

**Minutes of the Downtown Development Authority  
City of Portland**

Held on Thursday, December 15, 2005  
In Council Chambers at City Hall

Members Present: Barnes, Clement, Dempsey, Dumas, Hoppes, Kavanagh, Kolarik, Pontz, Williams

Members Absent: Antaya, Urie

Guests: Kathy Parsons, Carolyn Bennett

Chairman Dumas called the meeting to order at 3:32 P.M.

Chairman Dumas welcomed new D.D.A. Boardmember Vicki Pontz stating that she would be taking Becky Wards place on the D.D.A.

Chairman Dumas also stated the Boardmember Schrauben has resigned due to conflict of time with his new position.

Motion by Kavanagh, supported by Clement, to approve the agenda as presented  
All in favor. Adopted

Motion by Kolarik, supported by Clement, to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2005 meeting.  
All in favor. Adopted

Motion by Kavanagh, supported by Kolarik, to approve the Treasurer's Report.  
All in favor. Adopted

Economic Development Director Flanders stated there are no new applications for Façade Grants. However, he did say that the façade of Ted's Barber Shop is looking much better, and work is continuing on the Lewanski, Urie, and Steffes-Rosset buildings. He said that the Portland Theater is waiting for electric to be installed to their marquee. He also stated the Keusch Super Service is waiting for plans from their company for a 50's motif for their building.

Director Flanders stated the Promotion and Marketing Committee is moving ahead with an aggressive promotional program to develop plans for further sales areas in the downtown, as well as getting promotional material together to hand out. Mayor Barnes stated that the Promotion and Marketing Committee took in money from various store owners in Portland to promote downtown Portland at a conference in Lansing. He said, "There was income as well as expenses associated with the conference".

Director Flanders stated we are awaiting approval from D.E.Q. for the boardwalk design to allow the City to move ahead with the final plans. He stated the City Engineer's submitted a request for approval of the plans as amended. He said we should hear something by the end of the year.

Boardmember Karen Hoppes stated there was great cooperation from students from St. Pats, Portland Public School, and children from Tate's Playhouse in the placement and lighting of luminaries along Kent and Bridge Streets for Holidayfest. She stated she talked to Mr. Hodgeman from the Public School system, and he stated they would be happy to help out again next year. She also stated she hopes to get more volunteers to help light luminaries on Saturday and Sunday next year. Director Flanders commended Boardmember Hoppes for her leadership in this project. He said, "She was the leader of the pack".

Chairman Dumas stated the 24<sup>th</sup> edition of "On the Street" was mailed this month, and Don Flanders was named volunteer of the month.

Chairman Dumas introduced the newly appointed D.D.A. Director/Main Street Administrator Carolyn Bennett. He stated that Ms. Bennett was one of 30 applicants that applied for the position, and of the 5 interviewed, she was their first choice. He stated the interview board consisted of Mayor Barnes, City Manager Dempsey, Main Street Committee Chair Julie Clement, and himself.

Carolyn Bennett thanked the Board for the opportunity to meet with them. She informed them of her prior work experience as an Economic Development Administrator, independent consultant, and state employee, she just finished volunteering her time working with the Red Cross in Houston working with Katrina Hurricane Relief. She stated that Economic Development is her field of choice and is thrill to be offered the position. Director Flanders stated that Ms. Bennett has a strong personality, and that is what Portland needs.

Motion by Dumas, supported by Barnes, to enter into a Consultant Services Agreement with Carolyn Bennett for three years, and given her background experience, recommends that her salary be \$30,000 annually.

All in favor. Adopted

Chairman Dumas stated Ms. Bennett's term would begin January 1, 2006.

Director Flanders stated he has been working with Ken Kramer for several weeks on possible improvements to his operations. He stated that most shops in Portland are doing very well especially during Holidayfest. He stated he wanted to commend the Promotion and Marketing Committee and the merchants for their help in serving the public.

Director Flanders stated that the shop owners realize they need to do over and above what the owners do in malls. He stated our shop owners are selling service and that is our most important product. He stated that the Promotion and Marketing Committee is planning on having training sessions for owners of the shops and the methodology of improving customer service and shop displays. Director Flanders stated he wanted to commend Wanda Urie for her work with the training sessions and hard work hard during the Holidayfest.

Director Flanders stated that Marilyn Smith was to be here today to talk about the Loft Apartment Program, but was unable to attend because of the weather. She has secured over \$700,000 to allow for about 20 more loft apartment in the downtown area.

Director Flanders also wanted to thank Jim Lakin for the addition of the 22-unit Condominium Project, and the 22-unit Senior Housing Project. Mr. Lakin was also not available today. He stated Mr. Lakin has also been diligently working with the Arts Council at the dam property.

Director Flanders discussed the fact the M.E.D.C. has been cut because of budget reductions at the State.

He stated the staff that was working with Main Street and local governments was transferred to M.S.H.D.A. He stated the Main Street Review has been put off until February or March of next year.

Director Flanders thanked the Board for making him feel very welcome in Portland, stating it is time for him to concentrate on his health. He said, "It is with sad regret that I am leaving, and I thank you sincerely for the kindnesses you have given me".

Chairman Dumas stated Portland is a better community because of Mr. Flanders' involvement in our community from interim City Manager to Economic Development Coordinator, D.D.A. Administrator/Main Street Manager, all around good guy. Chairman Dumas said, "It has been a pleasure working with flamboyant Flanders both professionally and personally". He said, "Thank you on behalf of the Board". He wished him good luck and best of health.

Motion by Clement, supported by Kolarik, to adjourn the meeting at 4:03 P.M.  
All in favor. Adopted

Respectfully submitted,

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Yvonne M. Miller, City Clerk