

# THE CWE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

**JUNE 21st, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. at Kingside Diner.

**PRESENT** were Commissioners Jim Dwyer, Derek Gamlin, Chris Lanter, Pete Rothschild and Trip Straub; Kate Haher, Executive Director for the CID, and Elisa Essner, Marketing & Communications Coordinator for the CID.

### **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Derek Gamlin moved to approve the May 17 minutes; Chris Lanter seconded. All in favor.

### **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

**May 2016 Financials.** Trip Straub began by reviewing the May 2016 financials, stating that it was “a phenomenal month” in terms of payment from the state totaling \$112,866 and that the NCID continues to be in a strong financial position with \$823,521 collected YTD. He added that the NCID’s assets continued to exceed any potential TIF liability.

Derek Gamlin asked if any progress had been made on determining the date of the TIF expiration. Trip said that no one was actively working on that question, because previous attempts to do so had been expensive and had not yielded reliable information. Trip said that the information surrounding the TIF was public record, but that because the funds were commingled with other TIF projects from around the city, much of the information surrounding it has been very convoluted so far. Pete Rothschild recommended the NCID work with David Sweeney, a lawyer experienced in these matters within St. Louis City, and said he would reach out to him to determine how much it would cost to have him find the exact TIF expiration date. Kate Haher said she would review and recirculate the information previously provided by Husch Blackwell so he would have a better starting point if the board decided to move forward with further investigation.

### **MARKETING & EVENTS**

**CWE Cocktail Party Recap.** Kate recapped June 4’s inaugural cocktail party with a brief Powerpoint presentation, adding that she would email the presentation to board members for

their records. Trip suggested that the presentation also be used as a tool to attract additional sponsors in 2017.

Kate stated that feedback for the event had been very positive, from businesses, residents and outside attendees, a sentiment that Jim Dwyer seconded. Kate said that she had sent a survey to all businesses in the neighborhood (both those that participated and those that did not) to get a better sense of the impact of the event, and that based on those responses she anticipated even greater business participation in 2017.

Kate said that the event had come in on budget, and that sponsorships totaled \$13,750 (not including in-kind sponsorships for creative, wine and other cocktail competition prizes, media partnership with Sauce).

Kate also outlined the event's media coverage, which included two billboards, ads in West End Word, Sauce and Go, digital promotion by Sauce and Alive magazines, two spots on Fox 2 and a live segment on KSDK, as well as promotion through the NCID's social media and email channels.

Kate identified a few areas for improvement in 2017, including possible adjustments to the street closure process to avoid impacting business during hours leading up to event. She added that the sponsors were generally pleased with the event, though Major Brands had noted that they would like to see more use of their products at the individual booths (while also acknowledging that the NCID cannot mandate that).

Pete suggested tweaking the footprint of the event to have the stage facing east/west (without bothering the private streets), and Derek said he would like to see a second video board at next year's party. Pete questioned whether it was worth it for the NCID to invest in a stage or sound equipment for events (instead of continually renting), but Trip and Derek noted that that would be a logistical nightmare, and that sound equipment evolves too quickly to be a worthwhile purchase.

Pete also wondered if there were ways to get more accurate attendance counts. Kate said that she had not conducted a count for this event, but that she felt confident there were at least 2,500 attendees.

**Make Music Day.** Kate reminded the board that today (June 21) was Make Music Day, and that 25+ performances were scheduled at businesses throughout the NCID from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Trip mentioned he would love to keep the piano installed at Straub's by Jackson Pianos as part of the festivities, and would be willing to put up any signage they would like. He said it had been a great draw for his customers. Kate said Dennis Gorg of Coffee Cartel had expressed a similar interest, and said she would be reaching out to Jackson Pianos and the Make Music organizers to see what options might be available.

Kate said that while she did not expect significant additional traffic from this event, especially given that it was a first year event and on a Tuesday, she expected the event to grow in the future, adding that half of all city-wide performances for the day were scheduled in the NCID. She said that this event typically takes a few years to catch on with the general public in the cities where it is established, but that the musicians she'd talked to were very excited. She added that the NCID would be shooting video throughout the day and providing short clips to each performer and coupons or gift certificates donated by neighborhood businesses as incentives to come back and play in future years.

**Sidewalk Sale.** Kate said that the neighborhood sidewalk sale originally scheduled for July 23 had been rescheduled for July 16 due to a conflicting Alive Magazine event. She added that a merchant meeting would be held next week to sort out final details, but that almost 100% of NCID retailers had agreed to participate, and that she would also be identifying 10 locations for 10x10 tents to accommodate outside vendors for the day. Chris Lanter said that in his experience these sales are most successful when there is lots of merchant participation. Derek Gamlin noted that his restaurants could potentially host a pop-up whiskey/vodka store that day if it would be helpful. Kate said she would be reaching out to all restaurants this week to encourage them to participate as they had in years past during Local Social.

## **PUBLIC REALM**

Kate said she would be sending out a lighting RFP for review following the meeting and requested that board members send comments and suggestions on language within the next week so that she could begin sending it to lighting consultants. She said she hoped to receive proposals within the next month. Kate added that she had compiled a list of 4-5 lighting consultants, and encouraged board members to share any additional names for her to reach out to.

## **2016/17 BUDGET**

Trip reviewed the 2016/17 budget, noting that a more general version had already been sent to the city in March. He said that this second version was for internal use (though it would be public record) and would provide more details.

Trip compared the proposed budget against approved and year-end projections for the 2015/16 budget, noting that the TIF payment should be entered as 31 percent (not 29.5 percent), bringing

the TIF payment to \$265,000 and bringing the NCID's spendable funds to \$678,000. Trip noted that things were generally moving in a good direction, with revenues continuing to increase. He noted that sponsorships were also expected to increase in 2016/17 with the continued success of NCID events.

Trip then reviewed each expense category individually, including safety and security, public realm enhancements, marketing and events, and administration and overhead. The majority of the line items remain fairly consistent with only slight increases. Trip highlighted a few sections with larger changes, including an increase in landscaping costs to accommodate 40 new planters, changes in maintenance fund allocation (due to changes in how the program will be managed) and the inclusion of funds for a new, to-be-determined, event in 2017.

Pete asked Kate to share the minutes, budget information, etc. from the NSI board meetings with CID board members. Trip added that he thought these documents should be shared with all NCID tax-paying businesses so that they would know what these allocated funds were doing for the neighborhood.

Jim moved to adopt the budget as proposed; Pete seconded. The budget was approved.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Chris Lanter asked what news Kate had from the South CID, if any. She stated that she and several board members would be meeting with them the following week to talk about opportunities for collaboration.

Pete noted that he is a big fan of the CWE's annual American flag installation, but noted that some of the flags looked like they needed to be replaced, which Kate said she was working on. Jim said he thought that it might be a good idea to expand the scope of the flags beyond Euclid to include the commercial portions of Maryland Plaza and McPherson. Pete suggested that there might be other opportunities to use flags in the neighborhood to celebrate events such as Pride, and Derek suggested that pro sports flags might also be good for the neighborhood.

Trip asked about the dead trees outside of Straub's. Kate said tree trimming would occur Thursday, and that she had reached out to the forestry department about getting the dead tree replaced. Jim suggested she called the Citizens' Service Bureau if she did not get a quick response from forestry, as that would establish a record of communication on the issue.

Jim mentioned that he had noticed the mulch being piled too high around tree trunks, and that a circle needed to be dug out around the trunk to allow for water to be trapped. Kate said she would address this with Brickman.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:22 a.m.