



MINUTES
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING
Monday, August 18th, 2025 –12:00pm - 3:00pm
CITY HALL COMMISSION CHAMBERS
100 NW 1st Ave, Delray Beach, FL 33444

Call to Order of the July 14th, 2025 BOARD MEETING – 12:02 PM

Members Present: Jim Knight, Brian Rosen, Aaron Hallyburton, Jule Guaglardi, Alan Costilo, Cole Devitt, Anthony Barber.

Members Absent: None.

Ex Officio Members present: Mayor Tom Carney.

Staff: Laura Simon, Suzanne Boyd, Quentin Morgan, Shelly Likosar, Emily Oliveras.

1. AGENDA APPROVAL – Additions or Deletions

Board Secretary Devitt suggests moving “4F. DDA Officer appointments” down to 5E position.

Motion by Cole Devitt, seconded by Brian Rosen to approve the August 18, 2025 Board meeting Agenda moving item 4F to 5E position.

Board member Guaglardi suggests adding an item to the agenda which would be to request a workshop concerning the visionary committee and the DDA's involvement.

DDA Executive Director Simon suggests having that item at position “4F Workshop Discussion”.

Motion by Jim Knight, seconded by Aaron Hallyburton to approve the August 18, 2025 Board meeting Agenda with the addition of item “4F. Workshop discussion”.

Motion carries (7 - 0). All in favor.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS & PARTNERS REPORTS – limited to 2 Minutes

DDA Executive Director Simon informs that, to match the City's regulations in regard to public comments at meetings, the public comments at DDA Board meetings will be extended to 3 minutes (rather than 2 minutes).

Public comment by Stephanie Immelman, Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce, Chief Executive Officer):

Ms. Stephanie Immelman mentions that she sent a letter to the city commission last week, advocating keeping the garages free during the day as they are now because the Chamber of Commerce is concerned that having to pay during the day at the parking garages will affect negatively the businesses in terms of their employees but also in terms of their customers, depressing demand. She adds that the city's already getting revenue for the evening when the demand is high. She continues with updates on the Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce initiatives for the month of October and invites the DDA Board to participate. She finishes requesting the DDA support in executing and promoting the Delray Affair event in the future.

Public comment by Jeff Oris (City of Delray Beach, City Manager's Office, Assistant City Manager):

Mr. Jeff Oris gives clarifications in regard to some of inaccuracies on the timeline comments made during the item "The Link", on the Agenda at the previous DDA Board meeting. (A memo was provided to the DDA Board, and it is attached to these minutes).

3. Development Projects – No items to be presented

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. Downtown Development Authority Response to comments - L. Simon

DDA Executive Director Simon mentions that the DDA team wanted to take time during the meeting to share feedback received through social media and other public channels to clarify certain topics and keep board members informed of ongoing public conversations (a slide presentation was provided and included in the board packet as a backup). She then continues giving clarification on certain topics as below:

- Millage Rate
 - The maximum millage rate (1 mill) was set at the July meeting, in accordance with state statute;
 - There are two Public hearings scheduled (First Budget & Millage Hearing: September 8; Final Hearing: September 12);
- Savor the Avenue Program
 - Program Background:
 - Launched in 2009 (prior to current leadership's tenure beginning in 2010);
 - Purpose: Economic development and promotion of the downtown culinary scene;
 - Limited to downtown restaurants;
 - Initially launched as a Thursday event; later moved to Monday due to weather, which proved to be more effective.
 - Participation & Impact:
 - Attracts approximately 5,000 people to downtown;
 - About 1,000 participants dine at the table event; others patronize local businesses and restaurants;
 - Longstanding participants include Caffè Luna Rosa and Lemongrass;
 - Other cities (e.g., Hyannis, Punta Gorda, Naples) have inquired about replicating the event model.
 - Charitable Component:
 - Originally partnered with Office Depot Foundation (provided backpacks, donations per chair/table);
 - Currently it features only Delray Beach-based charities with a small portion of the funds going to the charities;
 - Local interest remains strong; multiple charities have expressed interest in participating.

- Downtown Resident Communication
- Ongoing effort to enhance engagement with the growing downtown residential community;
- Communication includes:
 - Sharing quality-of-life updates.
 - Promoting events that blend commerce with community.
- Recent Initiatives:
 - DDA Town Hall: Primarily attended by residents who expressed desire for more frequent meetings.
- Continued resident engagement is a key part of the plan for the upcoming year.

Board Chair Costilo congratulates the DDA on the great work the organization provides for the community.

B. Old School Square Venue Fee Waiver Request: Muscle on the Beach March 2026 event

Mr. George Walden (Muscle On The Beach Car Show, Co-producer) gives an overview on the Muscle on the Beach March 2026 event, a fundraiser event for the Sandoway Discovery Center event and on the reasons behind the fee waiver request.

Board Treasurer Knight mentions that it seems that this event raises a good amount of funds to the Sandoway Discovery Center, that he mentions to be a great cause.

Mr. George Walden mentions that apart from the benefit to the non-profit organization, the event brings many people into the town, around 6,000 visitors, which he considers to be a great opportunity for the community. He also mentions that the event takes place on the same day as the Delray Beach Green Market and therefore it is great for both events.

DDA Executive Director Simon adds that the event is low impact event for the Old School Square team, that the Muscle On The Beach Car Show event is very well managed and that the event only takes up a day of the venue space.

Board Chair Costilo mentions that the event is an excellent use of the facility and that it is in alignment with the DDA mission bringing positive economic impact to the downtown area, and therefore he is in support of approving the fee waiver request.

Board Vice-Chair Rosen mentions that he is also in support of approving the fee waiver request, seeing that the event will give back to the community. He also suggests the event organizer present the results post event at a DDA meeting. Vice-Chair Rosen concludes with the suggestion for the event organization to review transportation arrangements for Mike Brewer, to lower that budget line (10% of the budget) to turn those savings into proceeds for the event beneficiary.

Motion by Jim Knight, seconded by Cole Devitt to approve the Old School Square Venue Fee Waiver Request: Muscle on the Beach March 2026 event as presented.

Motion carries (7 - 0). All in favor.

C. Old School Square Venue Fee Waiver Request: Achievement Center for Children and Families Witches Ride event

Ms. Brandy Miller (Achievement Centers For Children and Families, Chief Development Officer) gives an overview of the Achievement Center for Children and Families organization and of their event 14th Annual Witches of Delray Beach Ride bike ride on October 25th 2025 which supports the efforts of their non-profit organization. She also mentions that the event brings over 300 participants and many spectators to downtown Delray Beach during the ride and for the post-celebration event at Old School Square which constitutes a positive economic impact for the community. She also clarifies that fee waiver request, if approved, will allow the non-profit organization to channel more resources directly into the programs for local children and families, including early learning, afterschool programs, and critical family support services. She adds that the event is in alignment with the DDA's mission to support vibrancy and community engagement, adding that the Witches of Delray Beach bike ride has become a tradition that brings people downtown, creating visibility for local businesses and highlighting the creative, inclusive, and fun spirit that defines Delray Beach.

DDA Executive Director Simon clarifies that the event has low impact, concerning the Old School Square grounds usage. She also mentions that the event adds to the City's Kid Fest later at the OSS grounds following the city's Halloween parade.

Ms. Sarah Martin (Achievement Centers For Children and Families, Co-founder and Epic Events Chief Executive Officer) mentions that this year the ride has incorporated Pineapple Grove with the help of the City team, which the riders will strongly appreciate. She mentions also that after the event, brunch activities are planned, encouraging further economic development, which will be hosted by local restaurants. She adds that the event also contributes to the kick-off of the new season for the Green Market, bringing visitors to the OSS grounds.

Board Member Guaglardi mentions that she appreciates the event, which is unique, creative, fun and engaging, a good fit for the personality of Delray. She is in support of approving the fee waiver request as she feels that the event brings a positive economic impact on the community.

Board Vice-Chair Rosen shows his support for approving the grant, stating that it is a great event and supports a local cause that helps the underserved kids in the community and supports their families.

Board member Barber suggests expanding the ride route, west of Swinton Avenue, to incorporate the businesses on that side of downtown and that would perhaps allow for more riders to join the event.

DDA Executive Director Simon suggests starting the ride at the Achievement Centers For Children and Families building.

Ms. Sarah Martin answers that the board's suggestions can be reviewed for next year's event.

Board Treasurer Knight comments that the cause supported by this event is of extreme importance as it is important to support the next generations, their education. He also mentions that the riders really get engaged in the event, in decorating their bikes.

Motion by Brian Rosen, seconded by Anthony Barber to approve the Old School Square Venue Fee Waiver Request: Achievement Center for Children and Families Witches Ride event as presented.

Motion carries (7 - 0). All in favor.

D. DDA Bylaws Amendments: Section 4.3 and 7.3 – Discussion - Q. Morgan

DDA Counsel Morgan clarifies that the changes to the DDA bylaws section 4.3 and section 7, comply with how the actual process is running, and enquires the board about any additional changes.

Regarding some of the DDA bylaws' changes, Mayor Carney wrote a letter to DDA Board Chair Costillo which was read into the records by Mayor Carney:

"Dear DDA board members, the law establishing the Delray Beach Downtown Development Agency was HR 299. I noticed my notes said 229. It should be 299 in case any of you really want to look it up. I'm happy to send it to you, but it is public record contemplates that the mayor or his representative may sit as an Ex-Officio member on the DDA in the state of Florida. The fact that no previous Delray Beach Mayor before me has elected to do so is unfortunate, but I think everyone would agree that these are very different times. The intent of this provision is to have someone that is elected and accountable to the voters be involved in this agency's use of taxpayer funds. Since no one sitting on this board or the staff has ever been elected, I believe, it is a wise and inclusion in the statute. As a new member of the board, I felt it was my fiduciary obligation to get a handle on how the agency operates and spends its money. Hence, my initial request for the records request to the Executive Director. My request was responded to by the executive director by instead of offering me a private meeting to discuss the financials and I was a little confused by this because I don't see how there can be a productive meeting without my having the opportunity to read the documents ahead of the meeting. My public records request seemed to send everything into a flurry of Sunshine Law violation accusations and bylaw changes to remove the mayor. Three hours after submitting the public records request, a Sunshine Law violation came from the chair. Shortly after that, the bylaw change was introduced. I have heard grumblings over the years of the DDA board members frustrated at the lack of transparency with spending of the organization's taxpayer funds. And now I see that indeed that has been the case since, this is a public organization funded by taxpayers. I find this situation very concerning as a result of my years on public boards such as housing authority where I was the chairman CRA when it was an independent board and I was the vice chairman and the city commission, I know how taxpayer funds are supposed to be spent and accounted for. I also know what true transparency looks like and the reaction I got to my request certainly begs that question. As a taxing authority, the DDA actually has two duties. The first is to operate within the mandate of the state, which is the downtown development. But not spoken about is and equally important is the fiduciary obligation to protect taxpayer dollars. In this period of time where the state is now looking at local governments and agencies to make sure taxpayer dollars are being spent prudently, I would hope it would be a priority of everyone in this board and staff to ensure that this is the case with our current budget. If not, we could see Doge interfering with our affairs, which is what I am really trying to avoid. As a result of my initial review of the documents, while this agency does obviously some very good work over the years and we have much to be proud of, I do have many questions and concerns with how this organization spends some of its money. I look forward to sharing that information with the board. As board members, we all have a fiduciary responsibility to know what is happening and to approve those actions. To look the other way, or intentionally not be informed, makes every board member liable for any unfortunate findings that may arise. I hope this board elects to keep the bylaws in statute as it intended and look forward to a productive relationship going forward."

Mayor Carney mentions that there have been conversations about the partnership between the DDA and the City and he feels that the Ex-Officio seat at the DDA Board continues that relationship, so that the City official can help to the extent they can with the deliberations of the DDA board. Mayor Carney then continues clarifying the second document added into the minutes' records, identifying it as his initial email

to the DDA Executive Director requesting financial information. Mayor Carney noted that a follow-up email indicated the matter would be discussed at the August meeting. Additionally, the Executive Director extended an invitation to meet in her office to discuss the financials in more detail. Mayor Carney clarifies that the request was in accordance with the statute governing such matters, specifically citing provisions that allow for the public to obtain financial records. The Mayor emphasized that the request was made to ensure full transparency and was not intended to cause disruption or concern. Rather, the purpose was to obtain all relevant financial statements of any board on which the Mayor serves.

Board Chair Costilo refers to the attachment to Mayor Carney's letter (included in the minutes' record) and mentions that this email, written by him, is a communication to DDA Executive Director Simon, in response to concerns raised about one board member being contacted by another board member outside of a public meeting. He refers that the email expresses his concern regarding potential violations of Florida's Sunshine Law. He then explains the basis for his concerns, in light of the recent visit at a DDA Board meeting from a representative of the Ethics Committee (who had reminded the board about the importance of compliance) and in light of the mandatory Pamela Jo Bondi training video, that the DDA Board is required to watch and that highlight the strong emphasis on the seriousness of Sunshine Law violations. He continues to explain that upon learning of the communication activity between board members, he felt a duty to consider whether the issue needed to be reported to the Ethics Commission. However, he acknowledged that it is not the board's responsibility to determine whether a violation occurred, nor to act as the enforcer. The primary concern was to ensure that the board remained protected and in compliance with legal requirements. He proceeds clarifying some parts of his e-mail, highlighted in yellow, which included his request to remove the Ex-Officio member. He informs the DDA Board that his request comes from the concerns regarding the inclusion of Ex-Officio language in the bylaws which mandates the acceptance of a representative from the City. While such a representative may currently be a congenial presence, the concern was raised that future representatives could potentially cause disruption or distress during meetings. Board Chair Costilo then emphasizes that there is no practical need for the Ex-Officio provision, as the board has consistently welcomed and accommodated any City official who has requested to speak. It was suggested that this practice continues, regardless of formal language, in the bylaws.

DDA Counsel Morgan explains that the Ex-Officio provision can be removed from the bylaws, that it has a permissible act and that it was included over the years, but that it is not required by the special act to be in the bylaws. He mentions that it is at the discretion of the DDA Board to remove it.

Board Chair Costilo invites, at this time, the DDA Board to express their thoughts on the Ex-Officio matter.

Board Vice-Chair Rosen clarifies that the current language does not allow any commissioner to join, but rather specifies that only the Mayor may participate, either as an Ex-Officio member or by appointing a representative. He proceeds emphasizing the importance of collaboration with the City, stating that the Mayor's involvement with the DDA Board, either directly or through a designee, is beneficial. He also voices that regardless of the current status of the relationship between the City and the DDA, the focus should remain on improving and strengthening that relationship. He points out that this provision was already in the bylaws and expressed his belief that it was included originally for good reason. He then concludes by saying he is not in favor of changing the language simply because things have not always run smoothly and reiterates his commitment to resolving issues and ensuring smoother collaboration moving forward. Regarding the remainder changes to the DDA bylaws he states that he is in agreement with the presented changes.

Board Member Hallyburton expresses his support for allowing the Mayor or a designated representative to participate at the DDA Board table. He then voices his concerns about the process that led to the current discussion, whether there was information or context the DDA Board may have missed. He then requests clarification regarding the Mayor's decision to exercise the privilege to appoint or participate at the DDA Board table.

Mayor Carney clarifies that he had a long-standing interest in the DDA, stating that it was unfortunate previous mayors had not taken the opportunity to engage more directly. Mayor Carney also expresses the value of participating in the process beyond just speaking at meetings, noting the importance of gaining a deeper understanding of an organization that is funded by public tax dollars. He continues acknowledging the good work of the DDA organization. Mayor Carney then highpoints that having an elected official on a taxing board contributes to transparency, amplifies public representation and improves communication.

Board Treasurer Knight begins by emphasizing the importance of transparency. He then voices his uncertainty regarding how he will vote on the issue at hand, expressing his concerns about the recent tension surrounding the topic. He proceeds reiterating that transparency within the DDA is essential but also noting that the relationship between the City and the DDA, unfortunately, does not currently feel like a partnership. He follows, expressing his interest in hearing the perspectives of other board members, with the belief that transparency is not being lost in this situation. He continues referring to the amount of recent Public Records Request issued to the DDA, and the feedback on their follow-up timing, stating that, in his experience, when he sends requests to the City either public records or zoning verification requests those take up some time to be fulfilled. He also highlights the importance of context and that there may be larger dynamics at play, beyond the immediate issue. He concludes by commending the DDA's efforts in fostering a strong sense of community.

Board member Guaglardi, speaking as one of the newest appointees, shares that she felt she had joined the board during a time of tension which they had not anticipated. They found the atmosphere disheartening and emphasized that such tension was concerning, given the belief that the city, village, and town should operate with a unified approach. She mentions her concerns that the tone of the discussions has become accusatory and emphasizes that there is a need to understand and resolve such issues, so that both organizations can return to a place of unity and cooperation. She concludes by suggesting that further discussion can take place at a future meeting.

Board member Barber emphasizes that transparency is paramount in all aspects of governance. He states the importance of understanding what is going on and noted that, based on the letters and documents provided, it would be difficult not to perceive that something may be amiss. He then expresses his concerns that there might be a deeper issue, influenced by major factors which have not yet been made clear to the board. Referencing Mayor Carney's comments regarding previous mayors not participating on the board he then acknowledging that, Board member Barber questions whether there might be more underlying reasons behind the recent developments. Additionally, Board member Barber shares that he has also submitted a public records request to the City, earlier in April, and had not yet received a response.

Mayor Carney expressed that the Mayor's involvement with the DDA was driven by a genuine desire to help, without any ulterior motives, adding that surprise and disappointment came by the Mayor being excluded from meetings, especially given that the DDA is a dependent agency of the City and the statute allows the Mayor to serve as an ex-officio member. Mayor Carney then acknowledges that the Mayor's enthusiasm at his first presence at the DDA Board meetings may have come across unusually but clarified

that their intent was not to be confrontational or accusatory. Rather, it was a commitment to transparency and ensuring that local decision-making remains within the community's control. Mayor Carney validates the use of Freedom Of Information requests as a means of gaining clarity. Mayor Carney concludes stating that the DDA Board had the right to discuss the Mayor's role but suggested that having a city representative at the table would be beneficial, reiterating that his position as a non-voting status and affirming that the Mayor's goal is to support accountability and transparency in the use of public funds.

Board Chair Costilo requests feedback from the remainder DDA Board members in regard to the matter being discussed.

Board Secretary Devitt agrees on moving forward with having the matter discussed at the upcoming DDA Board meeting.

Board member Hallyburton expresses his opposition to moving the matter forward or changing the existing rules, suggesting the current concerns were a reaction to something new rather than problematic. He then notes that initially he had reservations but has reconsidered his stance upon reflecting on the value of having the individual who oversees the City's finances present at the table—even in a non-voting capacity. He adds that excluding such a figure while requesting financial support can be seen as counterintuitive. He concludes by suggesting letting the situation unfold naturally and avoid unnecessary conflict.

DDA Counsel Morgan clarifies that there is no vote being called at this meeting, but he requests the board consensus to have further discussion on that item at the next DDA Board meeting.

Board members Devitt, Knight and Guagliardi reconfirm their wish in proceeding with the discussion at the future DDA Board meeting.

Mayor Carney states that it would be more desirable to conclude the discussion and not move the item forward, suggesting that it would be more productive to focus on internal collaboration with the DDA. Mayor Carney then indicates a willingness to work within existing structures or adapt to a different format if preferred by others but emphasizes the importance of working in-house. Mayor Carney concludes stating that if the Mayor is not to be considered a member, the status would be accepted, and the work would resume accordingly.

Board member Guagliardi expresses that, under normal circumstances, she believes the presence of an elected official at the DDA Board table is very beneficial. However, she acknowledges that the existing tension is the only factor raising concerns about how productive the group could be. She further notes that a lack of transparency, or the presence of unresolved questions, creates challenges in aligning the group and working cohesively.

Board Secretary enquires as to the reason for the letter sent to the DDA constituents by Mayor Tom Carney.

Mayor Tom Carney reports that the communications were regarding taxes and the upcoming millage rate. Mayor Carney emphasizes the importance of continued efforts to manage the DDA budget, noting that it had increased by 100% over the past five years—from \$1 million to \$2 million - not suggesting the funds were poorly spent, rather expressing the Mayor's concerns that such a significant increase had occurred without the involvement of any elected officials. Mayor Carney also stresses that this issue is not going unnoticed and states that the intention is to equip everyone with the necessary information to demonstrate that efforts were being made to address the situation.

Board Chair Costilo states that elected officials, members of the state government, had created the charter and established the current structure of the DDA, noting that the state had granted the authority

to levy one mill and had provided the ability to benefit from the growth of the business community through that millage.

Mayor Tom Carney emphasizes the Mayor's role and intent in avoiding potential issues.

Discussion concludes with reiteration of DDA Counsel Morgan that there is consensus of the Board to move the item for vote at the upcoming DDA Board meeting.

E. ILA Between the City and DDA for IT Services

DDA Counsel Morgan gives an overview of the ILA Between the City and DDA for IT Services.

Board Chair Costilo shares his experience with previous DDA meeting formats, expressing a preference for smaller, more informal settings such as the DDA offices or hotel conference rooms. He feels that these environments encourage better conversation and collaboration. He then clarifies that public access has always been a priority, with meetings broadcast via Zoom whenever possible. While he supports spending \$200 on audiovisual needs, he personally prefers a less formal setup where board members and the public are at the same level.

Board Vice-Chair Rosen emphasizes the importance of transparency and public access to meetings, noting that the current platform allows for viewing after the meetings occur, unlike Zoom. He supported the current format as a better way to engage the public, especially given the significant taxpayer funds discussed, and states that the \$200 cost is justified.

Board Treasurer Knight agrees with Board Vice-Chair Rosen on the importance of transparency and considers the \$200 cost reasonable. He acknowledges the option to hold meetings in community venues but emphasizes that continuing to meet at the current location is best, especially for critical discussions like the budget, and adds that the public is accustomed to attending there for both the City and other city agencies' public meetings.

Board member Guaglardi states that she sees value in both meeting formats. She acknowledges that the current setting is formal and lacks the intimacy needed for more comfortable conversation but appreciates its full transparency. She also expresses a desire for more frequent meetings, noting that meeting only once a month makes it difficult to engage in deeper discussions on various matters. She then extends an invitation to the board to consider holding additional meetings.

Motion by Aaron Hallyburton, seconded by Jim Knight to approve the ILA Between the City and DDA for IT Services as presented.

Motion carries (7 - 0). All in favor.

F. Workshop Discussion

Board member Guaglardi notes that the City is in the process of forming a Visioning Committee focused on the broader direction, identity, and aesthetics of the City. She recalled raising a related question at the previous meeting regarding the fundamental identity of the City—asking, "Who are we?"—and explains that differing views among organizations can make it difficult to move forward cohesively without a shared understanding of the City's goals, image, and intended audience. She then expresses interest in having the board participate in the Visioning Committee and stated that she would personally like to be involved, given her professional experience in the beautification of buildings, hotels, restaurants, and residences. She then requests the DDA Board feedback on adding to a future DDA Board meeting agenda, the possibility of board involvement in the Visioning Committee. Additionally, she

mentioned that she is preparing a presentation deck with related ideas, which she intends to share with the Mayor's office and the DDA board upon its completion.

Board Treasurer Knight clarifies that, to his understanding, the City's Visioning Committee has already been formed, with members previously selected during a recent commission meeting. He notes that the DDA should be careful not to interfere with or attempt to take over the City's process, and adds that the DDA's visioning efforts may be separate and distinct from those of the City.

DDA Counsel Morgan clarifies that Board Member Guaglardi is not suggesting the DDA take over the City's already established Visioning Committee. Rather, she is seeking to open a discussion so that the DDA Board can provide input from its perspective, to ensure the Visioning Committee receives input reflecting the DDA's vision and priorities.

Mayor Carney explains that a steering committee for the City's visioning effort has already been selected and has begun meeting, adding that the goal is to involve approximately 150 participants in future discussions, likely in November. Mayor Carney adds that, while the structure is still being finalized, there will be opportunities for the DDA, City staff, and other City partners to suggest agenda items and provide input.

Board member Guaglardi explains that she raised the topic because she had heard at recent commission meetings that, after the initial Visioning Committee was formed, organizations might have opportunities to provide input. She expresses interest in the DDA having such a platform and indicated her willingness to be involved if possible.

Board Treasurer Knight supports this and nominates Board member Guaglardi to represent the DDA on the committee if an opportunity arises.

Assistant City manager Oris clarifies that although the steering committee is established, opportunities for broader input would be available, and the DDA would be informed accordingly.

Board Chair Costilo confirms that the DDA can provide input through a workshop without waiting for formal invitations, which Assistant City manager Oris confirms.

Board Member Guaglardi emphasizes that the goal is simply to share ideas that can be accepted or rejected but to ensure the DDA has a voice.

DDA Counsel Morgan notes that there is consensus to support Board Member Guaglardi's proposal and suggests a motion to hold a workshop to develop input for the Visioning Committee.

Motion by Jule Guaglardi, seconded by Jim Knight to hold a DDA Board workshop to develop input for the City's Visioning Committee.

Motion carries (7 - 0). All in favor.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. DDA/OSS Program Updates July and upcoming – DDA Team

Ms. Suzanne Boyd gives a recap on the July DDA activities and initiatives highlighting: Art & Jazz On The Avenue, #LoveDelray Feel Good Summer Savings Pass, #LoveDelray Fit With The Cold Collective event, #LoveDelray Full Moon Yoga and Sound Bath event. She proceeds reporting on downtown economic development updates and on DDA advertising and communications initiatives.

Ms. Shelly Likosar reports on the Visitor Information Center data and initiatives for the month of July and on the DDA/OSS volunteer management program.

Ms. Suzanne Boyd continues informing on downtown upcoming events: Downtown Delray Restaurant Month, First Friday Art Walk, Art & Jazz On The Avenue, Davis Cup and upcoming #LoveDelray events. Then she proceeds with report on the events and initiatives for the month of July for the Cornell Art Museum: Pop Culture exhibition opening, Pop 2000 Tour event, “Not Candy” Art Talk by Harold Kaudio, “Impressions of Italy” Art Talk by Ralph Papa, Cornell Art Museum presence at Art & Jazz On The Avenue and museum attendance, donations, store sales and art sales. She continues informing the board on the upcoming exhibition: “Dorothy Gillespie Retrospective: Color In Motion”. Following, Ms. Suzanne Boyd reports on the Old School Square (OSS) grounds events and initiatives (Free Sunset Concert series) and on data on OSS advertising and communications initiatives. She finalizes giving information on upcoming events at the OSS campus.

B. FY2025 – 2026 Budget Review and Discussion– L. Simon

DDA Executive Director Simon begins introduction on the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and Old School Square (OSS) proposed budgets, mentioning that these presentations were also being prepared for the City Commission meeting the following day. She then provides an overview of the downtown district boundaries and explained the DDA’s role in placemaking and place management, including programs like street banners, safety ambassadors, and litter abatement highlighting that these efforts support downtown’s beautification, safety, and quality of life. Following, DDA Executive Director Simon emphasizes that strategic planning would be the main focus for the upcoming year, with the goal of creating a long-term roadmap. She then stresses the importance of stakeholder engagement, referring to the DDA plans to create more town halls and feedback opportunities. She informs the board that parking is the top concern from recent community surveys and a recent town hall, and that several new and recurring recommendations were collected on parking, events, beautification, and maintaining downtown’s charm. She continues stressing the importance of public safety, cleanliness, and managing both costs and crowding—stating these will all be key areas of focus moving forward. Breaking down the numbers for the DDA Fiscal Year 2025–26 (projected from the *ad valorem* tax revenue of \$2,037,980, driven by rising downtown property values) DDA Executive Director Simon she gives the DDA Board high level insights on some the major goals:

- Marketing & DDA Website: A new geo-focused website is launching soon to enhance the visitor experience, emphasizing the DDA role as the primary marketing arm for downtown Delray, filling a gap left by the former city marketing cooperative;
- Economic Development: Key downtown events have been reclassified as economic development initiatives, highlighting the development of a business navigation handbook to support new businesses. Board Vice-Chair Rosen supported reclassifying events as economic drivers;
- Data Tools: Identifying two major data platforms as critical to achieve the DDA’s goals: Placer.ai - For real-time visitor analytics; and Ginkgo.city - For data management integrated with the new website;
- Strategic Plan & Grants: Strategic plan and activation grant program are both prioritized in the budget;
- Placemaking & Safety: The Safety Ambassador Program continues with existing staffing levels. Placemaking efforts include new banners, lighting maintenance, and expanded café lighting for ambiance and safety;

- Veterans Park Renovation: DDA Executive Director Simon reported no current funding but affirmed that Veterans Park remains a priority, especially with growing neighborhood interest.

Board Vice-Chair Rosen supports reclassifying events as economic drivers. He also inquires about the developer contributions originally promised for Veterans Park.

DDA Executive Director Simon clarifies that those funds are no longer expected.

Board Vice-Chair Rosen then expresses concern about preserving the park's green space without overly restricting future improvements (e.g., lawn bowling area).

DDA Executive Director Simon agrees, emphasizing community input.

Mayor Carney clarifies that there is interest in converting part of Veterans Park for croquet tournaments and that he is supportive of preserving the park, whether designated historic or not. Mayor Carney further clarifies that the developer renovation funds were forfeited when the City chose to retain the public parking lot instead of turning it over to the developer.

DDA Executive Director Simon informs that the DDA is now working closely with the City and exploring grant funding opportunities. She also reiterates the importance of community involvement in future planning.

DDA Executive Director Simon then continues presenting the budget on Operations expenses, the service part of the DDA budget: salaries payroll and benefits, plus contract operations (audit, bookkeeper, legal) and office expenses (rent, IT services, supplies) and capital expenses.

Board Chair Costilo praised the transparency presentation, calling it complete and impressive. He reflected on a discussion from seven or eight years ago when former Mayor Cary Glickstein was Mayor and he served on the DDA board, noting that salaries then accounted for 34% of the budget - a figure the then Mayor Glickstein deemed reasonable. Board Chair Costilo proceeds, highlighting that the current budget, including salaries, taxes, and benefits, is just over 30%, despite the team's expanded responsibilities, particularly in managing part of the Old School Square Campus, and expresses pride in their achievements, growth and performance of the team.

DDA Executive Director Simon acknowledges the recognition, stating that it was a team effort.

The meeting proceeds with DDA Executive Director Simon introducing the Old School Square budget presentation, starting with Ms. Suzanne Boyd providing a brief timeline of the DDA's involvement in managing Old School Square.

DDA Executive Director Simon proceeds informing about the Strategic Priorities planning. She reports that in addition to regular management activities, the DDA is focusing on the 100th anniversary of Old School Square and on the 30th anniversary of the campus revitalization, including a year-long celebration and the brand launch. She explains that due to the reduction in budget, the DDA is prioritizing revenue-generating events, such as the Tribute Concert Series, which helps offset event costs (each concert costing \$25,000–\$28,000). She also informs that the DDA also plans to bring back Art on the Square in February, a previously successful juried art show. She continues informing for upcoming fiscal year, part of the priorities for Old School Square campus, based of community feedback emphasizing a need for more family events, ongoing campus activation, and stronger summer programming, (especially in response to a decline in summer visitor traffic), the DDA will focus on strategic planning for off-season engagement while continuing to support private events during the high season. She also informs as per capital improvements the plan includes upgrades to the restrooms in the concession stand building. Finally, DDA Executive Director Simon gives brief overview of the budget figures.

Board Chair Costilo asks, seeing that the DDA was awarded less funding for the management of Old School Square for the upcoming fiscal year, what were the adjustments made to fulfill that budget.

DDA Executive Director Simon answers that there were expense cuts on programming.

Ms. Suzanne Boyd provided a financial overview of the Old School Square operations, noting that total expenses are around \$427,000, with only two full-time OSS staff, seeing that executive and marketing salaries are fully funded by the DDA, not OSS. She continues stating that marketing remains a priority and explains that the Cornell Art Museum and Amphitheater programs have dedicated budgets to support exhibitions and seasonal events, including the 100th anniversary celebrations. She then notes that the City has proposed \$426,000 budget for the Creative Arts School, which represents over half of OSS's overall costs, and invites further questions.

DDA Executive Director Simon mentions that today's budget presentation will be provided Tuesday at the City Commission Meeting and Chair Costilo invites discussion from the Board.

Mr. Jeff Oris (Assistant City Manager) informs the board that the city's financial contribution to the Creative Arts School is expected to be offset by class-generated revenue, meaning no deficit is anticipated.

Ms. Suzanne Boyd noted that last year's revenue was \$77,000, with the city receiving 30%.

DDA Executive Director Simon expressed support for the financial outlook.

Board Chair Costilo raised a concern about a past report that listed revenue at \$63,000, questioning the apparent increase.

Mr. Jeff Oris clarified that not all of the projected funds would be spent, as teacher payments depend on class enrollment. Much of the prior year's budget remained unused, supporting the expectation of balanced financials moving forward.

Board Secretary Devitt requests clarification regarding the ad valorem tax figures, confirming that the amended budget for the previous year reflected \$1,837,000, while the draft budget for FY 2025–2026 projected \$2,037,000.

DDA Executive Director Simon clarifies that the forecast includes only ad valorem revenue and excludes sponsorships or miscellaneous income, though such sources have historically brought in \$80,000–\$100,000 annually. She notes ongoing efforts to grow these revenues to offset program and event costs.

Board Treasurer Knight suggests including an estimated portion of sponsorship income in future forecasts to encourage continued fundraising.

DDA Executive Director Simon asks if the board would like this approach reflected in the final budget draft.

Board Treasurer Knight supports the idea, pending board consensus.

Board Chair Costilo then cautions against forecasting unconfirmed funds but supports the motivational aspect of acknowledging potential revenue.

Board Chair Costilo praises the DDA staff for keeping salaries low while delivering strong outcomes, and he thanked DDA Executive Director Simon and Ms. Suzanne Boyd for their unpaid work at the Old School Square campus.

DDA Executive Director Simon credits the team's efforts and notes that past board initiatives focused on creating a sustainable organization by evaluating payroll and operations and mentions a recent salary survey of downtown organizations across Florida, which will be shared with the board.

Board member Guagliardi recalls her experience volunteering during the early days of the Delray Beach Fashion Week event and notes that the DDA relied heavily on unpaid support at the time. She proceeds, expressing appreciation for how much the organization has grown, stating it is impressive what the current six-member team is now able to accomplish compared to the limited staffing in the past.

At this time, Board Member Guagliardi requested permission to address matters outside the current agenda item, due to a prior commitment requiring her early departure. The Board agreed to her request. She proceeded to offer additional comments related to parking and vacant storefronts, which prompted further discussion and engagement from the Board. The continuation of this discussion is documented under the "Board Comments" section of these minutes.

2:35pm – Jule Guagliardi leaves the meeting.

C. Board Meeting Minutes Approval:

- 1.) June 9, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes
- 2.) June 24, 2025 Special Meeting Minutes
- 3.) June 24, 2025 FY2025/26 Planning Workshop Meeting Minutes
- 4.) July 14, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes
- 5.) July 14, 2025 Millage Levy Special Meeting Minutes

Motion by Jim Knight, seconded by Cole Devitt to approve the June 9, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes, the June 24, 2025 Special Meeting Minutes, the June 24, 2025 FY2025/26 Planning Workshop Meeting Minutes, the July 14, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes, July 14, 2025 Millage Levy Special Meeting Minutes as presented.

Motion carries (6 - 0). All in favor. Jule Guagliardi not present.

D. DDA Monthly Financials - L. Simon

- 1.) May, June, July 2025 Financials - L. Simon

DDA Executive Director Simon gives highlights of the previous months' financials (May and June).

Board Vice-Chair Rosen voices his concerns mentioning that under Economic Vitality and Development, 81% of the budget has been used.

Motion by Jim Knight, to approve the May, June and July 2025 Financials.

Motion dies for lack of a second.

Discussion resumes.

Board Vice-Chair Rosen continues voicing his concerns in regard to legal fees, stating that 90% of the budget has already been used, emphasizing the need to keep a close eye on the budget, especially when seeing rapid spending before year-end. He also mentions the budget line item labeled "credit card missed receipts", representing \$16,000 and suggests the process for reconciling receipts needed improvement. In reference to the budget line item titled "Accounts Payable," which reflected balances of \$140,000 in May and \$116,000 in June, he requested clarification regarding the specific vendors or entities to whom the organization was indebted.

DDA Executive Director Simon acknowledges Board Vice-Chair Rosen comments and clarifies that amendments would be required, with a forecast and adjustment to be presented at a future meeting. She notes that July financials would be presented in September, and October's in August, with an ongoing

effort to deliver financials more promptly. In regard to the "credit card missed receipts" line she mentions that there will be a follow-up, with more detail.

Board Chair Costilo comments that some of these concerns can be addressed more effectively with one-on-one discussions with DDA Executive Director Simon, unless the information was critical for full board awareness.

Board Treasurer Knight proposes tabling the financials due to outstanding questions, especially the large amount in accounts payable and revises his previous motion.

Motion by Jim Knight, seconded by Aaron Hallyburton to table item 5D DDA Monthly Financials - 1.) May, June, July 2025.

Motion carries (6 - 0). All in favor. Jule Guaglardi not present.

E. DDA Officer appointments – L. Simon

Board Treasurer Knight acknowledges that Board member Guaglardi is not present to vote on this item. DDA Executive Director Simon and DDA Counsel Morgan suggest tabling this item.

Motion by Brian Rosen, seconded by Aaron Hallyburton to table item 5E DDA Officer appointments.

Motion carries (6 - 0). All in favor. Jule Guaglardi not present.

BOARD and STAFF COMMENTS

DDA Executive Director Simon informs the Board that the Community Redevelopment Agency is having a public meeting outreach that evening, at 5:30pm at the Delray Beach Public Library to discuss the West Atlantic Master Plan, aka SET transformation plan to help shape the future of The SET. She also informs the board that the DDA is revisiting the Old School Square campus venue fees regulations and will bring the matter back for discussion at a future meeting to bring back some recommendations in order to reduce the number of waiver requests at future board meetings.

(Comment made during agenda item 5B FY2025 – 2026 Budget Review and Discussion):

Board member Guaglardi proposes several ideas to improve parking and downtown vibrancy, including implementing daytime valet services on city and private lots, raising meter rates during peak hours, and using paid employee shuttle services from remote lots. She also suggests creating financial incentives or penalties to discourage long-term vacant storefronts which negatively impact the downtown experience.

Board members Devitt and Rosen note that penalizing property owners for vacancies is not legally feasible and DDA Executive Director Simon suggests activating vacant storefronts with temporary uses or improved window displays instead.

Board Vice-Chair Rosen mentioned city restrictions on using unimproved lots for parking and clarifies that private lots would require agreements for shared use.

DDA Executive Director Simon acknowledges that all ideas would need further exploration.

Board Chair Costilo suggests a dedicated parking workshop

DDA Executive Director Simon notes that parking has already been addressed in recent meetings and town halls, and that the City Commission will be reviewing the parking management plan the following evening, also mentioning that the DDA has submitted input and will continue working with the city on next steps.

Mayor Carney expresses concerns over the decision to defer a vote on whether the Mayor should continue serving as an ex-officio member of the DDA board, adding that the need for a second meeting on the matter was unnecessary, and suggesting that advancing the item for further discussion, rather than omitting it, could be interpreted as the board's desire to remove him from participation. Mayor Carney further emphasizes that the matter was, in his view, a simple one and should not have been made into a more complicated decision.

Board Treasurer Knight clarifies that moving the discussion to a future meeting did not reflect a decision but rather provided the board with additional time to consider the matter thoughtfully. In regard to the changes by the City to parking fees, Board Treasurer Knight suggests exploring options to allow free daytime parking for downtown employees at the parking garages referencing Mizner Park's 24/7 free parking as a model. He expressed support for reasonable parking fees for visitors but stressed affordability for local workers. Addressing public comments about the DDA budget increasing by 100% over five years, Board Treasurer Knight notes that this growth correlates with a significant rise in property values and explains that the DDA's responsibilities have expanded, justifying the increase.

Mayor Carney responds to earlier questions from Board Member Hallyburton and Board Member Barber, stating he would distribute documents to the board. These included portions of the city's audit, which he claimed did not review internal controls—something he noted other departments routinely undergo. Mayor Carney also included several pages showing invoices submitted to the city, including to the DDA, that lacked receipts. Mayor Carney then addresses concerns about his role as a team player, explaining that his actions—such as sending letters—were aimed at saving taxpayer money, arguing that while the tax rate may not have increased, residents paying 11% more amounted to a real tax hike. Finalizing his comments, Mayor Tom Carney suggests meeting with DDA Executive Director Simon to discuss matters further but stated he would not revisit the conversation in regard to whether he should continue serving on the board in an ex-officio capacity.

Board Vice-Chair Rosen voices his support for free parking at the garages, emphasizing the importance for both employees and visitors. He further requests budget details for all events at Old School Square, including wellness programs, to better evaluate their financial performance and guide future funding decisions.

Board member Barber clarifies that while parking is free to visitors at Mizner Park, tenants cover the cost through their leases—unlike in downtown Delray Beach—which must be considered in any discussion about offering free parking.

Board Chair Costilo notes the downtown parking challenge relates to accommodating thousands of employees, which drives parking strategy decisions.

Board member Hallyburton praises the police and code enforcement teams and expresses support for keeping the ex-officio seat on the DDA Board.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:01.

Respectfully submitted,
Liliana Fino



Julie Guagliardi, DDA Secretary
11/13/2025

DATE

