



**Downtown Investment Authority**  
**Downtown Investment Authority Hybrid Public Workshop**  
***Friday, March 8th, 2024, 1:30 p.m.***

**Downtown Investment Authority Hybrid Public Workshop**  
***DRAFT WORKSHOP MINUTES***

**DIA Board Members (BM):** Jim Citrano, Board Chair; Sondra Fetner, Esq.; Patrick Krechowski, Esq.; Melinda Powers, Esq.

**DIA Board Members attending via Zoom:** Braxton Gillam, Esq.; Scott Wohlers (Unofficial Board Member)

**Mayor's Office:** None

**Council Members:** None

**DIA Staff:** Lori Boyer, Chief Executive Officer; Wanda James-Crowley, Financial Analyst; Allen DeVault, Project Manager; Ava Hill, Administrative Assistant

**Office of General Counsel:** None

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Board Chair Citrano called the workshop to order at 1:33 pm. This was followed by introductions. He then welcomed Scott Wohlers unofficially to the DIA Board.

**II. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**III. WORKSHOP**

Board Chair Citrano gave the floor to DIA staff to present the workshop agenda items.

As an introduction to the workshop, CEO Boyer explained that DIA operates with the four primary budgets shown below.

- Southbank Tax Increment District Budget
- Northbank Tax Increment District Budget
- Economic Development Agency Budget (Downtown Development Fund)
- Administrative Budget

CEO Boyer explained the purpose of each budget and then described how they worked. After the introduction, she reviewed in detail the following agenda items.

- Northbank Project and Program Priorities
- Investment Pool Earnings Calculations for FY 25
- Mid-Year Budget Review 2024



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➤ Mid-Year Budget Recommendations 2024

Board Chair Citrano asked for the beginning and ending date of the fiscal year.

CEO Boyer responded that the fiscal year begins October 1<sup>st</sup> and ends September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Board Chair Citrano also asked CEO Boyer to share what DIA's budget looked like in the year 2012.

CEO Boyer responded that it was probably less than half of the current budget. She continued that there has been a significant increase in the budget and reduction in some expenses.

Member Krechowski asked what mechanism is used if funds are leftover and then the Board wants to move those funds.

CEO Boyer responded that it's supposed to move automatically according to the ordinance code. She continued that DIA also uses a CRA BT form, which is good for documentation purposes.

Considering the challenges of getting applicants for the façade grant, Member Fetner mentioned the Broad Street project and asked if DIA thought about using that project as an example for the Façade Grant Program

CEO Boyer mentioned a request to allocate funds to restore the exterior of shotgun structures in DIA's inventory. She continued that the Broad Street project is a commercial building in DIA's inventory, and they have tried to do a disposition of it, but it's been difficult. She did agree that the building needs to be fixed up.

Member Powers asked if only the owners can take advantage of the façade grant and not a tenant.

CEO Boyer confirmed that the program is designed for the owner and not the tenant. She continued that she did not know what the reasons are for people not taking advantage of the façade grant, but that DIA is diligently working to change that.

Board Chair Citrano mentioned that there are CIP and CRA projects and asked if the CRA can contribute dollars to the CIP projects.

CEO Boyer responded no. She continued that if there were items not included in the CIP scope, the CRA could pay for those items because that would be a new scope. She then reviewed the following needs and recommendations.

Mid-year Budget Review 2024 (Needs)

- \$125,000 of unallocated to demo Duval Street houses
- Funding of Riverfront Plaza Restaurant design and construction
- Prioritize two-way street unconstrained
- Next priority – design and implement Riverwalk Continuity enhancements on completed sections of NB Riverwalk



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- Consider funding half of the cost of JEA relocation of duct bank across Riverfront Plaza
- If we decide to pursue a temporary food truck plaza or beer garden at Shipyards West in March, design and fund immediately to implement
- If decide to fund parking with food hall or beer garden on roof rather than temporary use begin design and set aside funding for construction
- Repair and clean-up façade of 324 Broad Street

**Mid-year Budget Recommendations 2024**

- Unallocated Funds
  - Transfer \$125,000 to demo Duval Street houses (125k)
  - Transfer \$250,000 to relocate JEA Duct Bank
  - Let the remaining 250,000 lapse to General Fund then to the Downtown Economic Fund
- Professional services
  - Use \$400,000 to \$500,000 for riverfront plaza restaurant design
  - Use \$50,000 to \$100,000 for riverwalk enhancement design
- Transfer funding from Shipyards West Park
  - Fund half of cost of JEA to relocate duct bank across Riverfront Plaza
  - Fund construction of riverwalk enhancements
  - Initial funding for Riverfront Plaza restaurant (don't have to do now)

**FY24/25 Budget Recommendations**

- Prioritize two-way street unconstrained
- Fund balance of Riverfront Plaza Restaurant

Board Chair Citrano opened the floor for questions and comments. He mentioned that they were trying to determine at the previous Finance and Budget Committee Meeting if JEA would foot the entire cost of relocating the duct bank.

CEO Boyer responded that after discussions JEA agreed to a 50/50 partnership.

Member Krechowski asked what the implications would be if DIA does not partner with JEA to relocate the duct bank.

CEO Boyer explained that JEA said they would not do the project if the city did not contribute.

Board Chair Citrano asked if moving the duct bank was critical for project development.

CEO Boyer responded that it is critical for the development pad and phase 2 and would also be critical for potential interim use. She confirmed that no development could happen at that portion of the park until the duct bank is relocated.

Member Gillam mentioned that he wanted the newer board members to have an opportunity to hear the presentation and thanked DIA staff for their work.

Member Fetner spoke on her reservations for moving money out of the Shipyards West Park Project and asked what the implications would be to move that money.



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CEO Boyer responded that the money is not park money but CRA project money.

Member Fetner also asked if the 1.2 million dollars sitting in acquisition and capital improvements are still just sitting there.

CEO Boyer responded that the money is available also. She mentioned that the money could be used for riverfront projection and sound, but she didn't need more money for that. She concluded that the money could be transferred.

Member Fetner mentioned that she didn't know what the plan was for acquiring more parks.

CEO Boyer mentioned needing a park in the Cathedral District and LaVilla and shared potential park locations in LaVilla.

Member Fetner mentioned possibly having a future workshop concerning parks and asked if DIA would continue to invest in parks as opposed to more commercial developments and affordable housing.

CEO Boyer responded that her answer would be different for a neighborhood park because DIA would not program it. Once a park becomes a true park it becomes a CRA facility and would be managed by the Parks Department who would maintain the park.

Board Chair Citrano asked the Board Members if they had come to a consensus on the recommendations presented.

Member Fetner suggested holding off on the construction of the restaurant since it's not needed right away and suggested the demolition of the houses could happen this budget year.

CEO Boyer responded that it could be done in 2 or 3 months.

Board Chair Citrano confirmed that everyone agreed with DIA staff recommendations except to move the 2 million dollars.

After discussing Northbank budget and deciding how to move forward, CEO Boyer reviewed the details of the Southbank budget, citing the following needs and recommendations.

**Mid-Year Budget Review Needs**

- If the Board elects to proceed with Friendship Fountain restaurant in April, use general fund professional service budget and some of professional services for design
- Fund SB Loans Program to provide resources for affordable housing support loan match-\$700,000 or create in next year's budget.
- Prioritize Riverwalk Enhancements on existing riverwalk
- Begin design of Flagler Avenue Shared Street



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- Design new dog park/sport courts on broadcast under overpass (recommendation of GAI Parks assessment and plan)

**Md-year Budget Recommendations 2024**

- Unallocated Balance
  - Transfer \$500,000 from unallocated to the St Johns River construction (if decided to proceed) or
  - Transfer to \$500,000 to loans
- Administrative Services
  - Use \$300,000 from Admin Professional Services for restaurant design
- Balance in SB Professional services
  - Begin Design and negotiation with FDOT for Montana/Broadcast Park
- Transfer funding from Marketing and Promotion
  - Fund SB Loans
  - SB Retail Enhancement
  - If moving forward with park restaurant, transfer \$500,000 to restaurant construction

**FY 24/25 (\$1,800,000)**

- Find SB Loans additional \$600,000
- Fund balance of Restaurant construction
- Provide additional funding for riverwalk enhancements

Board Chair Citrano opened the floor for questions and comments.

Concerning the Friendship Fountain restaurant, Member Fetner asked if that was for the concession stand or something else.

CEO Boyer responded that it was not the concession stand. She continued that the concession stand was in the park scope, citing a concession stand, restroom, wedding venue, and playground. She explained that when the design was presented it was presented with a restaurant which is more than a concession stand and would cost a couple million dollars, which was not in the park budget. She mentioned that was the reason why DIA could absorb it as a commercial facility that the DIA could lease.

Member Fetner asked if it was on CRA property.

CEO Boyer responded no and explained that it is like the riverfront projection and sound in that it is not a part of the original scope. So, the CRA could fund additional improvements.

Member Fetner also asked if the Riverfront Plaza is on CRA property and if the design of the restaurant is bundled up in the Northbank restaurant design.

CEO Boyer responded yes, it's on CRA property, but it's bundled up in terms of the RFP to select an architect and not in terms of pricing.



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Member Fetner asked concerning the restaurant, if DIA funded the restaurant, is there a mechanism where the DIA would have the ground lease and build the restaurant so that DIA would be in control of it. She added, “If the land ownership is different, how would DIA handle that?”

CEO Boyer responded that it would be handled with an MOU.

Member Fetner mentioned that she believes that they need to hold on the construction of a restaurant, especially for Southbank.

CEO Boyer responded that there is a challenge with timing and spoke on trying to address all three restaurants, but people just don’t have the bandwidth for that much at one time. She did agree that they did not have to move on anything at that moment but they could wait until they make a decision.

Member Krechowski asked if they were still doing Flagler Avenue or not.

CEO Boyer responded yes and that there was already \$800,000 set aside for it. She also mentioned that in the recommendations there’s a way to fund the restaurant without taking anything away from the Flagler Avenue Project.

Board Chair Citrano determined that the Board agreed with DIA's recommendations and asked DIA to go ahead and prepare resolutions for the Finance and Budget committee meeting.

CEO Boyer responded that she’d prepare a resolution to transfer from marketing and promotions and move ahead with both Admin Professional Services and Southbank Professional Services which are already appropriated. She added that she’d hold off on any unallocated transfers until after the Board makes a decision at the April meeting.

Board Chair Citrano asked if there were any other matters to discuss.

Member Powers acknowledged her students from UNF who attended the meeting either in person or via Zoom.

Board Chair Citrano asked if Scott Wohlers would be an official Board Member for the March meeting.

CEO Boyer confirmed that he would be an official Board Member for the March meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Board Chair Citrano adjourned the workshop at 3:10 PM.

*The written minutes for this meeting are only an overview of what was discussed. For verbatim comments of this meeting, a recording is available upon request. Please contact Ava Hill at [avah@coj.net](mailto:avah@coj.net) to acquire a recording of the meeting.*