



**MINUTES OF THE DOWNTOWN MEMPHIS COMMISSION  
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING**

**Friday, March 16, 2021**

**9:00 A.M.**

**114 North Main Street**

**Due to the declarations of a State of Emergency by the President of the United States, the Governor of Tennessee, and the Mayor of Memphis relating to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Downtown Memphis Commission (DMC) has determined that it is necessary that the meeting be conducted by electronic or other means of communication in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public, DMC staff, and DMC board members. This meeting of the DMC was held via Zoom virtual meeting. Board members participated by phone with all materials made available to them as well as the public in advance. Procedures were in place to identify all participants on the call including members of the public and allow for questions and public comment.**

**Board Members Present:** Deni Reilly, John Zeanah (for Mayor Harris), Joann Massey (for Mayor Strickland), Benjamin Orgel, John Pontius, Terry Woodard, Victoria Young, Commissioner Mickell Lowery, Demar Roberts Williams Brack, Julie Ellis, Cheryl Pesce, Elizabeth Low, Councilwoman Cheyenne Johnson, and Senator Raumesh Akbari

**Board Members Not Present:** Representative Barbara Cooper

**Staff Present:** Ray Brown, Jennifer Oswalt, Christine Taylor, Brett Roler, Penelope Springer, Penelope Huston, Erik Stevenson, Katie Flynn, Abram Lueders, Kaeyla Willis, Jonathan Mosley, Jaske Goff, Lauren Crabtree, Clint Burke, and Debra Streeter

**Guests:** James McLaren (Counsel), Tom Bailey, Paul Young, Jani Smith, William Young, Diane Young, Carl Person, Shanae McKinney (DMA), Bobbi Gillis (CCRFC), James Stokes, Joe B. Kent, Toby Sells, Cleo Griffin, Doug Carpenter, Corinne Kennedy, Kristin Lockhart, Dorcas Young Griffin, Jamila Smith, Jani Smith, David Young, Cara Greenstein, Erik Stevenson, Charles Carpenter, Corbin Carpenter, Erika Wynn, and Member of Public

After welcoming attendees, Deni Reilly determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM. The search firm Adams and Keegan, which was approved by the DMC board earlier this year, conducted a search on behalf of DMC, after reviewing over 30 local and national applicants, the firm recommends Paul Young as the President & CEO. He received an unanimously vote from the search committee. Board members were able to review Paul's resume and job agreement before the meeting. Chairman Reilly called for approval of recommendation of Paul Young as new DMC President and CEO. Joann Massey motioned to accept the recommendation of the search committee, Williams Brack seconded the motion, after roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

During the roll call vote Joann Massey commented, "I have had the pleasure of working directly and indirectly with Mr. Young throughout his professional career. He is a model example of effective leadership, he drives outcomes with data to back up his decisions and his passion for the community and the quality of

life for our citizenship is the perfect combination in what we need in the President for DMC, so my vote is a resounding YES” John Zeanah commented that he echo’s Joann’s comments.

Chairman Reilly congratulated Paul and echoed everything that Joann said. “We are absolutely thrilled to have you on board to lead the DMC into the future and look forward to everything you can do. I just want to take a moment before we let you say a few words just to say a big thank you to our staff, who throughout the process have continued not only their own great work but have also aided in the search and have done a superior job. I want to thank our search committee, those members that are on the call today, Bobbi Gillis, Terry Woodard, Julie Ellis, Carl Person, Benjamin Orgel, and Sheana McKinny.

Paul Young made brief comments thanking the board and search team, and all the staff at DMC for their confidence in him and he looks forward to having an opportunity to lead the next chapter of Downtown in collaboration with staff and board.

**Chairman Reilly called for agenda item: Adjournment.**

Chairman Reilly made brief closing remarks and meeting was adjourned.

(Note: due to technical difficulties board members Cheyenne Johnson and Cheryl Pesce called to be sure that their YES vote was included during the meeting, they are both in full support of Paul Young as the next DMC President. Also, Representative Barbara Copper shared a letter to fully support Paul Young.)