

WASHINGTON AVENUE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT - MAY 2026

Executive Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, May 14, 2026

Time: 2:01 PM – 3:08 PM

Location: Washington Avenue BID Office

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at **2:01 PM**.

Board Members Present

- Marc Lawrence
- Saul Gross

Others Present

- Heather
- Lauren
- Troy E. Wright, Executive Director

As fewer than the number of Directors required by the Bylaws were present, **a quorum was not established**. Accordingly, no official Board business was conducted, and no votes or formal actions were taken. The meeting proceeded for informational and discussion purposes only.

2. Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director provided updates on current BID initiatives, marketing efforts, corridor improvements, business recruitment, and upcoming events.

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Marketing & Promotion

The Board received updates regarding the BID's ongoing marketing initiatives, including:

- The continued success of the Washington Avenue Business Video Series, including the El Patio episode, which had generated more than 103,000 views.
 - Production of the Bikini Outlet feature.
 - Spring Break promotional campaign.
 - Ultra Music Festival digital marketing campaign.
 - Continued social media and visitor engagement efforts.
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3. Beautification & Corridor Enhancement

The Executive Director presented concepts intended to improve the visual appearance and visitor experience along Washington Avenue.

Topics discussed included:

- Developing "Controlled Value Zones" to create distinct identities for different sections of Washington Avenue.
- Evening economy activation between 6:00 PM and 10:00 PM.
- Gateway beautification planters.
- Decorative streetscape enhancements.
- Backlit art installations within vacant storefronts.
- Public art and corridor activation strategies.

During discussion, Board members expressed interest in exploring sculptural installations within the medians as an alternative to planters and discussed potential collaboration opportunities with the Wolfsonian Museum.

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4. Restaurant Activation Initiative

The Executive Director presented a proposed dining activation program designed to encourage increased evening activity by asking participating restaurants to offer simple, time-based promotions, including:

- Prix fixe dinner specials.
- Dinner and beverage pairings.
- Complimentary appetizers or desserts.
- Signature menu features.

The objective discussed was to establish Washington Avenue as a consistent dining and entertainment destination while increasing pedestrian activity during evening hours.

5. Financial Update

The Executive Director reviewed the April and May 2026 financial statements and provided an overview of current revenues and expenditures.

As no quorum was present, the financial statements were presented for informational purposes only and were not considered for approval.

6. Business Development

The Executive Director reported on several new businesses opening or planning to open along Washington Avenue, including:

- Kung Fu Chicken
- Naked Tomato
- Le Nicabanos
- New lounge at the former Liquid site
- Cheesesteak restaurant

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The Board also received updates on additional commercial activity occurring within the district.

7. Board Recruitment

An update was provided regarding Executive Board recruitment.

Potential new Board members discussed included:

- Gavin Crescenzo (Treehouse)
- Dillion Sawyer (Moxy Hotel)
- Akshay Moza (WPH / La Terraza)

The Executive Director noted that one additional Executive Board member would still be needed.

8. Upcoming Events

The Executive Director reviewed several upcoming BID initiatives and community events, including:

- Human Trafficking Summit
- Fourth of July activities
- Mac's Club Deuce 100-Year Anniversary Celebration
- BARLOOZA
- Hallowave
- Vibration Live Music Series
- July 9, 2026 Annual Meeting and Board Elections

The Board discussed planning efforts and event coordination.

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9. Legislative & Capital Improvement Updates

The Executive Director provided updates regarding:

- GO Bond funding opportunities.
- Residential redevelopment concepts.
- Potential kiosk advertising revenue sharing.
- Summer internship opportunities.

These items were presented for discussion and informational purposes only.

10. General Discussion

Board members discussed several additional operational topics, including:

- Beautification priorities along the corridor.
 - Opportunities to encourage timely payment of BID assessments.
 - Continued partnerships with cultural organizations and stakeholders.
 - Long-term strategies to improve the appearance, walkability, and economic vitality of Washington Avenue.
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11. Adjournment

With no further discussion, the informational meeting concluded at approximately **3:08 PM**.

Because a quorum was not present, **no motions were made, no votes were taken, and no official Board actions occurred.**

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The Board was advised that a Human Trafficking Summit was scheduled for **May 8, 2026**.

3. Alton City Center Overlay Presentation

The Board received a presentation regarding the proposed **Alton City Center Overlay** and the potential redevelopment of the former Epicure site.

Discussion included:

- Mixed-use redevelopment.
- Residential housing opportunities.
- Economic feasibility.
- Community impacts.
- Parking.
- Traffic.

The Board also discussed the possible impact of future zoning changes on Washington Avenue redevelopment opportunities.

4. Washington Avenue Redevelopment Policy Discussion

The Board reviewed several redevelopment issues affecting Washington Avenue, including:

- Floor Area Ratio (FAR).
- Building height limitations.
- Parking requirements.
- Property values.
- Economic feasibility.
- Regulatory barriers.
- Historic preservation requirements.
- Development incentives.

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The Board expressed support for thoughtful residential redevelopment while emphasizing that redevelopment must remain financially feasible for property owners and developers. Possible incentives discussed included:

- Height flexibility.
 - Parking solutions.
 - Workforce housing density bonuses.
 - Expedited permitting.
 - Tax abatements.
 - Mixed-use flexibility.
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5. Board Action

Following discussion, the Executive Board approved the redevelopment position presented during the meeting.

Vote

Approved

- Michael Simkins — Yes
- Andrew Resnick — Yes
- Marc Lawrence — Yes
- Roberto Delfore (Proxy) — Yes

Motion carried.

6. Washington Avenue Public Art Program

The Executive Director provided updates on the BID's public art initiatives, including:

- "It's Okay to Be Great" mural.
- Washington Avenue Legends Banner Series featuring:
 - Celia Cruz
 - Josephine Baker
 - Gloria Estefan

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- Maurice Gibb
- Muhammad Ali
- Bob Marley

The Board discussed the continued use of public art to celebrate Washington Avenue's history and enhance the visitor experience.

7. Financial Report

The Executive Director presented the February 2026 financial report for review.

Following discussion, the Executive Board approved the financial report.

Vote

Approved

- Michael Simkins — Yes
- Andrew Resnick — Yes
- Marc Lawrence — Yes
- Roberto Delfore (Proxy) — Yes

Motion carried.

8. Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director provided updates on current and upcoming BID initiatives, including:

- Annual Meeting scheduled for **July 9, 2026**.
- New business openings.
- FIFA World Cup planning.
- BARLOOZA event planning.
- Art Basel programming.
- Additional marketing and promotional initiatives for Washington Avenue.

The Board received the report.

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9. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.