

THE CWE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

July 21st, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

PRESENT were Commissioners Bill Derbins, Jim Dwyer, Pete Rothschild, and Trip Straub, in addition to Kate Haher, Executive Director of the CID and Elisa Essner, Marketing and Communications Coordinator for the CID.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:

Trip Straub asked for a motion to approve the June 23rd meeting minutes, noting that the date at the top of the minutes needed to be corrected. Bill Derbins moved to approve the minutes. Pete Rothschild seconded the motion. All in favor. The minutes were approved.

Trip Straub noted that the minutes would be sent out sooner going forward and he encouraged the Board to read the minutes in advance of the meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Kate Haher reviewed the June 2015 financials noting that \$76,795.84 had been collected in sales tax for the month of June, bringing the total amount collected for sales and use tax for the fiscal year to \$796,928.25. She noted that that this was significantly higher than the budgeted amount of \$715,000. Trip added that the total income from the 2014/2015 fiscal year was in line with what was projected for 2015/2016, and that we should feel confident about the budget. Kate explained that the format of the financial statements had changed and that the TIF funds were now being shown as a liability giving a more accurate picture of the financials. She noted that these changes were in line with the auditors notes.

Pete Rothschild questioned why Bowood was being paid to manage the cleaning program and stated that he thought the program could be managed for less money in-house. The mix-up was due to the fact that the Bowood payments were listed as a management fee when the company was actually a contractor doing the work, which includes supervision, insurance, etc. Kate noted that the crew was paid approximately \$8 per hour and that the CID paid Bowood approximately \$10.80 per hour, but stated that she would double check the exact amounts. She explained that Bowood had continued to manage the program for the CID and that because they had the staff available 7 days a week to check the Independence Center staff in and out and space to store the carts it made sense at the time to continue management of the program this way. She added that this could be brought in house but that management logistics would need to be worked out. Bill Derbins stated that at the current rates, this was a very fair deal. Kate agreed to send the exact pricing and details to all Commissioners.

Bill Derbins asked when the Maryland Plaza TIF would expire and what the total amount remaining on the TIF was. The Board requested that Kate request this information from the Comptroller's Office.

Trip Straub noted that the financial reports showed that the CID expenses had exceeded the budget but noted that this was due to the expenses in the 70000 category which were additional projects approved when there was an understanding that there were additional funds to spend. He noted that the Kingshighway project expenses would be reimbursed by the North SDB which administers TIF funds for capital projects.

MARKETING & EVENTS

Marketing and Communications Coordinator

Kate HaHer welcomed Elisa Essner aboard and explained that she would be in the office on Tuesdays all day, and Wednesday and Friday afternoons. She reviewed the initial priorities that she had discussed with Elisa to get her started, noting that social media, website updates, the monthly newsletter, the media schedule and events were going to be areas of focus for Elisa going forward.

Media

Kate HaHer reported that she had been meeting with the CID's media partners and would be putting together a proposed media plan for review at the next meeting. She reminded the group that the media budget for the 2015/2016 fiscal year had been reduced from approximately, \$95,000 to \$45,000 and that, as discussed at previous meetings, the focus for media would be on events.

Pete Rothschild stated that the St. Louis Magazine ad was very expensive and that in his opinion, advertorials were cheesy. He requested that a detailed advertising plan and budget be presented to the Commission and suggested that we consider co-op advertising and look at the online marketing of Alive Magazine for opportunities.

Event Update

Kate stated that she had met with several business owners from the neighborhood, including Derek Gamlin and Aaron Teitelbaum, to further discuss a concept for an event for next year. She explained that the cocktail party and outdoor dinner party ideas were very well liked by the group and that she would be meeting with Sam Foxman and Amit from Synergy to further discuss the idea and work to further develop the concept for the event. She noted that 2 retailers were invited to the meeting and both supported the idea of having a food/beverage focused event because the restaurants brought more traffic into their businesses.

Kate HaHer stated that the 3rd Local Social had taken place on July 10th and that, given the competition around the St. Louis area that night, it was a busy evening in the CWE. She explained that she would be meeting with the merchants the following day (7/22) to discuss how the event has been for business and discuss the future of the event. Pete Rothschild asked if the CID was spending enough time and money to bring people to the event and stated that he would rather see money spent on better landscaping and well lit buildings. Kate explained that the Marketing Committee had also discussed Local Social and suggested that the CID stop promoting Local Social as a monthly event, and rather than program one night a month heavily, that we schedule less entertainment, but do it for each Friday in the summer.

Trip Straub reinforced the idea to spend less on marketing and entertainment for Local Social and to provide entertainment more frequently. Bill Derbins suggested that we consider focusing on one intersection at a time and doing something different there. Pete Rothschild stated that the restaurant and bars should be our main area of focus and suggested that we create programs and events to bring people in on the slower nights – possibly having the restaurants offer deals. He suggested looking at Clayton's events and considering a 1 day event to promote the restaurants.

Bill Derbins suggested that we look at Coconut Grove in Florida for ideas and it was suggested to look at European cities for different ideas as well.

PUBLIC REALM ENHANCEMENTS

Parking Signs

Kate Hafer presented the final design plans for parking signage, noting the changes that were made from the last round of revisions. She added that she would forward the final location plan and asked Commissioners to review the detailed information and provide feedback. She explained that she would work with Heather Testa to obtain bids for the project and begin working on the fabrication and installation. Pete Rothschild suggested that a light be installed above or below each sign to illuminate it. Kate explained that the signs would be reflective so they are visible at night but said she would discuss ideas for additional lighting with the fabricators. Pete also suggested that signage be placed on the perimeter of the CID to direct people to the area parking lots. Kate noted that there were signs proposed for these areas.

OTHER BUSINESS

Trip Straub noted that there was still one open seat on the Commission which should be filled. The Commission discussed a few individuals to consider and requested that Kate discuss these individuals with Lyda Krewson and then report back at the next meeting for the Commission to discuss in more detail.

ADJOURN

Trip Straub moved to adjourn the meeting, Jim Dwyer seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

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IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

James Dwyer, Secretary