



MINUTES OF THE DOWNTOWN MEMPHIS COMMISSION

Thursday, June 24, 2021, 9:00 A.M.
114 North Main Street

Board Members Present:

In-Person: John Zeanah (for Mayor Harris), Ed Stephens, and John Pontius **Virtual (ZOOM):** Benjamin Orgel (Chairman), Joann Massey (for Mayor Strickland), Deni Reilly, Demar Roberts (Vice Chair), Victoria Young, Julie Ellis, Cheryl Pesce, Elizabeth Low (Secretary), Commissioner Mickell Lowery, Councilwoman Cheyenne Johnson, Senator Raumesh Akbari, and Representative Barbara Cooper

Board Members Not Present: Councilwoman Cheyenne Johnson, and Williams Brack (Treasurer)

Staff Present: Paul Young, Christine Taylor, Penelope Springer, Penelope Huston, Abram Lueders, Katie Flynn, Lauren Bermudez, Debra Streeter, and Colin (DMC Intern)

Guests: (Virtual) James Stokes

Benjamin Orgel determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. Christine Taylor called roll for board members to confirm quorum. After reviewing meeting protocols, Chairman Orgel called for approval of the minutes from May 21, 2021 meeting. Julie Ellis motioned to approve the minutes as presented, Demar Roberts seconded the motion, after roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Orgel called for agenda item III: Chair's Report

Before presented the Chair's report Chairman Orgel introduced and welcomed our new DMC board member Ed Stephens. Mr. Stephens is a 5th generation educator and the Community Pastor of Golden Gate Cathedral Memphis and serves as Chief Operating Officer of Star Academy Charter School. Mr. Stephens briefly commented that he is excited be a part of DMC. Chairman Orgel reminded board of the DMC bylaws regarding officer elections. He also took a moment to congratulate board member Cheryl Pesce for being recognized in the New York Times as owning one of the top 100 Black-Owned Businesses.

Before the reporting board activity, Chairman Orgel thanked board members and staff for their hard work and dedication to Downtown. He gave brief highlights of all DMC board activity.

Chairman Orgel called for agenda item IV: Financial Update

Penelope Springer presented monthly financial report for all boards and reviewed financial highlights.

Chairman Orgel called for agenda item V: President's Report

Paul Young reported several project updates, Wisacre grand opening, ground-breaking for Owens Place (South City), Hospitality Hub opening, the upcoming Handy Park concert series and the approval of the DMC budget. The DMC Planning & Development department has received 2 IDA awards for Build

Downtown Master Plan and the South City Good Neighbor Grant. Also updated the board on the Diversity Committee Meeting that was held, Public Safety and the 100 North Main RFP has been released.

Julie Ellis suggested having Chief CJ Davis as a special guest at an upcoming board meeting. Mr. Young agreed that we will invite her to a future meeting. Ed Stephens wanted to know more about the Hospitality Hub. Penelope Huston and Debra Streeter explained the mission of the Hospitality Hub.

Chairman Orgel called for agenda item VI: New Business/ Adjournment

Chairman Orgel made brief closing remarks, seeing no other business, the meeting was adjourned.