

DOWNTOWN ODESSA, INC

Minutes for June 8, 2021

Council Chambers

Board Members present: John Herriage, William Vaughan, Shawn Rodriguez, Cruz Castillo and Alma Gomez

Absent: Sondra Eoff, Lonnie Lawrence, Denise Swanner and Mark Matta

Others present: Michael Marrero, Randi Pineda, Alexa Moulakis, Devin Sanchez and Magaly Nieto

Invocation: Michael Marrero gave the invocation.

Board Chairman William Vaughan lead the meeting. The meeting started a 12:00 p.m.

Downtown Odessa, Inc:

1. **Approval of minutes – May 11, 2021** – Motion was made by Board member Herriage and seconded by Board member Rodriguez to approve. The motion was approved by the following vote:

Aye: Herriage, Vaughan, Rodriguez, Gomez and Castillo

Nay: None

2. **Review of May 2021 Financials** – Mr. Marrero went over the financials. Motion was made by Board member Castillo and seconded by Board member Rodriguez to approve. The motion was approved by the following vote:

Aye: Herriage, Vaughan, Rodriguez, Gomez and Castillo

Nay: None

3. **New Business:**

- a. **Prospective changes to grant program** – ODC meeting Downtown design review board recommended requiring applicants to take some kind of business course at UTPB or at some business development center. They feel that they may need more help and assistance to not only start the business but to make sure the business receiving the grant will thrive. They also want to require applicants turn in 2 bids with the application. Mr. Marrero has also had a discussion with two council members on how to speed up the process. The last applicant took longer than anticipated. Mr. Marrero went over approval process and opened it up for discussion. He also said that the two that are required are ODC and Council. Mr. Marrero will recommend two board members and one alternate to be on the approval process to help speed things up. Also, a thorough business plan needs to be submitted with any application. And last, they need to turn in more than one bid.
- b. **Consider the appointment of Vice Chair and Treasurer** – Motion was made by Board member Herriage and seconded by Board member Castillo to appoint Board member Rodriguez as Vice

Chair. Motion was made by Board member Rodriguez and seconded by Board member Castillo to appoint Board member Herriage as Treasurer.

4. Event Update:

a. Recap of May events:

- i. **Seek-o De Mayo Scavenger Hunt** – Per Alexa was very successful 80 participated.
- ii. **Painting Class** – We had a sell out class. People really enjoyed it. We want to thank Jolene for making the videos and for volunteering her time.

b. Hot Summer Nights – We had our first concert this past Friday, 600 ppl attended. Really good turnout better than what we have had at the park. A lot of great feed back everyone liked that it was airconditioned, they liked the bar. This will continue every Friday in June and July. July 2nd will be our 4th of July celebration.

c. 4th of July – Per Alexa this years Firecracker Fandango as we know it, will not happen. Instead, we will have a Downtown Independence Day Celebration. This year’s event will be held on Friday, July 2nd and have two parts: from 6-8 pm there will be food trucks and a car show along Texas Ave. between 4th and 6th street. The second part from 8-10 pm will be a free concert, inside the newly renovated Ector Theatre. Per Mr. Marrero do we want to add more elements to what is already planned. He reached out to Richard Esparza who is a local promoter that does the Cinco de Mayo every year, who has previously offered to help DOI to find entertainment and activities. Mr. Marrero opened it up for discussion. Per the board they feel that they should keep it small and clean so that it will be well organized. DOI is working with the Fire Marshall’s office to find a new location for the 2022 Firecracker Fandango event, which will be bigger and better than ever!

d. Future Tentative Partner Events

- i. **Solstice Live! Country Festival – July 24th** – Per Alexa they already have the line up down, starting to do promotions.
- ii. **Basin Pride** – August 7th – Coming downtown, moving from Mckinney
- iii. **Rocktober Fest** – October 2nd – Same folks that did Taco’s and Tequila, beer centric. Rock music in the fall and they will do Taco’s and Tequila in the Spring.
- iv. **Night of Light Downtown** – October 31st – Still waiting to hear from Crossroads. They were not sure if they were going to have the resources. They may do their own event on their grounds and maybe for 2022 they will be back to do it downtown.

5. Director’s Report:

a. Grants Update:

- i. Submitted completion documentation for audit – LCA (façade)
- ii. Compiling documents for reimbursement – Ambler Law (façade and infrastructure)
- iii. Approved by City Council – in contract phase – PediCardio of West Texas (façade and infrastructure)
- iv. Approved by City Council – in contract phase – ICON Tavern (façade and infrastructure)
- v. Approved by City Council – in contract phase – The House (infrastructure)
- vi. Awaiting Paperwork – Par II Companies (façade)
- vii. Awaiting Paperwork – Gifts R Us (façade)
- viii. Awaiting Paperwork – Dr. Kurra (façade and infrastructure for 3 addresses)

ix. Potential future applicants

1. Dr. Pill

6. Downtown Odessa Inc. Executive Director Update:

Mr. Marrero, John and William met with Debra Lehr from Nevada. She had some experience, had great ideas and great responses to their questions. He also reminded everyone that he wanted to make sure that the person we hire would be able to take the organization to where we want it to go and that we were not going to be in a rush to get a Director in. He did mention it has been taking longer than what we thought. We have received some good applicants but they really did not have the experience we are looking for. We want someone who has been in the space before, someone who has retail recruitment experience, event experience and someone who has that marketing background to take downtown where it us to be . He is also looking for someone who has administrative oversite capabilities. We have hired an executive search group. Hopefully we will see more targeted recruitment happening and hopefully we will be getting better applicants.