

MINUTES

Board of Directors Meeting

May 31, 2022

7:30a – 9:00a

- 1. Welcome and Introductions.** The meeting convened at 9:06am. **Attending Board Members:** Mary Hitt-Davis, Candice Rinaldi, Leanne Barschdorf-Nichols, Nikki Yanok Schneider, Rebecca Lizotte, Mark Malone, Jason Sulham, Sarah Tracy
Not Attending: Peter Joseph, James Hendricks, Dan Bacon, Caleb Stephens
Others: Tawni Whitney, Dan Piltch, Brett Richardson
- 2. Consent Agenda Items.** The Board unanimously approved the draft Minutes of both the April 26, 2022 and May 3, 2022 Board meetings, and accepted the Financial Report dated April 30, 2022.
- 3. Board Membership.** The June meeting is the annual in-person meeting. FEDC has an open Board position that is reserved for Tawni. The terms of three members are up.
- 4. Downtown Vision policy advocacy.** Brett updated the Board on the FEDC/Town Council workshop on Tuesday, May 24th. The Council was supportive of the client relationship management software and market analysis/fiscal impact analysis investments, and “luke warm” on the Downtown TIF District concept. Brett shared that the Planning Department and Project Review/Planning Boards would soon take up ordinance changes to update current requirements that are generally understood to be barriers to downtown development prioritized in the Downtown Vision.

Sarah shared her perspective that the Council wasn't necessarily “luke-warm” about the Downtown TIF concept, but the Council would need additional detail to properly evaluate trade-offs associated with a conceptual TIF.

Mary shared that as developers propose projects for downtown, they will request TIF, and that the Freeport community has an opportunity to be proactive and establish one TIF district to help fund the Downtown Vision, rather than respond to multiple requests from different developers for individual TIF districts.

Nikki shared that previously, when FEDC helped advocate for policy changes, that FEDC shared very specific items, rather than general goals. The specificity of the recommendations were data-driven and actionable, which is the appropriate level of detail to yield results.

Mark shared that FEDC has touch points with developers and is well positioned to play a leadership role in policy updates by being a conduit of information for policy makers. Developer interviews will enable FEDC to assist the Planning Department and Boards to develop good policies. Mark also shared that FEDC is well-positioned to convene pre-development meetings for potential projects to facilitate information sharing and expedite planning processes.

Leanne offered to play an advisory role to help provide input on potential ordinance updates.

The Board unanimously supported investing FEDC staff time to draft a detailed Downtown TIF District proposal to provide Council with the appropriate level of detail, and to monitor the Planning Board ordinance review process for opportunities to provide input.

5. **Director's Report**

- a. Council Work Shop Update. The Council was supportive of the client relationship management software and market analysis/fiscal impact analysis investments, and "luke warm" on the Downtown TIF District concept.
- b. Sewer District update. Brett shared that he is working to draft a memo to be submitted to GPCOG for COG support to identify applicable federal resources, especially federal Economic Development Administration grants.
- c. Website update. The Board discussed website design options generated by volunteer Leslie Graham. The Board agreed that:
 - the blue/green color scheme was more welcoming than FEDC's traditional stark black and red
 - Option B was the best option
 - FEDC's mission statement should be prominently displayed for easy viewing by Freeport residents but in appropriate size and proportion to other content relevant to the target audience: developers and business owners.

6. **By-Law review: Board Vote via email.** The Board agreed that the current By-Laws create the appropriate opportunity for the Board to take action outside of monthly meetings via Article 3, Section 5 and Article 4, Section 8.

Sarah suggested that the title of Article 3, Section 5 should be updated to replace the current “Unanimous Consent” with “Remote Voting Policy.”

Mary requested that any Board communication regarding a remote vote should clearly state in the subject line the purpose of the request and the timeline to respond so that there is no ambiguity in the request.

The Board unanimously approved maintaining the current policy and updating the title of Article 3, Section 5 to “Remote Voting Policy.”

7. **Metrics Review.** There was no discussion of the current metrics but the Board discussed future data gradations that could offer useful insights. Brett relayed Dan Piltch’s recommendation that FEDC track vacant storefronts in addition to vacant square footage. Mark shared that empty leased storefronts/SF vs. owner-occupied storefronts/SF might offer a more accurate assessment because owner-occupied properties have different underlying economic considerations. Going forward, tracking sub-categories like office space vs. retail could also lend valuable insights.
8. Other Business
9. Adjourn

Upcoming Dates

June 28: Board meeting (in-person)