



CITY OF BELLEVILLE, ILLINOIS
DOWNTOWN BELLEVILLE
DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

June 26, 2023, 4:00 PM

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Mayor Patty Gregory	Present
Dr. Mary Stiehl, Alderwoman-Ward 6, Chairwoman	Present
Steve Hemmer	Present
Chuck Blanquart	Present
Brett Baltz	Present
Zach Bair	Present
Jennaver Brown	Present
Andria Powell	Excused
Amber Weiss	Excused

GUEST ALDERMAN/ELECTED OFFICIALS:

None

STAFF:

Patty Gregory, Mayor
Cliff Cross, Director, Economic Development, Planning & Zoning Department
Kathy Kaiser, Director of Public Relations, Communications & Marketing
Penny Moore, Coordinator, Economic Development, Planning & Zoning Department
Kerrie Freeman, Secretary, Economic Development, Planning & Zoning Department

GUESTS: Bennie Parr, Dave Schoenborn

The meeting of the Downtown Belleville Development Commission (DBDC) held at Second Floor Conference Room Belleville City Hall, located at 101 N. Illinois Street, Belleville, IL, began as scheduled at 4:00 PM.

Alderwoman, Dr. Mary Stiehl, Chairwoman, called the meeting to order after declaring that there was a quorum. After introducing the members, staff, elected officials, and guests present, emergency procedures were explained. (4:00 PM)

Chairwoman Stiehl announced the meeting minutes for May 22, 2023, will be approved at the July 2023 meeting. (4:01 PM)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Chairwoman Alderwoman Stiehl explained, the guests will speak during the new business discussion. (4:01 PM)

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Treasurer's Report:

The Downtown Belleville Development Commission Income Statement was discussed and entered into the minutes (attached). (4:02pm)

B. Discussion to consider co-funding some larger projects for the downtown area the Belleville Main Street Committee has been considering.

C. Discussion of the future of the tax levy in the Area of Special Control.

Cliff Cross discussed both agenda items B and C at the same time, as the downtown area and the Area of Special Control correlate together.

Mr. Cross requested a general discussion for future projects. Including how to move forward with the Economic Development Strategic Plan and in creating a specific downtown strategy to include annual Belleville Main Street and City created projects. (4:02 PM)

Mr. Cross continued; the bonds will expire in 2027. There is enough money to pay off the bonds three (3) years early which could potentially provide one hundred forty thousand dollars (\$140,000.00) per year instead of forty thousand dollars (\$40,000.00) per year. Jaime will update the budget/bonds at the next meeting and review the ordinance to see how the money is used, possibly as a general pot or extend the bonds. (4:04 PM)

Discussion occurred regarding project suggestions. Jennaver Brown mentioned uplighting the trees with the Belleville Main Street Executive Committee and would like DBDC to consider working with Belleville Main Street Committee on specific projects with possible dual funding. Dave Schoenborn recommended the creation of a sub-committee with members of both committees to help process ideas. Chairwoman Stiehl agreed, adding the sub-committee (comprised of members from the Belleville Main Street Committee, Belleville Chamber of Commerce and DBDC representation) should come up with five (5) key ideas to bring back to the DBDC for consideration. (4:05 PM)

Cliff Cross discussed a year-long funded façade program. Dave Schoenborn mentioned many of the building awnings need to be replaced or power washed and could possibly be funded from the façade program. (4:09 PM)

Mr. Cross mentioned the continued use of the business district tax, asking the Commission if they would wish to continue with the tax, especially in order to fund various projects or maintenance programs. Jennaver Brown mentioned that the ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) Belleville Main Street receives from DBDC annually is great, but more money would be more beneficial to support more projects. (4:11 PM)

Chuck Blanquart spoke regarding if parking lots count as beautification. Cliff Cross said the parking lots are probably under City and Maintenance because they are mostly used by the public. Dave Schoenborn would like to get the parking lot behind Bennie's Pizza re-striped. Chairwoman Steihl clarified that the Streets and Grades Committee is in control of the re-striping. Cliff Cross then mentioned that some of this money could go towards infrastructure, but once there is more of a publicly used space, that needs to be taken care of by the City. (4:13 PM)

Guest Bennie Parr mentioned the lights and streetscape is very welcoming but missing the continuance of lights to beautify the surrounding businesses. Mr. Parr continued, lighting walkways and expanding to the full area of specialty instead of just one street would be beneficial. Dave Schoenborn also mentioned expanding the same lights and streetscape that is on Main Street would let the public know the area is all tied in because the theme is the same. Cliff Cross mentions that expanding the downtown by one block each way off main street could help. More funding will likely be obtainable because it is a competitive area. Mr. Cross continued, we are doing the Economic Development Strategy now, then the Comprehensive plan to include neighborhood plans. Planning for Character areas of the City will be important to do first. (4:16 PM)

Jennaver Brown mentioned directional signage would also be beneficial to help direct the public to these other areas that are not lighted. Ms. Brown would like to know how long until the plans in place are operational. Mr. Cross answered, he hoped to get the Economic Development Strategy adopted in October and to begin looking at the specific areas, starting with downtown. Mr. Cross explained we hope to have the neighborhood plans of the ED strategy in place by May of next year. (4:17 PM)

Discussion occurred regarding the need for a parking garage to assist with walkability to the businesses on the side streets and neighborhoods. Discussion on a way to make this happen with the city council and others occurred, including the possibility of increasing taxes in this area to assist with funding. Also, a parking garage could help bring more businesses to the area. (4:20 pm)

Discussion of a small trolley occurred, mentioning that it would not cost as much as a parking garage. It will also help to shuttle consumers. (4:21 PM)

Several indistinguishable conversations occurring. (4:23 pm)

Jennaver Brown asked if there are any extra funds that could be used to work on projects this year while the bond money is set aside or hold off on any type of investment until this May. Mr. Cross mentioned that we will have to hold off on that question currently, as we will need to look at the TIF funds and if they can be utilized. Mr. Cross recommended they be used for a specific plan or designation. Jennaver Brown would like to know what would help with those recommendations, such as a list or proposal. Cliff Cross mentioned a list of projects and costs will need to be taken to the Economic Development and Annexation Committee. If this Committee and Main Street work together, they need to meet to make sure each committee is on the same page. Chairwoman Stiehl says she would volunteer to be on a subcommittee. (4:23 PM)

Steve Hemmer shared concern regarding the potential of the Committee disbanding or having the option for the business to be in or out of the tax district. Mr. Hemmer recommended re-establishing the committee with the new funding proposal before the funding potentially disappears from the special taxes. (4:25 pm)

Cliff Cross mentioned that Jamie Maitret, Director of Finance mentioned to the DBDC, roughly one hundred and forty thousand dollars (\$140,000) a year is generated. One hundred thousand (\$100,000) dollars goes to pay the bond and the rest goes to the committee. Enough was generated that the bond can be paid off, so the options are to continue to generate for the next two (2) years and then commit to projects or commit to new projects now. There are technically two (2) years to think about these options. (4:26 PM)

Steve Hemmer mentioned that the parking garage idea is a multimillion-dollar job and goes beyond this committee, the trolley idea seems like a good idea because it is a living thing that could go from point A to point B, shuttling consumers around but could also be transferred to the fairgrounds use for events or at the West end of town too. There is a company that has a bus that looks like a trolley, but with actual trolley tracks, you are limited to the route of a trolley. Still have the horse-drawn carriages at Christmas time though. Jennaver Brown claimed there is an old bus at the Industrial Park, by King's food, and it would need paint, but could work. (4:29 PM)

Jennaver then clarified that a subcommittee is needed for further discussion/specifics. They will discuss five priority items and then go from there. The following in attendance volunteered for the sub-committee: Steve Hemmer, Dave Schoenborn, Bennie Parr, Zach Blair, and Chairwoman Stiehl. (4:30 PM)

Jennaver Brown asked if someone would be the speaker, and if someone would be taking notes. Chairwoman Stiehl said yes, but the subcommittee will not meet until after July and offered to keep minutes and create the agenda. Jennaver Brown mentioned that at the subcommittee meeting you start with a plan and a cost and bring it up at the next meeting. Penny Moore clarified that we would add the subcommittee discussion on the agenda for August. (4:32 PM)

Discussion resumed regarding obtaining a trolley. (4:41 PM)

Ideas included:

- Hiring a private firm that rents by the hour as needed basis.
- The city purchases one and has a city employee drive it.
- Working with the St. Clair County Transit District to cover with City of Belleville vinyl.

- Requesting use of Eckert's tractors/trailers that they pull.
- Renting a trolley for the first year, evaluate how the first year goes and then potentially try to invest in purchasing a trolley afterward.
- Bennie Parr mentioned that he rented shuttle buses (but needed signage to help direct people) on the weekends when there were events at the fairgrounds and then shuttled back to downtown. The cost was four hundred (\$400) to five hundred (\$500) dollars, mainly running on Saturdays. It would be more feasible if other businesses chipped in too. Mr. Parr mentioned he did this four (4) to five (5) times a year. It helped both places with parking too. Steve Hemmer suggested it is funded through this committee and then find others to contribute once it has gotten used and then potentially develop into a purchase of a trolley. (4:44 PM)
- Bennie Parr mentioned that he would love to see the west end included too.
- Jennaver Brown mentioned that not being able to worry about parking is ideal too, especially if the trolley is available to take the customers around town.
- Dave Schoenborn reiterated that signage is key, as there are several shuttles around when there are bigger events, especially at the fairgrounds.
- Bennie Parr also mentioned that The Corner Chill and Grill bought a small trolley, that is a golf cart style trolley, bought from Anheuser Busch. There could potentially be a deal of shuttling from there to downtown and back. It would be more of a downtown shuttle, holding fifteen (15) to seventeen (17) people, potentially.
- Mayor Gregory mentioned there are Bar Bicycles that go around town, but they do serve alcohol. Dave Schoenborn mentioned some people would like that idea, kind of like when we had the bicycle guy in 2018-2019.

Several people having indistinguishable discussions. (4:51 pm)

OLD BUSINESS:

Mayor Gregory discussed The City Market. Mayor Gregory recently visited the Tower Grove Farmers Market and spoke with the coordinator who shared, they had one hundred and thirty (130) vendors. Mayor Gregory is thinking of only having twenty-eight (28) vendors. Cliff Cross verified twenty-eight (28) vendors with a combination of inside and outside booths. (4:34 PM)

Mayor Gregory discussed Tower Grove Farmer's Market charges. (4:34 PM)

Several indistinguishable conversations. (4:36pm)

Mayor Gregory mentioned there was interest in the market being held on Thursday and Friday nights 4:00-8:00 P.M. and the courthouse parking garage will be used for parking. (4:36pm).

Bennie Parr mentioned that it would be fantastic to get directional signs near the market pointing towards the downtown area. (4:37 PM)

Mayor Gregory verified directional signage will be in place and added we are still waiting for the signed agreement for grant money from Illinois Tourism. (4:37 PM)

Discussion occurred about City Market timeline. (4:38 PM)

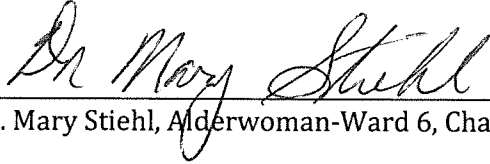
Discussion about types of vendors that would be available at the City Market occurred. (4:39 PM)

Discussion about the kitchen that will be available for use too. (4:40 PM)

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn was made by Zach Bair. It was seconded by Jennaver Brown. All present members voted in the affirmative by a vote of 5-0. (4:52 PM)

Respectfully Submitted,
Kerrie Freeman
EDPZ Secretary
Economic Development, Planning, and Zoning



Dr. Mary Stiehl, Alderwoman-Ward 6, Chairwoman

**Downtown Belleville Development Commission
Income Statement - Cash Basis
As of May 31, 2023**

	Actual Fiscal Year 2020-21	Actual Fiscal Year 2021-22	Actual Current Year 2022-23	Budget Current Year 2023-24	Actual Current Year 2023-24
<u>INCOME:</u>					
Tax Levy	36,851	39,285	39,195	38,500	-
Reimbursement	500	-	-	-	-
Interest/Investment Income	<u>875</u>	<u>(1,440)</u>	<u>932</u>	<u>1,100</u>	<u>5</u>
 Total Income	 38,226	 37,845	 40,127	 39,600	 5
 <u>EXPENSES:</u>					
Utilities	15,041	14,685	13,332	15,100	480
Liability Insurance	2,486	2,505	2,816	2,950	-
Other:					
Marketing	-	1,500	1,500	1,500	-
Belleville Main Street	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Belleville Police Dept.	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>-</u>
 Total Expenses	 37,527	 38,690	 37,648	 39,550	 10,480
 Net Income (Deficit)	 699	 (845)	 2,479	 50	 (10,475)
 Cash/Investments balance	 \$ 46,683	 \$ 45,838	 \$ 48,317		 \$ 37,842