PROCEEDINGS OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY REGULAR MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 2026, AT 7:30 AM, LAFAYETTE PARISH ASSESSOR CONFERENCE ROOM, 213 W. VERMILION STREET, LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA

Present: Russo, Skinner, Ledet, Moreaux, Supple, Hamner
Absent: Taylor

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 AM by Chair Jaci Russo. The Chair reminded attendees public comment would be available at the end of the meeting on any DDA-related topic or agenda action item. Comment cards were available, and comments were limited to three minutes per item.

Board Materials for Approval

Skinner moved, with a second from Hamner, to approve the May 20, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes and accept the Financial Report through May 2026 for review. The motion passed unanimously.

Mid-Year Budget Amendment

The board received and discussed a proposed mid-year amendment to the Fiscal Year 2026 budget. Staff explained that the amendment would create a new "Service Agreements" revenue account to recognize approximately $61,293 in pass-through revenue tied to the extended Block by Block ambassador contract with Catholic Charities, with a corresponding increase in Supplemental Services expenditures, and absorb an approximately $5,000 contract escalation not reimbursed by the Economic Development District. The Chief Executive Officer advised that the amendment was for review and discussion only, with no action at this meeting, and would return for formal action at the July meeting before submission to the Lafayette City Council for ratification. No action taken.

CEO Update

Chief Executive Officer Kevin Blanchard reported on the Downtown Urban Core Redevelopment Plan. He recalled that the Lafayette City Council approved the plan on April 7, 2026, and later vetoed it, and that the DDA had since engaged in ongoing negotiations with the administration, assisted by the Community Foundation of Acadiana. He advised that the DDA had prepared a revised cooperative endeavor agreement responsive to the veto message, with a streamlined scope of work and detailed scope as an exhibit, and that the matter was in its third revision, with positive movement anticipated by the July meeting.

He further reported that construction of the Hotel Lafayette project had resumed after weather-related delays, and updated the board on the Coburn's building, noting that the oldest end-cap portion would be demolished for safety while the remaining structures would be preserved and remain eligible for historic tax credits.

DLU Update

The Downtown Lafayette Unlimited Executive Director was unable to attend. Blanchard reported on her behalf that a sponsor had agreed to support a new downtown data dashboard and that a City Center Session to build excitement and interest was being scheduled for approximately July 29.

Director Update

Director of Development and Planning Rachel Holland reported on efforts to advance several downtown initiatives with the City. She advised that new trash receptacles purchased with Economic Development District funds remained to be installed; that the City said it could not perform the installation as previously agreed; and that staff would solicit three installation quotes, estimated at approximately $20,000 to $30,000. She reported continuing playground-equipment maintenance delays under the existing City agreement, due in part to Parks Department turnover, with ambassadors assisting where able. She further reported sidewalk-cleanliness concerns near late-night establishments and advised that staff would meet with management.

Staff also reported on ambassador activity, including increased glass and litter near one nightlife establishment, reduced graffiti, and continued encouragement of downtown businesses to plant landscaping rather than allow planters to be used as receptacles. Staff reported recent installation of hanging baskets throughout downtown, completed with help from Station Six firefighters, and described ambassador operations in the LaPlace area under the Catholic Charities agreement, including landscaping, cleanup work, and a positive working relationship with area residents.

Updates

Councilmembers: No councilmembers were present.

Lafayette Public Trust Financing Authority: A representative reported on the Coburn's building, advising that legislation authorizes the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development to transfer the property to the LPTFA upon federal clearance that it is no longer needed for the I-49 Lafayette Connector project, that the LPTFA is responsible for demolition under its existing lease, and that the LPTFA anticipates crediting prior lease payments toward the eventual acquisition price. The representative further reported that a City of Lafayette housing-needs assessment RFQ had drawn fifteen respondents, shortlisted to five.

Acadiana Center for the Arts: A representative reported continued progress on the Music Museum capital campaign, nearing the threshold to secure a bridge loan and begin construction, and previewed spring and summer programming, including a series featuring local, emerging artists.

One Acadiana: A representative reported that a consultant had been retained for the University Gateway Economic Development District, that a stakeholder engagement meeting would be held the following Tuesday at 11:00 AM, and previewed the leadership exchange trip to Chattanooga, Tennessee, scheduled for September 16–18, 2026.

Opportunity Machine: A representative was present; no formal report was given.

Public Comment

No public comment cards were submitted.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.