



**Cheyenne Downtown Development Authority
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 20, 2025
Room 118, City of Cheyenne Municipal Building
2101 O'Neil Avenue, Cheyenne, WY 82001**

Members Present: Councilman Scott Roybal (President), Wendy Volk (Vice President), Janelle Rose, Brian Bau, Danica Mrozinsky (Secretary), Lorrell Bellotti (Treasurer) (Zoom), Jamie Winters, Amber Nuse (Zoom), Linda Heath (Ex Officio)

Members Absent: Dave Teubner

Staff Present: Charles Bloom, Planning and Development Director; Irene Parsons, DDA; Miya Debusk, DDA

Members of the Public Present: Glen Garrett, Councilman Pete Laybourn, Corey Loghry, Astrid, Sam Galeotos; On ZOOM: Amber Ash, Stacy Koch, Susan Allen, Eric Fountain, Julie Tucker, Jenna M, Erin Fagan, Melissa Ruth

Disclosures/Conflicts of Interest: None

Approval of the Minutes

Motion to approve Minutes for January 16, 2025, as presented was made by Volk, seconded by Rose. Motion passed unanimously.

Item V. A. Financial Report – City Treasurer Robin Lockman

City Treasurer Robin Lockman presented the Financial Report. She reported to the Board that the DDA reserve has increased by \$50,000. She asked if any Board members had questions about the financial report. No questions were asked. Motion to approve the financial report as presented was made by Volk and seconded by Bellotti. Motion passed unanimously.

Item V. B. Funds Returned to Outstanding Commitments – Irene Parsons, DDA

Parsons: This is a summary of two grants. The DDA was waiting for additional paperwork to process easement agreements and payment. As we went through the new process for easement agreements, we realized there was more time involved than anticipated. Due to end of year tax requirements, those two checks were returned to committed funds. We have since received the paperwork for both of these grants and will be getting the easement agreements completed for those grants. Now that we have a better understanding of the easement agreements, and what all is involved, we will not be

drawing checks until everything is done, and the easement agreement is signed, then we will draw the check to avoid this happening in the future.

Roybal: He asked if all members of the Board who needed to get on the signatory have done so.

L. Bellotti: She was sick last week, so she didn't get to the bank, but will get it done.

Parsons: There is no requirement to vote on this item, it was for informational purposes only.

Bloom: All Board members who are signatories will need to have a bond, so we'll be reaching out to get that done.

Item V. C. Plan of Development update

Bloom provided a summary of what changed in the document since the DDA Board meeting on January 21, as well as proposed amendments from Council members, and an appendix that has been added in the Plan of Development. The Plan is up for final consideration to the Governing Body on Monday February 24. A substitute attachment will be proposed for the final version. Summary included answers to questions that were asked on second reading, including: sidewalks and walkability; outreach and how many members we reach out to monthly; the consultants' responsibility for public engagement and a summary of events, questionnaire responses, and hours they put in related to that; an email list of 150 members who pay to the Mill Levy; work plan timeline within 1-2 weeks; snow removal; communication to constituents through the "Public Perception" part of the Plan as well as "Website Update" and "Resource Repository." On second reading, public comments were raised about walkability and pedestrian count, possibly working together with the MPO on getting data. Also questioned was the sex offender population downtown, and that information came from the Sheriff's office, 19 in secured jail, 7 in transitional center, 25 in the Pioneer Hotel, and 5 in individual dwelling units. Mr. Bloom clarified what wording was changed based on the Board's motion and provided an attachment that identified every change. Website links have been spelled out and added to the last page of the document prior to the appendix. Two new action statements were added in the implementation matrix as a result of Councilman Aldrich's comments regarding the CIG Program and Sidewalk Program, and they were replicated into the pages of the Plan. The Foundational graphic will be updated to include walkability and continuation of grant programs once the graphic designer for the consultants returns from vacation. Appendix 2 was not included in initial resolution and will be added to the substitute resolution. It is a 32-page appendix that provides all summaries of all 4 phases of public engagement. All information is available in the Draft Plan of Development on the DDA page of the City website and at cheyenneddaplan.com. Mr. Bloom requested approval from the Board for the additions added on its behalf.

Roybal: Any questions from the Board

Bau: Regarding parking in the implementation matrix on Page 72 Enhanced Downtown Parking, ensure the language is consistent with the language that was added. Mr. Bloom checked to make sure it is correct.

Bloom: It would be OK to take a formal vote that the Board concurs with the changes as presented. Volk motioned to approve the changes as presented today; Bau seconded. No public comment, motion was passed unanimously.

Item V. D. Staffing Update

Bloom: First round and second round interviews have been conducted, with a committee comprised of Councilman Roybal, Board member Bau, Board member Teubner, Director Eric Fountain and Director

Bloom. An offer was made to and accepted by Sophia Maes, who is currently employed with the City and will be transferring to the position on March 3.

Roybal: They had five people highly qualified, and it was a hard decision to make.

Item V. Email requesting input and discussion from the Board about action items moving forward:

Parsons: By request of the Board President and Plan of Development Task Force members, an email was sent out to Board members requesting they bring ideas of how they want to start implementing the Plan of Development. This is the opportunity to open that conversation with the Board members. A couple of suggestions that were shared, and other ideas from Board members as well.

Roybal: Likes Belotti's suggestion that the Board have a staff and Board tour of the projects within the District.

Bau: Would like to do that as well and include the railcars in that tour.

Volk: See if Visit Cheyenne will let us use a trolley.

L. Bellotti: As a new Board member, she has not seen many of these things, and she wants to be more informed, and would feel more competent in her role with the DDA.

Roybal: He recommended having DDA Staff coordinate this tour, see if we can get a trolley.

Bau: In regard to another recommendation about a work session, openly discuss these ideas around a table, engage with other Board members, either separately from the tour or on the same day.

Roybal: Consider making this an annual event, to see progress of projects in the District.

Bloom: Historic Preservation Board does this every year, annual work plan, created subcommittees that focus on different events and goals; will try to get that scheduled.

Volk: It will behoove the Board to see the Capital Improvement projects the DDA has granted; nice way to reach out to those businesses, see the fruits of the grants.

Bau: In the development of the work plan through the consultants, maybe there is a way to put this tour with the work plan session.

Rose: Looking at how to leverage this into strategic action items, and a couple of things she was thinking. (1) The Board could engage businesses, enhance education and access to programs, and establish a business pipeline for grant opportunities. Given the importance of historic preservation, prioritizing businesses in need of restoration is key. This includes guiding them through the process, educating the Board, and identifying properties suitable for preservation efforts. The DDA should take a proactive approach in raising awareness about available grants and advising on next steps. (2) TIF is a key component of the Plan, and Rose wants the Board to help advance it through the DDA, City, and mixed-use zoning. She suggests leveraging the Urban Renewal Authority and the MPO to create a comprehensive plan with parking and pedestrian access. To ensure progress, she proposes forming a task force to set clear goals and develop actionable plans.

Winters: A few years ago, he was working with the prior DDA Director to prepare a pamphlet or flyer to guide business owners through the process of grants and information they need from the City and DDA. Need to have that in place to give grants, a complex process, to educate businesses or to have contact information for City departments and resources and other grants available.

Mrozinsky: That was a key topic in the Task Force committee discussion on the implementation matrix, particularly regarding the Resource Repository. The goal is to provide guidance on grants and how to access them, aligning with the discussion. Some ideas to add: (1) The DDA needs to improve communication about the paid parking process, as business owners felt uninformed. A consistent communication policy should include a monthly newsletter with meeting recaps, grant updates, board

meeting access, and surveys. This will grow the email database, allowing for targeted outreach to property owners, business owners, residents, and community members based on their interests (2) The DDA should assess its outreach to Mill Levy payers and consider additional methods like quarterly mailers and website promotion (3) The website should feature newsletter content and grant result summaries, helping business owners see past projects and apply similar ideas to their properties (4) better and more efficient planter placement for more impact (two to three spots) and to help get bids from contractors to manage.

[Roybal left the meeting at approximately 11:15 AM; Volk took charge of the meeting]

Volk: Asked if any motions or actions were required at this time.

Bloom: Responded that no actions were needed, but this is valuable information to analyze and create bullet points for future planning.

Volk: Emphasized the importance of ensuring the staff isn't overwhelmed, avoiding turnover, and taking manageable, "bite-sized" action items.

Item VI. Downtown striping project and potential DDA participation in that

Bloom: Trying to get a temperature check with the Board on the striping and estimates and status from Paul Bellotti on what we are seeing.

P Bellotti: This project is in the early stages, with a consulting firm working on striping and handicap spots. Instead of separate efforts, the goal is to consolidate them into one project, gather the data, and present it to the DDA and City Council for approval to proceed.

Heath: The project is exploring adding handicap spaces to private lots around the courthouse, as there are currently few available. Contacting businesses like ANB Bank with accessible parking near the courthouse could help address this need.

P. Bellotti: This is outside the parameters of the current project, but he would work with Mr. Bloom to facilitate this conversation with those businesses.

Heath: She would appreciate that.

Announcements or Other Business:

- **Bloom:** Paul Bellotti can speak about the 15th Street Project or any other projects. Roybal invited Bellotti to provide an update on any projects that impact the DDA.

Heath requested an overview, since she is new to the DDA Board as Ex Officio.

P Bellotti provided an overview of the 15th Street Project and the striping of certain downtown parking sections, which are currently out for bids. He was also instructed by Councilman Seagrave and the Mayor to discuss acquiring a property at the corner of W Lincolnway and O'Neil Ave. This property, an old car lot owned by the Fraternal Order of the Eagles, is not for sale, but they are open to a public/private partnership to convert it into a parking lot. Additionally, the Pumphouse and wetlands project is being considered to convert the pumphouse into office space, with the Chamber of Commerce expressing interest in possibly relocating their offices there.

Volk: Have they been coordinating with Visit Cheyenne? The 15th Street corridor is part of the Master Tourism Plan approved by the Tourism committee a few years ago.

Bellotti: Yes, they have been communicating with the Director Domenic Bravo.

Mrozinsky: Asked what the timeline is for getting the Pump House into office space.

Bellotti: Initial design is expected to be completed by April, contracted with TDSi Architectural Firm for architectural work. Also getting flood analysis for mitigation, expect the analysis within the next

30 days or so. Actual construction costs and timeline will be assessed once those items are completed.

Bau: Asked if there had been any updates since the work session with the Council on 15th Street.

Bellotti: There are four phases: Phase One, the abatement of the railcars, has been completed. Anyone interested in touring them can contact him for a visit. Phase Two involves restoring the railcars externally to resemble their original colors. The final phase will move the railcars to 15th Street once it's ready. The City must complete Phase One by next June to secure financing.

Bau: Some constituents on 15th Street would like to see street lighting to continue all the way down the street to help with safety. The DDA can possibly assist with that lighting. Bau asked about the status of UPRR negotiations for the far west dirt lot.

Bellotti: Does not have an update, but they are still in discussion with the railroad.

Public comment by Glenn Garrett: Asked how the City is funding the 15th Street project and going to bid documents at the same time based on the financing discussion at the work session.

Bellotti: Phase Two funding for the railcars has been secured, doesn't have details on the breakup. They are waiting for the bid documents to be completed to understand costs and associated needs for 15th Street funding.

Garrett: Asked if the project will receive bids before the funding is in place.

Bellotti: Does not have the information currently available to respond to his question.

- Reminder of the City Council meeting next Monday 6:00 PM - DDA Plan of Development will be discussed, and the consultant will be present. Downtown public parking will also be discussed.
- Next regular board meeting will be March 20, 2025,

Item VII. Public Comment

- **Sam Galleotos, Downtown Property Owner:** He thanked the Board for their time and effort supporting the DDA, as well as the staff involved. Although he knows many members personally, he addressed them as a body. He mentioned hearing from business owners that there is general discontent about the DDA, with concerns that it doesn't fully represent the broad spectrum of business and property owners. He also stated he couldn't identify recent value-driven projects from the DDA and acknowledged that the organization has experienced both highs and lows over the years. He appreciated Ms. Mrozinsky's comments about outreach and communication with stakeholders. He expressed concerns about the parking issue and the recent ordinance on paid on-street parking. Reflecting on the past 2 ½ years, he felt many action items for improving downtown parking had not been acted upon before considering paid parking. He believes the paid parking initiative will be damaging to downtown and that the DDA should take a more active role in addressing parking issues. He noted a lack of public outreach from the DDA staff in recent years and suggested that Board members should also be involved in outreach efforts. He does not support the mill levy or see its value and feels that the current structure of the DDA lacks sufficient support from his perspective. He appreciated the opportunity to share his thoughts.
- **Glen Garrett, Downtown Property Owner:** Agreed with much of what Sam said, having made similar points in the past. Garrett was pleased with the presentation of the Plan and appreciated Mrozinsky's comments on outreach. He found the website cumbersome and not as user-friendly as others he is accustomed to. He also inquired about the striping, zones, and the role of the

consulting firm in this process. Lastly, he asked if the DDA could take a position on the upcoming parking ordinance.

- **Councilman Laybourn:** Feels confident about voting in favor of the Plan with the Governing Body. The community is at a pivotal moment, and the Plan's efforts have the potential to bring positive results across all areas. If the DDA gets involved with the striping, he emphasized the importance of ensuring it is properly maintained. He also highlighted the sidewalk snow removal in the Plan, stressing its importance for ADA accessibility. He commended Clean and Safe for their snow removal efforts, especially Mr. Sanchez and his crew, and suggested exploring group rates with a contractor for business owners to ensure timely snow removal.
- **Corey Loghry, Downtown Business Owner:** Loghry read a statement opposing paid on-street parking and expressed a desire for the DDA to take a stand on this issue. She urged the DDA to become actively involved in addressing downtown parking and to follow through on the six recommendations made in a report two years ago to better represent downtown stakeholders.
- **Janelle Rose:** Expressed appreciation for the public comments and the time people took to speak. From a DDA member's perspective, she struggled to understand how the paid on-street parking process moved forward so quickly with minimal public input. She also questioned what role the DDA could play in that process. This situation, she believes, is an opportunity to strengthen the DDA's relationship with the City. She agreed with Mr. Garrett's comments about the website and reflected on the DDA's mission, noting that while it sounds good, she's unsure what it truly means. She wants to focus on initiatives that actively engage and support businesses. She suggested advocating for the parking issue on Monday, establishing clearer communication channels, and possibly appointing a communication chair on the Board to ensure ongoing engagement with stakeholders. She emphasized the need for concrete action, not just discussion, with actionable steps moving forward.
- **L. Bellotti:** Seconded her colleagues' comments wholeheartedly. She mentioned feeling like she's been "drinking from a firehose" trying to understand the Board's role and level of authority. She appreciated the email and the conversation about ideas to improve the governing body. She believes today's discussion will lead to actionable items that will help the Board perform better. Having witnessed the DDA's changes in the past, she hopes to see more consistency moving forward. She requested some grace as she continues to learn her role on the Board.

Bellotti made a motion that the Board show support for the repeal of the parking ordinance; seconded by Winters.

Winters asked if the DDA Board has ever been presented with a motion to approve parking previously. Volk said No.

Bau recalled a previous motion from the Board to share updates on the 15th Street project with the City Council, which was rejected, and the Board was criticized for it.

Bloom: Clarified Mr. Bau's comment, noting it was slightly different because the Board cannot direct the City Engineer but can only relay an opinion to the governing body.

Garrett: Recalled the DDA Board made a motion in 1984 regarding parking and has been involved with parking since then.

Mrozinsky: The underlying issue with Mr. Bau's comment stems from uncertainty about the Board's powers and boundaries, which needs to be addressed. Regarding paid parking, she previously supported it, believing it would address downtown pain points with flexibility. However,

as a DDA Board member, she now supports its repeal due to the petitions and actions taken by downtown residents impacted by the decision.

Galleotos: The DDA is an independent body, by statute, and can act accordingly, separate from the City.

Bau: If they repeal the paid downtown parking, then City should repeal paid parking in the parking garages.

Bloom: This would be two different motions, because they are making two different messages.

Loghry: One recommendation previously made was to offer a discounted rate on 2nd 3rd 4th floors.

Volk: Motion passed unanimously.

Bau: Motion to support free parking in the Spiker garage and other City parking lots, and to incentivize employee parking to open spaces for customers. Mrozinsky seconded for the sake of discussion.

Volk: Aware of a councilman who will be making a proposal at the next Council meeting

L. Bellotti: Would like to see this tabled for a future conversation, so they can get more information. She does not feel informed enough at this time to make a vote one way or the other.

Mrozinsky: Would not be in favor of the motion at this time and would like to see the Board develop a more inclusive proposal for the City if they decide to move forward with the suggestions.

Rose: Clarified that the garage is free for the first two hours. Bloom confirmed. Rose expressed hesitation, as the City has to pay for the garage. She likes the idea of utilizing other floors for employees but feels this is a larger issue and wants to see the City's overall parking plan. This issue needs to be addressed both budgetarily and logistically.

Bloom: Recommends withdrawing the motion instead of tabling the discussion. He suggested including the issue in the work plan and discussing it in a work session. He will consult with the MPO for information on previous studies and with the City treasurer to understand the remaining debt payments.

Bau: Expressed he did not want to withdraw the motion.

Volk: A vote was taken on tabling the parking lot discussion, which passed with one opposition from Winters.

Volk: The motion has been put on hold.

Volk: Expressed appreciation for the creative energy and community input. Mentioned that Visit Cheyenne previously shared an idea about a parking grant program to cover costs for off-street parking lots. Encouraged continued sharing of ideas and input.

Heath: Discussed concerns from employees making \$12/hour, who question the value of working downtown if they have to pay for parking. Also mentioned issues with parking around the courthouse, as some individuals involved in court cases or meetings may need to stay all day without an opportunity to leave. Suggested taking these factors into consideration for parking access around the courthouse and other related businesses.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Rose, seconded by Mrozinsky. Meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM.