



DSCA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 3, 2024; Broadway Promenade and Zoom

Board Members Present: David Lough, Judy Mower, Peter Fanning, Patrick Gannon, Catherine Sellers, Ken Shelin, Roger Barry, Victor McTeer

Board Members Absent: Jaime Still, Clark Lauren

Member Representatives Present: Cheryl Walker, One Hundred Central Avenue; Jim Lampl, Jewel; Janice Hetland, 101 Condominium; Rosemary Krimbel, Alinari; Charlie Nagelschmidt, Broadway Promenade; Bill Diehl, Condo on the Bay; Jim Long, Mark Sarasota;

Associate Members Present: Paul Schott, ServPro of North Sarasota; Michele Sidlasky, City National Bank; Annika Mantius, Burg Simpson Eldredge Hersh Jardine; Reva Jackson, Cadence Bank; Lynn Mucciano, First Service Residential; Steve Shaw, Hotwire Communications; Dennis McSweeney, Smart Water Protection; Fred Grady, Alderman Oaks; Eric Mace, Youthful Aging Home Care

Guests: Kevin Stiff, Interim Executive Officer, Suncoast Partnership to End Homelessness; Vice Mayor Jen Ahearn-Koch, City Commission; Rondald Kashden, CCNA Laurel Park Neighborhood; Jim Toale, 101 Condominium; Dina Lareau, Arcos;

The meeting was called to order by David Lough at 4:00, a quorum was declared.

Treasurer Clark Lauren's absence due to a sudden illness was noted by David Lough, therefore there was no treasurer's report at this meeting. Patrick Gannon reported that 2024 dues had been paid by 22 of 37 DSCA members, 15 have not yet paid. Annual dues from Associate members are invoiced on anniversary dates of their joining DSCA. Of 42 members, 12 have unpaid dues.

The minutes of the December 4, 2023, meeting were approved (Peter Fanning, Cathy Sellers)

Guest Speaker, Kevin Stiff, Interim Executive Officer, Suncoast Partnership to End Homelessness, Inc.

Peter Fanning introduced Mr. Stiff and reviewed his history of involvement with the homeless – transitioning from Sarasota City Police Officer to Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) service coordinator to his current position as leader of the main advocacy and outreach group working on behalf of the homeless in Mantee and Sarasota Counties. A national search for a new chief executive of the Partnership is underway.

Mr. Stiff began by describing the upcoming Point In Time (PIT) count of homeless people in both counties, set to happen from noon January 29 to noon January 30. Volunteers are needed to do this count, and those interested in helping can email aimee@suncoastpartnership.org. Volunteers work in pairs, are trained, and use electronic phone apps to gather information as they search for and interview homeless people. PITs are done regularly, and each result is viewed as a sort of "snapshot" useful to determine trends that lead to fluctuations in numbers of homeless, and to identify and track those among them who can be viewed as "chronically" homeless.

Nationally, HUD reports a 12% increase in homeless people. The numbers collected during the COVID epidemic years were probably undercounts. The data on homelessness is used by HUD to determine the

amount of federal government resources that will be collected overall, and how those resources will be deployed to localities via NOFO's (Notices of Funding Opportunities). Current expectation is that at least 1 ½ million dollars will be made available, and an additional half million is hoped for. Amounts given to localities are determined by base counts and certain system performance measures.

Commissioner Ahearn-Koch interjected with some statistics for the City of Sarasota: the homeless population in Sarasota went from 1,106 in 2014 to 138 in 2021, an 88% reduction – making Sarasota a model for the rest of the country and earning accolades for both the City and the Partnership. Federal funding for just the City went from \$31,000 in 2015 to \$40,000 in 2023. This outcome shows that the Commission has been sensitive and responsive to the issue – both in terms of homeless people's "rights" to have a home and to the "rights" of city residents to enjoy their city without the worries brought to mind by the presence of numerous homeless people.

Other funding to find homes for the homeless and support programs that prevent and address health and mental health issues (including addiction) that lead people into homelessness comes from City government, the County, and the state. Together with philanthropic sources of funding, all these governmental funding streams create the CSIS – Community Services Information System, and the COC – Continuum of Care – linking homeless people to the Partnership. Sarasota was the first city in the state to create, in 2019, a Community Care Court – a problem solving specialty court where cases involving homeless people are deliberated with a view toward helping them navigate the legal system. Sarasota Memorial Hospital has just completed a new Behavioral Healthcare Facility, with around 80 beds.

Answering questions following his presentation, Mr. Stiff said around 75% of homeless people suffer from mental health problems, such as PTSD, various addictions, schizoaffective disorders, and dementia. In order to qualify for assistance offered to chronically homeless people, an individual must be diagnosed as having a disability. Good case management is the key to successful outcomes for such people. The lack of permanent supportive housing is the biggest problem.

New Gold Associate Member: The board approved Atlas Insurance as a Gold Associate Member (Patrick Gannon, Ken Shelin).

OLD Business:

President's Report: David Lough referred to the material he had emailed to board members just prior to the meeting, which included besides the agenda and meeting minutes a draft statement of DSCA's position on the City's Parking Proposal, and a *Herald Journal* article (12/31/23) on the speaker series, *Architecture Sarasota*. The Speaker Series will be held at the Art Ovation Hotel, beginning with Andrés Duany on January 24, with three other speakers to follow on 1/31, 2/14, and 2/28. (Over 200 people have signed up.) David spoke briefly about the recent ZTA (zoning text amendment) workshops. Recordings of Commission Meetings, including such workshops, can be viewed via the City's website.

City Update: David Lough spoke briefly about a document also sent ahead to board members concerning ongoing discussions about zoning text amendments (ZTA's) applying to night clubs, bars, and restaurants. He added that the next meeting of the Planning Board will include re-application for approval of the Obsidian. DSCA's position remains in opposition to the requests for exceptions to current building standards requested by the developer of that building.

Arts & Culture: Ken Shelin reported that on January 9 at 10 AM there will be ribbon cutting ceremony for the completion of Phase I of the Selby Gardens Master Plan. The part of the plan calling for installing solar panels has had to be delayed due to lack of availability of needed components. The adjacent city park is being upgraded. Selby Gardens is gaining recognition and praise for lowering the carbon footprint of its facilities and campus via its climate adaptation activities and renovations.

Associates & Events: In Jamie Still's absence Annika Mantius reported that planning is underway for DSCA's March 20th workshop, the tentative theme for which will be "keep it sustainable". Fliers are being prepared and will go out soon.

Health & Safety: Peter Fanning reported that the downtown watch program is presently "in limbo" but two condos have expressed interest in getting involved.

Greenspace: no report

Homeless: No further report, given it was the main topic of the guest speaker.

Transportation: David Lough and Peter Fanning spoke about the January 8 City Commission workshop that will focus on attainable housing, but will also include discussion of Braxton Harvey's proposed changes to the City's parking regulations. This workshop will be an opportunity for City Commissioners to meet with staff. The public can attend and observe but not speak. A lengthy discussion among DSCA board members followed this introduction – making reference to the previously emailed document listing elements of the proposed new parking plan with accompanying comments added by Mr. Fanning - these comments representing DSCA's recommendations on various items within the plan. The conclusion of this discussion was that board members wanting to make specific changes to the document must send them via email to Peter Fanning by noon on the following day. He will see that the document, with any revisions, will get to the City Commissioners before January 8. The board approved his doing that, meaning that whatever it finally contains after more board input will represent DSCA's "official" position. (Ken Shelin, Victor McTeer)

Zoning: David Lough thanked Victor McTeer for agreeing to chair the Zoning Committee. Mr. McTeer spoke about his having arranged a zoom call with Mayor Liz Alpert, to talk with her about the zoning text amendments under consideration for bars, nightclubs, and restaurants.

Bay Park Conservancy: Ken Shelin reported that building a parking structure at the park is under consideration.

CCNA: CCNA will meet on Saturday, January 6, 9 AM, and the meeting will include a presentation on ZTA's for attainable housing.

Rosemary District: David Lough reported that work has begun to install underground conduits for utilities.

Associate News: Brief presentations were made by representatives of City National Bank, Cadence Bank, and ServPro of Sarasota.

Meeting adjourned at 5:37.

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, February 7, 2024, same time and place