



DESOTO DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, March 14, 2024

The Board of Directors of the DeSoto Development Corporation (DDC) met on **Thursday, March 14, 2024 at 6:00p.m.** in the Council Conference Room located in City Hall at the DeSoto Town Center, 211 East Pleasant Run Road, DeSoto, Texas 75115, The meeting was streamed live on Facebook and archived on the websites.

As authorized by Section 551.071(2) of the Texas Government Code, this meeting may be convened into closed Executive Session for the purpose of seeking confidential legal advice from the Corporation's attorney on any agenda item listed herein.

**REGULAR SESSION** - THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER by President Michael Baldwin at 6:01 p.m.

**Present:**

Michael Baldwin, Board President  
Felicia Pierson, Secretary/Treasurer  
Dr. Micaela Herndon, Director  
Mark Jones, Director  
Dr. Ahmad Garrett-Price, Director  
Akilah Wallace, Director

**Absent:**

Latosha Herron Bruff, Vice-President

**Staff Present:**

Matt Carlson - Chief Executive Officer  
Antoine Long - Economic Development Manager  
Rhonda Faulkner – Marketing Coordinator  
Tracy Cormier – Interim Deputy City Manager

**Also Present:**

Victoria Thomas, Attorney

Invocation was offered by Director Mark Jones



**REGULAR AGENDA— NEW BUSINESS**— Items for discussion and/or possible action:

1. Financial Status Report –Interim Deputy City Manager Tracy Cormier, reported that Revenue overall through the month of January 2024 reflects an increase as compared to the previous year. This is due to Sales Tax Revenue which is up 4.7% compared to budget along with Interest Revenue exceeding its previous year amount through January 2024. Expenditures are well under budget through January.

2. City Council Liaison Update – Councilman Andre’ Byrd, Sr., not in attendance due to his participation at the National League of Cities in Washington, D.C., which is an American advocacy organization providing education, research, support, and advocacy to city leaders across America.

3. Board Member Terms and Succession Plan discussion was reviewed providing the board members expiration of terms: (two in 2025, two in 2027 and three in 2029). This discussion was to bring awareness and continuity of the importance of having a solid board in place with all of the projects that are coming forward within the city. Director Mark Jones committed to extending his term to 2027. Director Akilah Wallace asked what happens if the directors appointed to serve until 2025 and 2027 decides to resign his/her post, what is the timeline for filling those spaces?

Mr. Carlson stated the sooner he is informed of such a change, the sooner would be able to, along with the board, begin the vetting process of candidates and forward that information to council for consideration. The decision of a candidate is solely that of the council, however the latitude is given to this board to make recommendations.

4. Marketing Blueprint – The Golden Shovel Agency has completed its Marketing Assessment Blueprint for the DDC. They will now begin the creation of a 18-month marketing strategy that will include revamping our website adding unique functionality and analytics specific to the Economic Development industry. As part of this work the DDC will maintain its own identity, URL and while instilling it is part of the city with the implementation of the city color and themes.

Golden Shovel’s expertise is in creating marketing strategies for economic development organizations having worked with entities in 39 states and over 800 organizations. Fees associated the initial campaign and strategy creation are \$26K, which is already budgeted in this fiscal year. If this timeline continues to move at this fast pace, \$10K for targeted marketing will also be spent during the August/September timeframe. Staff have requested an expedited website design to coincide with the Bio Life Sciences conference in June. Golden Shovel has indicated this can be done, if DDC staff ensured adherence to established deadlines for information.

Board members also indicated a desire to implement data tracking and analysis at the launch of the new website regardless of the increased cost with a belief that the initial usage data would have substantial value in shaping the future marketing efforts.



**CONSENT AGENDA**

Items are listed on the Consent Agenda by the DDC Executive Director and are recommended to the DDC Board of Directors for single vote of approval. Any item may be removed from the Consent Agenda for separate vote at the request of a Board Director.

1. Consider approving the February 8, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes
2. Consider approving the January 2024 Financial Statement

**On a motion by Director Mark Jones and second by Director Akilah Wallace the consent agenda was approved unanimously.**

**BRIEFING BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER —Matt Carlson**

1. Mr. Carlson delivered a brief update of business plan goals, department goals and personal professional development plans of the staff.

**BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:00 p.m.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Matt Carlson", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

J. Matt Carlson—Chief Executive Officer