

Downtown Lexington Management District
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, May 6, 2020
Zoom Telephone Conference

Present Board Members: Thomas Pettit, Lawrence Wetherby, Mary Quinn Ramer, Stan Harvey, Clay Angelucci, Kevin Atkins, Jim Frazier, Dougie Allen, Paula Hanson, Brianna Carroll, Scott Davidson, Councilmember Mark Swanson, Vice Mayor Steve Kay

Advisory Board Members: Beverly Fortune, Salvador Sanchez

Other Persons Present: Ethan Howard (DLP), Laura Farnsworth (DLP), Terry Sweeney (DLP), David Warren (Block-By-Block). Chris Toutant (Parks & Recreation)

The meeting opened at 8:31am.

Jim Frazier welcomed the board and opened the meeting. There were two items for approval on the consent agenda:

1. Approval of the minutes from the March 4 meeting. There was a motion by Clay Angelucci to approve, and a second by Paula Hanson. The motion passed unanimously
2. Approval of the Financial Statements. Paula Hanson noted that there had been payments to participants in the Property Improvement Grant Program. Jim Frazier noted that at this time, the majority of the tax revenue was in for this year. There was a motion by Paula Hanson to approve, and a second by Lawrence Wetherby. The motion passed unanimously.

DLP Update

Terry Sweeney informed the board that DLP is focusing on marketing downtown businesses during the “stay at home” orders. This includes social media, websites, and a marketing campaign. Laura Farnsworth provided an update on DLP events, including a start date for Central Bank Thursday Night Live, DLP/DLMD Annual Meeting and State of Downtown.

Property Improvement Grant Changes to Support Business Recovery

DLP sent a survey to businesses in the DLMD boundary seeking information on hours of operation, revenue, and the status of their employees. The survey has 16 responses. Businesses are interested in grants to rehire staff, purchase PPE, rent/mortgage, and inventory. Intent to take the existing Property Improvement Grant program and modify it to take the currently 50% match and make it 75%. Increase the number of items eligible to include from the list above. Instead of having a \$10,000 max amount, cap the grant at \$3,000 to help more businesses. There is \$65,000 from the unspent grant funds, and it would be supplemented with \$15,000 from DLP. The \$80,000 pool would help 27 businesses if each one maxed out at \$3,000. DLP staff would continue to provide marketing assistance to these businesses. Additional resources would be considered as the next DLMD budget is created. Business owners could still apply for the traditional Property Improvement Grant Program for infrastructure, but would only be eligible for \$3,000, not the \$10,000 that had been available prior.

Following discussion, Kevin Atkins made the motion to amend the grant guidelines to accommodate the new assistance program. A second was provided by Paula Hanson. Paula also proposed a timeline for this amendment. Jim Frazier agreed and noted that the budget would cover the program through June 30 2021. Kevin agreed to the amendment to his motion, and all were in favor.

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On Street Report

David Warren noted that since the “stay at home” orders, meaning fewer people downtown, his team has been able to focus on more detailed cleaning and daily sanitizing on frequently touched surfaces. He also noted that the homeless population hasn’t increased during this time, but the main groups remain at the Courthouse plaza and Fifth Third Bank Pavilion, but no additional issues.

Issues Not on the Agenda

Ethan Howard gave a brief update on the tribute to former Lexington Councilmember Jake Gibbs. The plan is to put a bronze marker in the sidewalk in front of the Alfalfa restaurant that would feature a tree and some text. At some point in the future, there would be an unveiling ceremony. The cost is roughly \$3-4,000.

Thomas Petit had a request to David Warren to investigate the dead plants/bushes in front of both Alfalfa and Sunrise Bakery as they are quite unsightly.

Jim Frazier asked CM Mark Swanson of the future of the hanging baskets in downtown, and whether that expense was being cut for this year or next year. Terry mentioned that the funding would likely be cut for next year, as the plans would need to have been ordered in early 2020. There was questions as to what it means for services to be cut entirely vs. what the DLMD is allowed to spend funds on per the KRS.

Public Forum

No public comment was entered.

The next meeting of the Downtown Lexington Management District will be held on Wednesday, July 8.

With the boards work complete, the meeting was adjourned at 9:17am.