

**Woodland Park Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors**

**City Hall – Council Chambers  
220 W. South Avenue, Woodland Park CO**

**REGULAR MEETING - WORKSHOP MINUTES**

**November 14, 2017 – 7:30AM**

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:** Merry Jo Larsen, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:32AM.

**IN ATTENDANCE – Board of Directors:** Merry Jo Larsen (Chair), Noel Sawyer (Vice Chair), Tanner Coy (Treasurer), Al Born (Secretary), Jon DeVaux, Jan Wilson (arrived at 7:34), Jerry Good, Elijah Murphy

**Absent:** Ellen Carrick

**Others Present:** Arden Weatherford, Bob Volpe, Dan Taylor, Fred Slane, Jane Mannon, Ken Tamez, Kerri Kilgore, Lynn Jones, Pat Hill, Sally Riley, Todd De Remus, Tony Perry

**ADDITIONS, DELETIONS, OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA**

None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. October 3, 2017 DDA Regular Meeting Minutes
- b. October 17, 2017 Special Meeting – Workshop Minutes
- c. October 31, 2017 Special Meeting – Workshop Minutes

**MOTION:** To approve the Agenda and October 3, 17 and 31 Minutes. Born/DeVaux Passed 7 – 0 (Jan Wilson arrived just after the vote.)

**CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSION ON NEW TIF AGREEMENTS**

Chair Larsen explained the purpose of the meeting: continued discussion of TIF agreements. She added that each TIF agreement is an individual application, analysis and contract. Larsen asked Elijah Murphy to introduce Ken Tamez, a friend of Murphy's who also served in the special forces of the military. Tamez was asked by Murphy to take an in-depth look at the Foundation Plan and the Colorado Revised Statutes. Tamez shared the findings of his research, mainly that there are no specific criteria for TIF agreements. Larsen reiterated from the last meeting that what the DDA has done has been relatively successful. Larsen asked Lynn Jones to share suggestions for developing TIF criteria received from Ellen Carrick via email—the Oshkosh application provided a good definition of a TIF agreement for all applicants and a TIF application could be constructed by cutting out parts of other agreements and putting them into one document that would best serve the DDA. Jon DeVaux suggested calling Oshkosh to find out the perception of the DDA from the businesses, rather than just relying on an article.

Larsen stated that the Foundation Plan is still good, but it would be nice to provide applicants with a better explanation of TIF. DeVaux explained that TIF is the lifeline of the DDA income. Each time a TIF is issued, money is collected by the assessor. There is no loss to the DDA; money is not distributed until

collected. Woodland Park was the seventh DDA district established in Colorado and at that time, the DDA Board visited Greeley because it was as an example of what not to do. DeVaux added that this DDA was very cautious moving forward, wanting to make sure that everything it did worked. DeVaux, Al Born and Merry Jo Larsen were part of the group that visited Greeley.

Noel Sawyer referred to the Oshkosh application and mentioned that he liked the length of its agreements of not more than 10 years. He stated that because of the DDA's debt, it is in survival mode and determining if other DDAs have a similar debt situation could be good research for Tamez. DeVaux stated that it's important to look at how the DDA got where it is today and referred to the Saddle Club transfer—that it was through the City and the Saddle Club, not the DDA. In 2007/2008, the economy tanked and the DDA is still working through the effects of that. Murphy added that the DDA concentrates on blighted or unattractive properties and had Natural Grocers opted to improve the old Ben Franklin store, that would have been the perfect TIF. Murphy suggested that the DDA's TIF application should explain what assistance is provided by the DDA and should also address economic impact and public improvement requirements. Larsen cautioned the Board about focusing just on blighted properties. The DDA Board should try not to guess whether the company coming in can survive, but instead, should discourage a TIF if it thinks the business would not be viable.

Al Born stated that the Foundation Plan, specifically the objectives and purposes, would provide a good start for a help sheet for companies coming in. As previously discussed, metrics could be added easily and would provide a more objective reflection about how the DDA handles TIFs. DeVaux added that one of the problems is taking an existing property and improving it, because that provides the least amount of gain. The best property for a TIF agreement is one that is not already taxed and provides the most amount of gain when it becomes a taxable unit.

Kerri Kilgore, Owner/Broker of Prestige Realty Group, suggested for the benefit of members in the audience, information should be put into the newspaper stating that the goal is to take the Foundation Plan and merge it with pieces from other cities' agreements, creating a scoring system and information sheet that could be given to interested businesses. Sawyer mentioned that Bob Volpe had written about it in The Mountain Jackpot. Sawyer suggested another hands-on workshop and preparing a draft to work from. DeVaux suggested applying each current TIF agreement to the draft criteria once it is developed to determine if current requests would have been granted.

Tanner Coy agrees that new construction on vacant land is more advantageous, but as a business owner he feels that renovating blighted property in the district may have more public benefit. Coy is more interested in the net effect on the surrounding properties and the overall health of the district. He also added that he agrees with Born about the DDA Foundation Plan as the starting point, but perhaps more documentation should be required from TIF applicants—plans; sources and uses of funds; development budget; the request for TIF in terms of specific amounts and terms; budget of eligible expenses; pro forma (on a more professional level than has been previously received); professional studies including market studies, appraisals and environmental studies; developer information; financial statements; resumes of principals involved. Larsen requested that Al Born work with Ellen Carrick to create a TIF criteria draft and bring it back to the Board at the next meeting. Born requested to also review the requirements from the City's planning department. Sally Riley, Planning Director, agreed to the request. Coy suggested adding to the draft that any proposed development must be in accordance with all guidelines of the City of Woodland Park.

Dan Taylor from the audience added that TIF is a great vehicle for assisting developing businesses. Business experts, not the government, should be making decisions about a business. When a business person comes in and identifies what will work for their business, the DDA needs to decide if it can help the business and if there is a benefit to the City. Born stated that it's not the responsibility of the DDA to pick winners and losers. Murphy added that it is part of the DDA's job to do or require a market analysis to understand the prospects for success. Jerry Good stated that he does not think it's necessary to reinvent the application process because of one denied TIF.

### **EVENTS COMMITTEE**

Larsen stated that the Events Committee is being revived to work in conjunction with Main Street, who will take the lead. The DDA will provide support. DeVaux suggested Larsen, Murphy, Wilson and non-Board member, Tamez, get together. Events that have been agreed upon: Mardi Gras; Territory Relief Days Brewfest; July 4<sup>th</sup> week summer events; Logging Days (no date selected yet). Coy suggested adding fire mitigation as part of Logging Days; Born suggested including modern logging equipment; Murphy suggested getting the forestry service involved. Murphy also suggested working with the promoter of the Territory Relief Days, making it more of a regional event, creating a bigger economic impact for the region. He added that Main Street has already adopted a First Friday of every month which includes expanding on the Farmer's Market and utilizing the entire alleyway, bringing up other vendors, and possibly promoting it as a military appreciation day. In addition, Murphy shared a potential Gold Rush Days event coming in June. Born suggested contacting the Western Museum of Mining and Industry and the Colorado School of Mines for that event. Murphy reminded the Board that these events are manpower intensive and suggested getting the right people involved. Larsen reiterated the need for an Events Committee.

### **GENERAL DISCUSSION**

Larsen asked Jerry Good if he had an update on bringing in a locomotive. Good did not have an update, but Murphy mentioned that he found a caboose from the Rock Island line less than 20 miles away. Jan Wilson stated that the average cost for a caboose is \$10,000 and it costs as much to move them. DeVaux will have someone from the Historical Society contact Good about the locomotive idea.

Good shared his dissatisfaction with lining the streets with vendors during events and explains that his business loses out when vendors come to town. He suggested rethinking inviting vendors into town with the notion that it has no harm. Murphy shared how busy he was during the Farmer's Market and during last summer's July 4<sup>th</sup> event.

Coy reminded everyone of the upcoming Woodland Park Holiday Home Tour on December 2 and 3. Purchase tickets prior to November 17 and be entered into a drawing for four Bronco's tickets for the New Year's Eve game. Proceeds from the tour benefit three local nonprofit organizations.

Murphy stated that there will be a workshop November 30 at Shining Mountain Golf Course and will focus on the future of the rodeo in Divide and Woodland Park. It will include discussions on designing and creating high-end RV parking and a horse hotel.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

Tony Perry, President and CEO of Park State Bank, referred to a call he received from the attorney for the Weatherford group with a request for use of a bank conference room to conduct depositions. The bank is offering to both Weatherford and the DDA use of its conference room at no cost to either side.

Sally Riley, Planning Director for the City of Woodland Park, shared the Parking and Walking Audit summary report. All sidewalks and future sidewalks have been inventoried. According to the audit, Woodland Park has ample parking in the downtown area, but the system is fragmented. The question is, "How do we take advantage of it and how do we encourage people to stop, get out of their cars and walk? The consultant spoke about the need to develop "mojo," which means coming together on a set of objectives to achieve incremental successes. Ben Sheets, Public Works Director and City Engineer, has established a new relationship with CDOT and participated in sharing the Parking and Walking Audit results; CDOT will now take care of the crosswalks that will be parallel to Highway 24 on the local streets, connecting the sidewalks. The next big step—Main Street will apply, through the City, for the Community Builders grants in January 2018, asking for technical assistance to determine how to create an overall master plan for wayfinding. Coy asked about the City’s plan to add 12 parking spaces by the hardware store in Bergstrom Alley and how it ties into the parking study. Riley stated that there is a concept plan for turning Bergstrom Alley into a one-way street and creating both diagonal and parallel parking; the parking will work nicely with the existing power lines. Riley confirmed that the proposed improvements are on the DDA boundary side of the alley and stated that the City will wait until the budget gets approved, then conversations can begin with the DDA. Good asked if there were any conclusions about RV parking during the audit. Riley explained that RV parking was discussed during the audit and it will be part of the overall wayfinding focus. In addition, Riley added that Vectra Bank started promoting RV parking and people are using it. DeVaux mentioned that he is a member of the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) and there are projects in the area that have money left over that could be used for small projects such as some that may have been identified from the audit.

**MOTION:** To adjourn meeting. DeVaux/Murphy Passed 8-0.

Meeting adjourned 8:55AM.

Recorded by: Lynn Jones, Assistant to the Board.

APPROVED THIS 5<sup>th</sup> DAY OF DEC, 2017

  
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Al Born, Secretary