



**Downtown Development Authority of Colorado Springs  
Board of Directors Meeting  
February 9, 2021 at 8 am  
Convened via Zoom Meeting**

**Board members present:** Carrie Bartow, Aaron Briggs, Jordan Empey, Jill Gaebler, Stella Hodgkins, Chris Lieber, Dave Lux, Darsey Nicklasson and Ingrid Richter

**Staff:** Alex Armani-Munn, Jan Branham, Susan Edmondson, Laurel Prud'homme and Ana Valdez

**Guests:** Jon Khoury, Ryan Tefertiller and Peter Wysocki

---

**Welcome and roll call**

Ingrid Richter called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. and roll call was taken.

**Minutes**

Board reviewed minutes dated January 12, 2021. Following a motion by Darsey Nicklasson, seconded by Stella Hodgkins, minutes were approved unanimously without change.

**Financials**

Board reviewed financials dated January 31, 2021. Susan Edmondson shared that there is very little to report as it is still early in the year; DDA has about \$886,000 in operating fund and \$303,000 in the TIF Fund. A few more expenses were paid related to holiday marketing. Allocations include property management payment for the ArtSpace property, Gateways 1 project and Job Incentive grants.

Susan reminded the board that the DDA audit is under way and must be submitted to the city by end of month, a very tight turnaround. She sought a motion to authorize the DDA Executive Committee to review and accept the 2020 DDA audit later this month so the audit can be submitted on time.

Aaron Briggs led a motion to authorize the DDA Executive Committee to review and accept the 2020 audit, seconded by Stella Hodgkins, and approved unanimously.

**Old Business**

Jon Khoury, executive director, provided an annual update on Cottonwood Center for the Arts. Despite being closed for three months in 2020, Cottonwood ended the year in the black with a net of about \$35,000. Cottonwood has been open since June 2020 for live classes and is working hard to keep up the momentum. Jon explained that after The O'Neil Group is paid back by March 2022, Cottonwood will double down efforts to pay off debt to DDA. Until then, Cottonwood will continue to make monthly payments of \$2,400 to the DDA. Lots of improvements to Cottonwood are planned, including resurfacing the parking lot, adding gates, increasing ADA accessibility, and adding outdoor gathering areas. Cottonwood has a goal to beautify the entire neighborhood with these improvements. Jon reassured the board that paying off the DDA loan is a high priority. The board thanked Jon for his presentation and wished him success on all of Cottonwood's endeavors.

*Jon Khoury left the meeting at 8:23 a.m.*

**Grants**

Alex presented a grant request from Rocke Mountain Bike at 226 N. Tejon Street. The owner has made some improvements to the façade with fresh paint, new window and door and signage. Alex explained that paint and windows are considered deferred maintenance. Therefore staff recommends calculating grant for half the cost of the new sign and door for a grant of up to \$2,361.

Ingrid Richter led a motion to provide a grant in the amount of up to \$2,400 to Rocke Mountain Bike. The motion was seconded by Darsey Nicklasson and approved unanimously with none opposed.

Susan drew board members' attention to a memo regarding 2021 appropriations. Staff seeks a board vote on annual job incentive grant payment to Kinder Morgan and annual operations grant to PikeRide.

Aaron Briggs led a motion to approve the annual \$20,000 job incentive grant payment to Kinder Morgan. Chris Lieber seconded the motion with all in favor and none opposed.

*Carrie Bartow joined the meeting at 8:25 a.m.*

Susan then explained that PikeRide began as a stated goal and tactic of DDA's Experience Downtown Master Plan, incubated through Downtown Ventures. DDA had informally agreed a few years ago that it would aim to provide \$35,000 each year in operating funds to ensure PikeRide continues to fulfill multimodal transportation goals. PikeRide has had an outstanding year and worked hard to secure PPE and grants specific to transportation and bike share programs.

*Jordan Empey joined the meeting at 8:30 a.m.*

Jill Gaebler added that PikeRide recently received a CDOT grant and is working to leverage safety initiatives for tourists. Jill also noted that the most used bike share stations are at Memorial Park and Tejon/Moreno. This indicates that locals are using bike share for leisure activities. By comparison, tourism accounts for 40% of bike rentals. The PikeRide board is encouraged that resident use of the program is growing.

Chris Lieber led a motion to provide the \$35,000 annual grant to PikeRide this year. Dave Lux seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved with Jill Gaebler recusing herself from the vote.

Susan referred board to a memo summarizing outdoor dining grants. This memo is for informational purposes and no board action is required. \$6,350 in grants was disbursed to eight restaurants to cover costs of parklet construction, outdoor heaters, and structural improvements to existing patios. These grants helped Downtown restaurants expand outdoor seating to maintain income despite the ongoing indoor dining restrictions.

### **Informational**

Staff shared that a consumer analytics tool has been purchased to help track Downtown user patterns and provide staff with meaningful data. Alex also referred board to an update on commercial and business activity Downtown included in board packets.

### **Discussion**

Susan asked Chris Lieber of N.E.S. to give a brief update on the Monument and Fountain Creek upgrade planning process made possible by a grant from the Lyda Hill Foundation. Chris explained the project to improve the creeks has three primary goals: improve creek health, increase recreational opportunities, and position the creeks as an economic catalyst for the region. The planning process will be a year-long effort. Chris noted that many local organizations already have made lasting improvements to the creek areas.

Susan drew board members' attention to the memo on TIF reimbursements. While urban construction remains challenging and costly and still needing TIF to level the playing field, it also is clear that new projects are proving able to meet high rent and sales capacity, especially evidenced by the recent sale of Blue Dot Place, which set a citywide record in per-unit sales price. Staff recommends lowering TIF reimbursement cap to help build up reserves for other worthy future projects. Susan especially noted that in a few years, reimbursement agreements will not be the ideal structure because there will be too few years remaining for meaningful reimbursement; for that reason in particular, DDA should be mindful of building reserves to support projects in the future. After much board discussion, the board favored setting a cap of 65 percent TIF reimbursement on residential projects. If projects either demonstrate a component of affordability (rents serving 80 percent AMI or less), or if projects are mixed use or in especially problematic, hemmed-in sites, they could be eligible for a greater percentage of reimbursement.

Darsey Nicklasson led a motion to set future TIF reimbursements at 65 percent while allowing consideration of future bonuses for unique circumstances. Dave Lux seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved with none opposed.

*Jill Gaebler left the meeting at 8:40 a.m.*

Continuing with board discussion, Susan shared the memo on Public Improvement Projects that are priority for 2021. Many of these projects are dependent upon the city to fund and implement, but staff plays an important role in advocating for their completion. Staff recommends putting a pause on further Alleyway Phase 2 projects and reallocating the \$300,000 in funds for more impactful future projects.

Jordan Empey led a motion to put a pause on further Alleyways Phase 2 improvements, move the \$300,000 from Alleyways Phase 2 and hold the funds for other worthy future projects. Stella Hodgkins seconded the motion which was unanimously approved with none opposed.

Also listed on the memo is a recommendation to add lighting to the underpass at Colorado Avenue in the next one to two years to further enhance the mural. Busy Corner also will need to be addressed, adding conduit for wayfinding signage and perhaps compelling public art will be a priority. Converting South Tejon from diagonal to parallel parking would assist in widening sidewalks for increased patio space. Using the street between Colorado and Pikes Peak could serve as a beta test for the rest of Tejon. Lastly, staff will continue to advocate for Bijou and Kiowa to be converted from one-way to two-way streets to increase pedestrian safety.

*Jordan Empey left the meeting at 9:50 a.m.*

Staff seeks board input on public improvement projects. Board suggested that DDA think big and not try to tackle lots of little projects but focus on significant improvements. Board is in favor of any project that makes Downtown a pleasant place to experience.

*Chris Lieber left the meeting at 10:01 a.m.*

Board recommends that Downtown be analyzed in a holistic manner to include many minor improvements into one project. Susan added that a code change to use alleyways rather than medians for deliveries would make a big improvement on South Tejon. Board member Aaron Briggs drew up a draft street plan that staff will share at a future meeting. Board is in support of the projects listed on the memo.

## **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.