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The Downtown Development Authority **Board of Directors** met on Friday, October 19, 2007 at 8:30 a.m. at the DDA office, 200 South Biscayne Blvd., Suite 2929, Miami, Florida 33131.

PRESENT:

Com. Joe M. Sanchez, Chairman
Jeff Bercow, Vice-Chair
Alvin West, Treasurer
Sergio Rok, Secretary (Via Teleconference)
Com. Audrey M. Edmonson (*County Commission Rep.*)
Neisen Kasdin (*State Cabinet Rep.*)
Loretta Cockrum
Jorge Gonzalez (Via Teleconference)
Jose Goyanes
Oscar Rodriguez
Rodrigo Trujillo

ABSENT:

Scott Robins
Megan Kelly
Jerome Hollo

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dana Nottingham	Olga Ramirez-Seijas	Danet Linares
Beatriz Barberio	Antonio Alonso	David Lithgow
Davon Barbour	Brian Alonso	Marta Martinez-Aleman
Risha Daniel	Basil Binns	Jessica Pacheco
Sandra Hernandez	Rodolfo Calderon	William Plasencia
Alonso Menendez	Luis Casamayor	Jami Reyes
Cristina Raecke	Josie Correa	Gary Ressler
Madelyne Raybourn	Robert Geitner	Jay Solowsky
Yami Roa	Bert Gonzalez	Carolina Terrones
Mark Spanioli	Seth Gordon	Steve Wright
Dania Vergel	Armando Gutierrez, Jr.	Teresa Zorrilla
Leo Zabezhinsky	Catherine Lackner	Veronica Xiques

Chairman, Com. Joe Sanchez, called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

I. Approval of the Minutes ~ *September 21, 2007*

Jeff Bercow motioned to approve the minutes of September 21, 2007, Al West seconded and the item passed unanimously.

II. Financial Report ~ *As of September 30, 2007*

Carolina Terrones from BKR Garcia & Co. CPA, presented the Financial Report as of September 30, 2007 and stated that there were no reporting conditions.

III. Committee(s) Update

- A. Operational Committees
- By-Laws Committee

Olga Ramirez-Seijas reminded the board that at its last meeting (9/21/07) they had discussed whether non-board members could be appointed to committees by the chairperson of any given committee with the approval of the board chair. As a result, she was directed to prepare a resolution to that effect. In any event, a resolution

making any kind of amendment to the By-Laws needs to be mailed out seven days prior to the meeting. So, this item could be taken up at the next board meeting.

- DRI Committee

Jeff Bercow reported on the following:

- Increment II NOPC: the committee continues its attempt to get the City Manager to schedule this item on the November City Commission agenda and requested the Chairman's assistance in this regard.

- Finance Committee

Al West reported that the finance committee had met to consider the reclassification of certain line items, which is outlined as a legislative item in today's agenda.

Olga Ramirez-Seijas addressed the board concerning the adoption of the DDA millage, which has to go back to the City Commission for a re-vote. The reason being, that while the commissioners present unanimously approved it, there was one commissioner who was not on the dais at the time that this item came up. Subsequently, the Department of Revenue and the Property Appraiser have taken the position that therefore that is not a unanimous vote. The reason that unanimous vote is necessary is the new tax bill that affects all municipalities, counties, and special districts. And affects municipalities special districts and counties of special concern differently. So, if DDA goes to the City Commission and they unanimously approve the millage then DDA can adopt the same millage that it adopted last year without any problems. What needs to be understood and where guidance is needed is what happens if that vote is not unanimous. If the vote is by simple majority, then there is an issue as to whether DDA is an independent taxing district or a special district dependant upon a municipality. The Department of Revenue is taking the position that DDA is an independent taxing district and if the millage is approved by simple majority that means that it has to go back to 97% of rollback rate last year. If however, and it is the City Attorney's position that DDA is a special district dependant to a municipality of special financial concern, then DDA with simple majority can adopt 100% rollback. The reason being that DDA's budget is approved by the City Commission. In any event the issue of whether DDA is a special district dependant to a municipality of special concern has to be addressed because the amendment to the tax bill leaves a hybrid like DDA in limbo and it's going to effect it this year next year. And it will continue to affect it unless a clarification takes place. Because the law as drafted is impossible for DDA to comply with. Brief discussion ensued. The Board agreed with the City Attorney's position on this matter, which is that DDA is independent for purposes of not including its millage within the City's millage, but it is dependent because it depends on the City Commission's approval of the budget.

- Nominating Committee

Neisen Kasdin stated that DDA's recommendations for board membership is pending City Commission confirmation, which is scheduled on the November 8th City Commission meeting agenda.

B. Program Committees

- Economic Development / Research Program

Neisen Kasdin started his report by asking Gary Ressler to report on the retail/restaurant permitting matter.

- Retail/Restaurant Permitting: Mr. Ressler informed the board that he, along with DDA and DMP, had met with the City's building department regarding the permitting plans review and inspection process, which as co-chair of the CBD Task Force for the Greater Miami Chamber along with DMP and DDA has made this matter a priority due to the prolonged and protracted experiences many of the restaurateurs and retailers have trying to open in downtown. The City committed to pre-application meetings with the construction companies, developers, and tenants in order to point out any foreseeable issues with the plans and permitting process. Additionally, they provided point people inside and on the field for inspections and plans processing. That said, there is still a long way to go.

There is a procedural and process issue that needs to be addressed, which thus far has not been addressed. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Ressler stated that the message he and the group left with was that the building department's opinion is that there is a "perception issue" and therefore there was a resistance towards modifying the current process. However, working in partnership with the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, Miami DDA and DMP will continue to advocate for additional systemic improvements to streamline the review process.

- Façade/ Shutter Program Development: Mr. Kasdin stated that in the coming days, Miami DDA would release a RFQ for an Economic Development Administrator to continue existing economic development and marketing programs.
- Research Program: Mr. Kasdin stated that in the coming days, Miami DDA would release a RFQ for a Research Partner to continue the previously board approved Research Program. Miami DDA's past partner has been FIU Metropolitan Center.
- Marketing Program

Rodrigo Trujillo reported on the following:

- Community Forum: The Marketing-Communications Committee agreed that Miami DDA should host a community forum for the downtown stakeholders, which should be composed of developers, retailers, educational institutions, hotels and venues, and public sector. The purpose of the forum is to present a downtown marketing plan in order to leverage the \$240,000 of the Miami DDA Marketing fund with contributions with the participating stakeholders. The forum will result in the establishment of an ad hoc committee who will oversee a comprehensive downtown marketing campaign. The date of the forum is Thursday, November 15, 2007.
- Billboard Campaign: The campaign started yesterday (10/18/07), with billboards at I-95, south of W. Flagler Street and NE 1st Avenue, North of I-395 Expressway. Additional billboards will be at US1, south of Bird Road and I-395 Expressway, East of NE 1st Avenue.
- DWNTWNR: This publication is currently being printed and mailed out.
- DWNTWN.com and DWNTWNR.com: Two new websites are in place to support initiatives.
- Media Relations is working on the following:
 - « Special Projects Funding Program Allocations
 - « DWNTWN Branding
 - « New Board Member Appointment
 - « Flagler Street Planters
 - « I-95 Gateway Improvements
 - « Downtown Ambassadors Program
 - « Community Forum
- Upcoming Events:
 - « Miami Herald Editorial Board – November 12, 2007
 - « Community Forum – November 15, 2007
 - « Marketing Plan Stakeholder Roundtable – TBD

Com. Sanchez acknowledged the committee, staff, and consultants for their time and effort in expediting marketing initiatives.

Regarding the Ad Hoc Committee, Com. Sanchez stated that if DDA is going to ask stakeholders in Downtown Miami to commit serious dollars in helping to promote downtown, the only way they will participate is to bring everyone to the table. At the end of the day, we all have an interest and that “interest” is Downtown Miami.

Com. Sanchez passed the gavel to Vice-chair Jeff Bercow and addressed the Board concerning an initiative his office worked on to entice merchants to open on Sundays as well as try to provide a “holiday” atmosphere in Downtown Miami. The initiative is a Resolution that reads as follows:

A RESOLUTION OF THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION, ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TO DIRECT THE MIAMI PARKING AUTHORITY TO GRANT FREE PARKING IN DOWNTOWN MIAMI FOR TWO HOURS EVERY SATURDAY AND ALL DAY EVERY SUNDAY DURING THE HOLIDAY SHOPPING SEASON.

Com. Sanchez motioned for a DDA Resolution in support of this item, Com. Edmonson seconded, and the item passed unanimously.

- Services Delivery Program

Mark Spanioli updated the board on the following:

- Panhandling Ordinance: The committee met last week to discuss the boundaries with input from board members and stakeholders in the area. Assistant City Attorney, Veronica Xiques addressed the board concerning the boundary being proposed, as a litigator in the City Attorney’s office feels the area is too large. Discussion ensued concerning the boundary being considered.

Com. Sanchez recommended sending this item back to the committee to fine-tune the boundary working with input from District 2 Commissioner Sarnoff’s office.

- The Ambassador Program: The DDA Executive Director along with staff met with the first and second ranked firms and finalized negotiations with the second ranked firm, Verasys, LLC., who has committed to having ambassadors on the street by November 15th.

- Urban Design, Transportation & CIP Program

Dana Nottingham reported that on the following:

- Downtown Master Plan: A comprehensive study was conducted on all the relevant studies going on in downtown and how they are incorporated into the Master Plan and if not why not? Outreach and briefings are also being done with public agencies and stakeholders.
- Miami 21: DDA is still in discussions with the City’s Planning Department. DDA has requested that some case studies be done for comparison purposes. There are areas of special focus to ensure that as part of the master plan that the short term priorities are captured.

IV. Legislative Item(s)

1. A RESOLUTION OF THE MIAMI DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (“DDA”) OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE RECLASSIFICATION OF REMAINING BALANCE(S) OF SPECIFIC PROJECT CARRY OVER ALLOCATIONS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS BUDGETS BY A TOTAL OF FIFTY-SEVEN THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED ELEVEN DOLLARS (57,611).

Rodrigo Trujillo motioned to approve this item, Commissioner Audrey Edmonson seconded and the item passed unanimously.

2. A RESOLUTION OF THE MIAMI DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (“DDA”) OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA, ALLOCATING AND APPROVING FROM THE DDA FISCAL YEAR 2007-2008 BUDGET THE AMOUNT OF ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$100,000) FOR VARIOUS PROJECTS/EVENTS AS RECOMMENDED BY THE SPECIAL PROJECTS FUNDING REQUEST PROGRAM SELECTION COMMITTEE.

Al West motioned to approve this item, Jose Goyanes seconded and the item passed unanimously.

Al West and Neisen Kasdin commended the staff for organizing the information for review, which made the process much simpler. Additionally, the committee is recommending that the Special Projects Funding Request Program be moved from the Fall to the Spring. The Board agreed.

V. Other Business

- Downtown NET – Downtown Graffiti Busters Beautification Project: Eddie Padilla informed the Board on the Downtown Graffiti Busters Beautification Project being held on Sunday, October 21, 2007 from 3:00 PM – 5:30 PM in collaboration with DDA, Downtown Miami Partnership, Inc., City of Miami Police-Downtown Beat, and Hands on Miami to enhance the facades of the CBD from North 2nd Street to South 2nd Street & between West 2nd Avenue to East 3rd Avenue. Everyone was invited to participate and volunteer time on this endeavor.
- Miami International Airport: Rodrigo Trujillo requested that DDA find out what the expansion plans are.
- Landscaping Projects: Com. Sanchez informed the board that he had recently visited Downtown Chicago and had an opportunity to focus on their ordinances related to their greenery & beautification projects. Chicago Mayor Daley arranged for him to tour with the landscape architect who had worked on said projects and agreed to provide her the time to come to Downtown Miami if the board agreed to a presentation. Brief discussion ensued. The board agreed to invite her to a DDA Board meeting in January or February.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.