conference in Orlando, FL. Cliff Wood and Dan Baudouin met with Councilman Yermin who has sponsored an ordinance to review licensing of nightclubs. Mr. Baudouin has asked the Charter Review Commission for changes to the charter to require that the Board of License develop rules and regulations. Mr. Wood

met with Mayor Taveras' staff to discuss the nightclub problem. Director Lappin suggested having the DID write a letter to Mayor Taveras regarding Level II. Dan Baudouin expressed his preference was to take an overall approach to all nightclubs. Director DiBattista made a motion that the DID send two letters to Mayor Taveras—one directly dealing with Level II, and the other dealing with nightclubs as a whole. Director Macliver seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was held as follows:

Director DiBattista	Yes
Director Doyle-Spatcher	Yes
Director Gagliardi	Yes
Director Granoff	Yes
Director LaPidus	Yes
Director Lappin	Yes
Director Macliver	Yes
Director Placco	Yes

Therefore the motion passed.

Director Gagliardi asked if the board had any specific recommendations on what should be in licensing ordinances; he further stated we need a strong, cohesive message regarding changes and enforcement. Director Lappin asked if Hospitality Resource Partnership has had discussions on whether having under-21 nightclubs is a viable option. Frank Zammarelli suggested

**the need to question why Providence was an under-21 city. He stated that the over-25 crowd is the group who actually pay to enjoy nightclubs and other evening entertainment, and the problems caused by under-21 establishments are negatively affecting the city's nighttime economy by discouraging the over-25 customers from patronizing downtown clubs and entertainment venues.**

#### **8. Report from Block-By-Block**

**Frank Zammarelli reported that mulching tree beds and pressure washing sidewalks are in process. Cliff Wood asked if the DID could plant flowers outside the fencing at Burnside Park. Mr. Zammarelli responded that the city of Providence will not allow the DID to plant there. Block By Block has agreed to issue a credit of \$11,000 to offset the data collection system that was not put into place as originally agreed in FY 2012. Their goal is to have their new system in place by approximately July 2012.**

#### **10. Adjournment**

**The meeting was adjourned at 9:48 a.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Robin J. Remy**

**Accounting Manager, Downtown Improvement District**