

GRAND JUNCTION DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 2024
750 MAIN STREET-GROWL CONFERENCE ROOM & VITRUAL OPTION
7:45 AM

Board Members present: Libby Olson (Chair), Garrett Portra (Vice-Chair), Steven Boyd, Cole Hanson, Faith Rodriguez, Cris Silverberg, City Council Representative Abe Herman

Board Members absent: Maria Rainsdon, Doug Simons Jr.

Downtown Grand Junction staff present: Brandon Stam, Dave Goe, Vonda Bauer, Kyra Seppie, Sarah Dishong (via zoom)

City of Grand Junction staff present: City Attorney John Shaver, Parks & Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou, Parks Operations Superintendent Randy Coleman

Guests: Via Zoom: DTJ Design - Greg White (Principal & Landscape Architect), James Palmer (Senior Associate & Architect)

CALL TO ORDER: Libby called the meeting to order at 7:45 a.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minutes:

Meeting on July 25, 2024

Garrett made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 25, 2024, Downtown Development Authority Board meeting. Cole seconded the motion. The motion passed.

REGULAR AGENDA

WHITE HALL

Brandon informed the board that a group interested in the White Hall property is also considering the sawmill property, which the city has an active RFP. Although the group initially planned to provide an update in August, they are not ready yet but remain interested in the White Hall property. They are currently pursuing the sawmill property.

Brandon previously spoke with Libby, Garrett, Doug, and Cole about reopening the White Hall property for proposals, and they all agreed with the idea. Other parties have also expressed interest, and the original group could still submit an RFP if they are ready.

Cole recused himself, as Gear Junction may submit a proposal.

The board discussed on whether to give the group more time or to restart the process with an RFQ, an RFP, or a combination of both. The board agreed to proceed with any of the options.

Garrett made a motion to reopen the White Hall property for solicitation. Cris seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

FINANCIAL ADVISOR-NORTHLAND SECURITIES

Northland Securities was selected to provide Financial Planning & Advisory Services. The board received a copy of the Request for Proposal. Initially, the contract was set at up to \$30,000; however, it has been increased to \$50,000. The board will vote on the contract annually.

The firm would initially attend some board meetings, discuss matters with the board, and review how the TIF extension impacts the budget. Previously, there was a discussion about whether the firm's services should be focused on a specific project or be more general. Brandon recommended a general approach as it is more common and would better support multiple projects. If a more targeted approach is preferred, an alternative proposal can be requested. Additionally, any potential bond issuance would require a separate financial arrangement, although no issuance is currently planned.

Abe moved to authorize the staff to sign the Financial Planning & Advisory Services Contract for up to \$50k. Cole seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

WHITMAN PARK UPDATES

Parks & Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou announced that City staff and DTJ Design have been working on plans for Whitman Park, which will feature an urban design with numerous amenities. The City Council recently reviewed these concepts. Initially there were three concept designs, but feedback led to two of them being combined into a final schematic design. The project will be phased, with the first phase set for funding in 2025 at an estimated cost of \$1.9 million. The City may also seek financial support from the DDA board.

James Palmer (DTJ Design) provided a presentation of the Whitman Park Schematic Design. The information included:

- Housing Support (City has contributed \$19 million, \$43 million in contributions from partners)
- Park Design Influences (various plans and studies)
- Engagement Process and survey findings overview (feedback was provided for the design through survey results, engagement sessions, focus groups, stakeholders, and community-wide public meetings)
- Top 10 Desired Programs (lighting, pollinator garden, food trucks, shade canopies, multi-use event stage, seating, holiday gathering, seasonal ice rink, rec space, public art)
- Conducted a Tree Survey (existing trees are estimated at a value of \$918,750)
- Preferred Concept Design Plan Options

The board provided feedback on several aspects, including electric outlets, restroom facilities, and the use of artificial turf for the dog park. They suggested incentivizing the dog park, given the upcoming opening of The Junction and future development of The Terminal. Additional concerns were raised about whether a wind study had been conducted, potential issues with certain groups taking over the park, and the need to encourage activities like neighborhood block parties. They also emphasized the importance of programming events to keep the space active and safe, with police or parks patrol presence.

Parks & Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou mentioned that it is a tight budget year, but efforts are underway to secure resources for the project. Staff plans to propose using parks revenue, grants, and partner contributions to fund Phase 1 in 2025. There is growing pressure to address Whitman Park, and the design process has always been part of our plan. The proposal will be presented to City Council in October.

FCI Construction plans to start Phase 1 by focusing on the southern area and then complete the full park construction the following year. To reduce costs, the city project team will handle the demolition of the restrooms.

MAIN STREET IMPROVEMENTS

James Palmer (DTJ Design) provided a presentation of the Main Street Improvements. The information included:

- Project highlights
- Main Street history
- Map of the four Downtown Districts (Downtown, Business, River, and Rail)
- In-Person Engagement Findings
- Survey Data
- Overall Engagement Findings (Main Street from 3rd to 7th)

Summary of Improvement Opportunities:

Gateway lighting, digital wayfinding kiosks, enhancing landscaping, seating areas, expanded restaurant seating, additional art and misters, water bottle filling stations, block number on sign poles, improved alleyway lighting, signage near the parking garage, potential interactive elements, improved shade, and an activity zone. Concepts were also shared to make the splashpad area more usable.

The board gave feedback to add alleyway signage, handicap parking, and shade structures. They liked the logo but recommended changing the name from Revive Main Street to something else, preferring Vibrant Downtown.

Brandon mentioned that lighting and bike racks would be funded through the 2024 DDA budget, while other improvements would require board consideration and prioritization for the 2025 budget.

Recommendations for further improvements will be discussed with Downtown staff, Ken Sherbenou, and Randy Coleman before being presented to the board for approval.

UPDATES

None

OTHER BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Cole made a motion to adjourn. Garrett seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:22 a.m.