



**Board of Governors Meeting  
Tuesday, April 15, 2025, 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.  
The Adolphus Hotel  
Dallas TX 75201**

In Attendance: Milton Anderson, Darcy Barnes, Evan Beattie, Michael Blackwell, Kate Clapper, Cathy Collins, Brandi Crawford, Rev. Amos J. Disasa, Melissa Graham (Representing Brenden Shanahan), Ted Hamilton, Payton Holderman, Todd Howard, Elizebeth Herman-Fulton, , Jamee Jolly, Suzan Kedron, Shyam Lalu, Amy Lewis Hofland, Eric Kreuger, Bosther Kusich, David Martin, Evan McCurdy, Linda McMahon, Amy Meadows, Jesse Moreno, Jed Morse Strick, Katy Murray, Kyla Porter, Matthew Renna, Travis Reynolds, Juan Rodriguez, Lacey Ruiz, Ryan Schutt (Representing Dan Noble), Jennifer Scripps, Skip Simpson, Richard Stockton, Sana Syed, Sam Tucker, Steven Upchurch, Lindsay Wilson, John Wulfert.

Absent: Panjola Abel, Ted Benn, Brian Bergersen, Wendy Bridges, Bill Brokaw,, Dave Brown, Rep. John Bryant, Alan de Castro, Matt Craft, John Crawford, Laura Crawford, Jim Cuddihee, Larry Daniels, Noa Dowl, Nick Diaz, Zenetta Drew, Cory Feldman, Colin Fitzgibbons, Mattia Flabiano III, Larry Good, Jim Greer, Lisa Hall, Susan Harris, Jonathan Haywood, Jamie Hendrick, Steve Hulsey, David Johnson, Eric Kreuger, Jon Leach, Hunter Lee, Nadine Lee, David Lind, Richard Markham, Ed McGonigle, Kristy Morgan, Cassandra Nack, Neal Parikh, Michael Peterson, Geena Piwetz, Billy Prewitt, Holly Reed, Randy Robason, Scott Rohrman, Paul Ridley, Hector Sanchez, Arthur Santa-Maria, Kit Sawers, Josh Shane, Kristian Teleki, Amy Tharp, Shawn Todd, Michael Tregoning, Gary Tress, Adrian Verdin, Heather Walker, Ray Washburne, Lily Weiss, Brian Wheeler, Steve Whitcraft, Bradford Williams, Jared Williams, Craig York, George Youngblood, Alan Zreet.

Staff in attendance: David Davis, Monica Gonzalez, Larry Gordon, Mike Hunter, Juan Galvan, Danquawn James, Gary Johnson, Eevee Marcus, Shalissa Perry, Doug Prude, Micheal Graham, Paulette Cherubin.

Guests: Aaron Farmer, The Retail Coach

**I. Meeting was called to order at 8:31 a.m. by Katy Murray, Chair**

**II. Welcome Sam Tucker with Adolphus Hotel**

**III. Consent Agenda Items – Administration (A-C)**

- A. Minutes: December 19, 2024, Board of Governors
- B. Minutes: February 11, 2025, Annual Meeting (BOG)
- C. Financials: March 31, 2024

Ms. Murray called for a motion to approve the Minutes and Financials. The motion was made by Todd Howard with a second by Steven Upchurch. The Board unanimously approved.

**IV. Welcome Our Newest Governor, Katy Murray, Chair**

Jarred Williams (Hall Arts Hotel) was absent, and the meeting continued with the Monthly Reports.

**V. March 2025 Monthly Report, Jennifer Scripps, President & CEO**

Ms. Scripps provided an update on Neiman Marcus, announcing that the flagship store will remain in the building through 2025. She emphasized the store's historical and cultural significance, noting its longstanding presence and value to both the property and the downtown community. Ms. Scripps expressed gratitude to Shawn Todd for his instrumental support in efforts to retain Neiman Marcus. She also referenced the two recent press conferences hosted by Downtown Dallas, Inc. (DDI), which helped spotlight the importance of preserving this iconic retail anchor and revealed promising business opportunities.

Ms. Scripps then introduced an exciting development: Therme Group's plans to bring Therme Dallas to the Cedars neighborhood. She explained that HR Consulting is currently coordinating strategic planning efforts. Once completed, the Therme wellness resort is expected to attract over one million visitors annually, offering year-round, seven-day-a-week experiences for guests of all ages. This would be the first Therme location in North America.

Finally, Ms. Scripps shared that Hampton Social officially opened its Dallas location in March. The venue offers a vibrant atmosphere, offering breakfast and lunch in the downtown area.

**VI. Ground Floor Activation Strategy**

**Shalissa Perry, Chief Experience Officer, Aaron Farmer, President, The Retail Coach**

Ms. Scripps shared that Ms. Perry is actively engaged with Retail Coach representative Aaron Farmer, who will provide strategic insights moving forward. Mr. Farmer presented an overview of the phased retail strategy currently underway.

Phase 1 involves analyzing the data that informs retail site selection decisions. Phase 2 focuses on developing a ground floor activation strategy to enhance downtown street-level engagement. Phase 3 includes ongoing retail recruitment and consulting support.

Mr. Farmer also emphasized the importance of improving consumer experience, retaining and attracting local businesses, and activating spaces to support a thriving destination retail district. He noted the value of continued outreach, leveraging stakeholder feedback, and building momentum for long-term growth. Strategic planning is also underway regarding the future of the Neiman Marcus building. While acknowledging that retail growth takes time, he affirmed their commitment to championing the future of downtown Dallas.

Mr. Farmer extended an invitation to attend a virtual presentation of the ground floor activation strategy scheduled for May 14 at 10:00 a.m.

## **VII. Legislative Updates Jennifer Scripps, President & CEO, Evan Sheets, VP, Planning & Policy**

Ms. Scripps noted that Mr. Sheets was unable to attend today's meeting and provided an overview of DDI's 89th Legislative Session priorities, which include support for economic development initiatives, public-private partnerships, safety and homelessness programs, mixed-income housing and office-to-residential conversions, as well as mobility and infrastructure improvements. She also highlighted education and workforce development priorities, including increased funding for healthcare worker education, technology career programs, and school choice vouchers. Ms. Scripps noted that DDI is currently tracking approximately 130 bills and reviewed key legislative dates for the session. She discussed relevant legislation impacting DART funding (HB 3187), Project Finance Zones expansion, film and grocery access incentives, and gaming legislation.

In addition, Ms. Scripps addressed Texas Senate Bill 2594 and House Bill 4078, which were filed without input from the affected Public Improvement Districts (PIDs) or Dallas-area legislators. While the bills suggest the possibility of state, city, and county funding matches, they would significantly reduce local control by eliminating the ability to renew PIDs at the local level, restructure PID board compositions, and expose DDI to the risk of frivolous lawsuits. No dedicated funding allocations were identified in either bill. The DDI Board of Directors has voted to oppose both bills. Other impacted cities—including Fort Worth, Austin, and San Antonio—are also opposed, along with the City of Dallas and Dallas County. Numerous civic groups have echoed these concerns and expressed their willingness to offer support.

## **X. President's Report Jennifer Scripps, President & CEO**

Ms. Scripps provided a brief update on the downtown market, noting a slowdown in leasing activity year-over-year, with 27 deals totaling roughly 140,000 square feet. She highlighted key leases such as HNTB at Ross Tower and KERA at One Arts, as well as the successful leasing at Pearl Street Lofts and the recent opening of Hurtado BBQ. Updates from City Hall included the appointment of a new Chief of Police, plans for the \$30M redevelopment of Fire Station 18, progress on parking reform, and ongoing review of the Parks Management Agreement. Public safety improvements have led to a 30% decrease in downtown crime following DPD staffing

increases and the launch of a dedicated task force. The Street to Home initiative has housed 170 individuals since July, with a goal of 250 by mid-May, and encampment closures planned by May 16.

She also shared that Neiman Marcus will remain open through 2025, giving the City and partners time to explore future uses for the space. DDI continues to support efforts with data and strategy while all parties refrain from media announcements until plans develop. The City of Dallas has accepted ownership of the land beneath the store, donated by Slaughter Partners. The Board of Governors will meet at The Zodiac inside Neiman Marcus on December 16, 2025. Ms. Scripps also previewed upcoming events like Movie Nights, Goat Yoga, and Yappy Hours. She concluded by asking members to save the date for the State of Downtown on October 29 at 8:15 AM at Thompson Dallas and noted the next BOG meeting will be held June 10 at DallasNews Corporation.

### **XI. Adjourn**

With no other business, Ms. Murray thanked all in attendance. The meeting was adjourned at 9:29 a.m.

Minutes submitted by: Gary Johnson, Director Membership Engagement & Events

***The next Board of Governors meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 10, 2025, at DallasNews Corporation 1954 Commerce Street Dallas, TX 75201.***