



MINUTES OF THE DOWNTOWN MEMPHIS COMMISSION

Wednesday, August 25, 2021, 12 Noon
114 North Main Street

Board Members Present:

In-Person: Councilwoman Cheyenne Johnson, **Virtual (ZOOM):** Benjamin Orgel (Chairman), Williams Brack (Treasurer) Joann Massey (for Mayor Strickland), Deni Reilly, Victoria Young, Julie Ellis, Elizabeth Low (Secretary), Commissioner Mickell Lowery, Senator Raumesh Akbari, Ed Stephens, and John Pontius

Board Members Not Present: John Zeanah (for Mayor Harris), Demar Roberts (Vice Chair), Cheryl Pesce, and Representative Barbara Cooper

Staff Present: Paul Young, Christine Taylor, Penelope Springer, Penelope Huston, Halle Novarese, Abram Lueders, Katie Flynn, Lauren Bermudez, Debra Streeter, Eleslie Walker and Kendrick Moore (DMC Intern)

Guests: (*In-Person*) Deputy Chief Paul Wright (MPD), Assistant Chief Donald Crowe (MPD), Lt. Colonel Steve Chandler (MPD-North Main Station) (*Virtual*) Bobbi Gillis, Jim Crone, Joyce Selina Love, Mario Walker, Mike Hammond, Sylvia Crum, Tanja Mitchell, Brandy Johnson Ward, Michelle Ye, Jayme Stokes, James Stokes, Yolanda Jones (Daily Memphian) and Member of Public

Benjamin Orgel determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 12:04 PM. Christine Taylor called roll for board members to confirm quorum. After reviewing meeting protocols, Chairman Orgel called for approval of the minutes from June 24, 2021 meeting. Elizabeth Low motioned to approve the minutes as presented, JoAnn Massey seconded the motion, after roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

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

Chairman Orgel gave a brief overview of DMC activity to allow more time for Safety discussion.

Chairman Orgel called for agenda item IV: Financial Update

Penelope Springer presented monthly financial report and announced that we have retained auditors Banks, Finely and White for a second year. The final audit report will be presented by the end of the year.

Chairman Orgel called for agenda item V: DRB Board Member Approval

Chairman Orgel presented nominated DRB members Mario Walker and Shelia Urevbu for board approval. Julie Ellis motioned to approve Mario Walker as a DRB member, Cheyenne Johnson seconded the motion, after roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously. Julie Ellis motioned to approve Shelia Urevbu as a DRB member, Cheyenne Johnson seconded the motion, after roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Orgel called for agenda item VI: Downtown Safety Report & Discussion

Chairman Orgel welcomed MPD guest Deputy Chief Paul Wright, Assistant Chief Donald Crowe, and Lt. Colonel Steve Chandler. Paul Young presented the Downtown Public Safety Strategies for creating a safer Downtown. A few major issues are vehicular related issues (cruising, speeding & reckless driving), safety & security on Beale Street, unwanted activity on parking lots and garages, loud carriages and pedal pubs, scooters posing a nuisance by driving recklessly, and the lack of youth activities. After the presentation Deputy Chief Paul Wright and Assistant Chief Donald Crowe led an open discussion and answered several questions.

Chairman Orgel thanked our guest for participating in today's meeting and for all they do for our City.

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

Paul Young updated board on upcoming meetings, the Diversity Committee and 114 North Main Renovation Committee will be held in September.

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

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