



**THE DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT, INC.
BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

May 13, 2022
Innovation Pointe Media Suite /Zoom

Board Members Present:

Larry Donald, Phillip Roberts, John Lamb, Jeff Justice, Stephanie Terry, Amanda Schmitt, Dwight Emmert, Tresa Miller, Kelley Coures, and Randy Hobson

Board Members Visible on Zoom:

Lucero Tennis Kieffer, Randy Hobson, Anna Jordan, Stephanie Engelbrecht, Heather Vaught, Jared Smith, and Stacey McNeill

Board Members Absent:

Johnathan Pope

Guests Present:

Tara Barney

Counsel Present:

Mike Schopmeyer and JR Trockman, KDDK

Staff Present:

Joshua Armstrong, Adam Trinkel, and Alli Turpin

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman, Phillip Roberts, called the board meeting of the Downtown Evansville Economic Improvement District to order at 7:33 a.m.

Quorum was present.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Approval of Minutes (action)

Secretary, Lucero Tennis Kieffer, mentioned that the minutes from the March/April EID Board Meeting were sent out via email prior to today's meeting. Kelley Coures sole moved to approve the minutes, Tresa Miller

seconded, none opposed; motion was carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Approval of financial reports March/April (action)

Treasurer, Stephanie Terry, stated that the March/April financial statements were sent out prior to today's meeting. Stephanie gave an overview of the reports.

Over 1100 tickets were sold for the Spring Wine Walk on April 24.

Stephanie noted that there is an expense on the Data Collection line of \$17,000 – this is a grant that was received from the Evansville Redevelopment Commission to do an appraisal of several parcels related to Rivervision.

Revenue is up at \$61,000. Expenses are up slightly at \$7200 but the EID has budgeted for year-to-date loss. With tax payments coming in June, the loss will be recovered.

Stephanie Terry asked for a motion to approve the financial reports for March/April. Kelley Coures sole moved, John Lamb seconded, none opposed; the financials were approved.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President, Josh Armstrong, provided an update on EID Projects.

2021 Project Update

In the last month, 3 vehicular alleyways have been illuminated in Downtown with dusk to dawn lighting including the 200 Block of Main and Sixth Street. This should make those spaces feel safer.

Discussion on 2022 Project

Lane Young with the Evansville Water and Sewer Utility is working with his counsel on drafting a document to their board for approval of the use of their parcel for the dog park.

READI 2023/2024 (Discussion and Action)

READI provides a 20% match in many areas of improvement in our community. Play READI is for things like parks, trails, and other things that add quality of place enhancements to our city and region. Josh believes the Play READI grant could be an opportunity to seek some support on a few place-making projects in Downtown Evansville. The match will not be received until 2023 or 2024 and the projects do not have to be completed until 2025.

1. A mural program does not yet exist in Downtown

Evansville, Fort Wayne, Cincinnati and a lot of other cities have a similar program in place. The EID could develop a program, apply for funds, set up a process for the EID Board to review sites, review respondents, and to match some of the EID's dollars with those that would come from the READI grant. Josh proposed considering budgeting \$30,000 - \$40,000 in 2023 for this project. Josh asked for any thoughts from the Board.

Jeff Justice stated that murals are an important part of vibrancy in Downtown Evansville and thinks that the program is worth exploring.

Randy Hobson asked Josh what the limitations of this grant are. Josh explained that the Play READI dollars are mainly for trail and park enhancements.

Amanda Schmitt asked Josh if building owners would want a mural on their building. Josh stated that several building owners have expressed that they want murals. Josh explained that the parking garages would also be a good location for murals.

Josh explained that if the EID were to decide to go through with the mural project, a message would be put out about the funding of murals in the district and any business owners that would like one should apply. After that, a call for artists would be sent out. The EID Board would then vote on their favorite rendering for approval.

Heather Vaught volunteered to be a part of the committee.

Randy Hobson inquired about curb/street repair. Josh Armstrong and Counsel, Mike Schopmeyer explained that those repairs are a City of Evansville function.

Phillip Roberts made a motion to approve Josh applying for the Play READI dollars to start a mural program, Kelley Coures seconded; none opposed. The motion passes.

2. Underpass lighting was in the EID's Beautification Plan in 2019. Josh spoke with Mayor Winnecke earlier this year about adding underpass lighting to the Downtown corridors. Jeff Justice has been assisting with understanding what the technology is and brought in Professional Lighting Systems – a company that does these projects across the world.

Josh showed an example of an underpass lighting system from Lynn, Massachusetts. Josh reached out to their mayor to see the outcome from the lighting systems. Their mayor said Lynn saw an uptick in sales tax collection near the areas where the lighting was installed. Josh explained that it may not be connected but the indication is that these areas became busier at night.

Josh presented 5 underpasses that are poorly illuminated in Downtown. Mayor Winnecke has been presented with the cost of this project and will receive renderings soon.

Josh stated that not only would this project benefit Downtown property owners but it's also the connectivity piece to other districts of the City that haven't felt connected to Downtown ie. Jacobsville, Deaconess, and Berry. Jeff Justice added that this will enhance the gateway to Downtown.

Josh shared that the underpass lights can be programmed to different colors similar to the lighting systems on the trees located on Main Street.

Tara Barney asked if there were any restrictions or approval needed. Counsel, Mike Schopmeyer, affirmed that the approval comes from the State. The lights are low voltage and low risk.

Larry Donald shared that The Plaza Condos at 101 SE 3rd are adding up lighting to the building that also can be programmed to match the colors of the lights on Main Street.

Value of Downtown Study Highlights

Vibrancy/Identity

Josh reminded the Board that this study was done on Census Tract 17 and 18, which is bigger than the EID District and includes other micro neighborhoods surrounding the district. The data ends in 2019.

Census Tract 18 (EID) shows dramatic residential growth, while Census Tract 17 shows a very dramatic residential loss. Josh explained that some of the loss is due to demographic changes in household sizes and aging populations. Over 50% of American adults are single. Household size in Downtown Evansville is approximately 1.25 and household size in the City is at 2.

Josh believes that in the next Census cycle we will see dramatic growth in both Census Tract 17 & 18 due to housing projects such as Silver Burches, Post House, and Central Lofts.

The data from 2019 shows that the EID had 24% of hotel rooms in the region, that number is now 27% with the new hotels that have opened since then.

There are several large draws of visitors within the district – Bally’s, the riverfront, EVPL Central.

Downtown’s retail sales makes up 2.4% of the City’s retail sales – which does not benchmark well against other cities with more retail stores in their downtown.

The two Census Tracts are loaded with destinations and unique features including historical sites, 32 public art installations, parks, churches, and 4 of the region’s museums.

Josh noted that the Buxton Retail Analytics shows that the busiest day Downtown with most cell phones is Saturday.

The EID team is creating a fold over card of talking points on the value of the EID/Downtown for the Board that will be distributed at the next Board meeting on July 8.

EVENTS & MARKETINGREPORT

Marketing and Events Director, Adam Trinkel, gave the Events and Marketing Report.

Past Events (report)

The EID hosted the Spring Wine Walk on April 24 with Oliver Winery. Over 1100 tickets were sold which makes it the largest Wine Walk to date. Adam explained that lines were a little long and the Fall Wine Walk will be adjusted to serve wine from two tents instead of one. There were two admission prices for the Spring Wine Walk but to simplify the check-in process, the Fall Wine Walk (September 30) will go back to one admission price. Romain Cross Pointe Auto Park is the Presenting Sponsor for both Wine Walks.

The EID hosted the Sidewalk Sale Presented by Edward Jones Financial Advisor: Jim Back on May 7 with 70+ vendors and a great turnout of shoppers.

Upcoming Events (report)

- Spring Small Business Saturday, June 4 – same day as River City Pride Festival. The parade will come through Main Street.
- Fireworks on the Ohio Presented by Bally's Evansville, July 4

Adam reminded the Board that no EID dollars are used to fund Fireworks on the Ohio. So far, \$56,000 in sponsorships has been secured for this event.

With an event this size, there are multiple entities involved. Adam is working through getting the barge agreement signed as well as other necessary permitting.

Ruler Foods upped their sponsorship from \$2,500 to \$10,000. Visit Evansville is also a \$10,000 sponsor.

The sponsorship goal for Fireworks on the Ohio is \$60,000. Adam explained that there are a lot of added costs for this event including sound and public restrooms.

Josh added that the 2024 Eclipse event planning has begun. Evansville will experience 3 minutes of totality. We can expect that our population will double in size that day and hotels will be completely booked. This will be a great opportunity for all Downtown businesses. Josh shared that the EID will sell branded Eclipse glasses for viewing.

Randy Hobson shared that WNIN is hosting a Taste of Evansville event on June 18. The event will be held at the corner of Main & Riverside with several local restaurants attending.

BOARD COMMENTS

None

RATE PAYER COMMENTS

None

CHAIR COMMENTS

Phillip Roberts followed up on the conversation about two Downtowns that was had at the past Board meeting. He ensured that it wasn't an empty conversation and the Executive Committee has begun meeting and reaching out to the organizations that were discussed last meeting.

Josh Armstrong connected the Indiana Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) with the team at Tepe Park. There will be an event for minority and women-owned businesses to get certified. After having conversations with people in the 4th ward, some people do not feel comfortable coming Downtown so the event will be held at Tepe Park. The EID will support the event with snacks and water.

The Indiana Small Business Development Center is hosting a Launch Your Own Business seminar at Nazarene Baptist Church on Lincoln.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the EID Board is scheduled for Friday, July 8, 2022 at 7:30 a.m. at 318 Main Street or via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 a.m.

Adam Trinkel asked for a motion for a roll call vote to ratify all actions that were approved during this board meeting. All in attendance and on zoom voted “yay.” None were opposed.

Approved: Minutes from the March/April Meeting

Approved: March/April financial reports

Approved: Apply for the Play READI dollars to start a mural program

Submitted by,



Lucero Tennis Kieffer

Prepared by,
Alli Turpin, Marketing and Events Coordinator