

**THE CWE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION
MARCH 31, 2020**

The meeting was called to order at 10:09 a.m. via Zoom.

PRESENT were Commissioners Kyle Bozoian, Jim Dwyer, Paul Filla, Ken Fowler, and Trip Straub; Kate Haher, Executive Director and Erica Lembo, Marketing and Communications Coordinator for the CID; and Peter Cassel (Mac Properties).

MINUTES

Ken Fowler moved to approve the February 18, 2020 meeting minutes. Kyle Bozoian seconded. Motion approved.

FINANCIAL REVIEW & ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Review of February 2020 Financials

Kate Haher reviewed the monthly financial statement for February, noting that it was another good month for the CID. She stated that total income is still tracking ahead of year-to-date budget, but acknowledged that revenue could take a big hit in the months to come as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. She mentioned that the CID currently has approximately 1.9 million dollars in reserves, which will enable the CID to keep moving forward and will provide resources for the CID to help businesses at this time.

COMMUNICATIONS, MARKETING & EVENTS

Neighborhood Update/Gift Card Program

Kate referred to an email she sent last week about a gift card program for businesses. She explained that the Executive Committee had discussed ways that the CID could help businesses in the District during this challenging time. She noted that while they had initially explored the possibility of providing loans to businesses to assist with payroll, after gathering information from local business owners they decided that a gift card program would be more beneficial and would help drive traffic back into the neighborhood once businesses reopen.

Kate stated that the Board had given her full support to move this program forward, and that she has started to reach out to businesses one at a time. She mentioned that feedback from business owners has been overwhelmingly positive and many are very appreciative of the CID's support. Kate stated that she will be going to businesses this week, picking up gift cards and distributing checks. Kate mentioned that she and Erica will work on creating different promotions around these gift cards and how to drive traffic back into the neighborhood once businesses reopen.

Trip Straub stated that these funds will hopefully help provide payroll protection for small businesses. Kate mentioned that she has been emailing businesses information about small business loans, along with links to other resources. Jim Dwyer noted that this can be a lot of information for small business owners to absorb, and suggested that the CID streamline the process for them by highlighting the most important information. Kate stated that the CID could create a landing page on its website, which would include information and links to various resources. She also mentioned that she's been in discussion with Alderwoman Heather Navarro and Rachelle L'Ecuyer (Executive Director of the East Loop CID) about available resources. She noted that Explore St. Louis held a Zoom call for its partners last week, and mentioned that a Zoom call could be helpful for businesses in the 28th Ward. She explained that this would be an opportunity for business owners to ask questions and get more detailed answers about available resources.

Peter Cassell stated that landlords can also provide important information to retailers about grants, and that collaboration between organizations is extremely important during this time.

Cocktail Party

Kate stated that the CID needs to be ready to activate the neighborhood with events and activities when businesses reopen. She mentioned that Cocktail Party will be the big event coming out of this storm and that the CID will begin its approval process with the City, in order to be prepared once a date is confirmed.

Additional Programs and Activities

Kate mentioned two other activities she intends to focus on: wall murals in the CWE and a neighborhood sampler event. She noted that these two programs had been brought up at a previous Board meeting, but due to recent events have been pushed back a bit. She stated that she would like to see the neighborhood sampler event take place sometime this fall, once restaurants are back up and running.

PUBLIC REALM

Streetscape Update and Discussion

Kate stated that the CID's streetscape pilot program is currently in a holding pattern. She mentioned that she is working with Alderwoman Heather Navarro to help get approval from the Treasurer's Office. She explained that once approval has been granted and the CID understands what the budget for the parking meters will look like, John Hoal at H3 Studio can begin to design the pilot program.

Kate mentioned that she and John have met with business and property owners within the focus area, and that everyone has been supportive of the project. She noted that she had reached out to a few of the smaller businesses (along Euclid) to set up a group meeting two weeks ago, but hadn't gotten a response. She said she would follow up with them again to make sure they're in the loop.

Kate noted that John Hoal has finished his initial analysis of the McPherson intersection and that the next step would be scheduling meetings with community stakeholders (via Zoom conferences and phone calls).

Kate stated that she would like the Board to consider moving forward with the retail vision plan that had been presented to the Board at the February 2020 meeting. She explained that the first phase of the retail plan is based around information gathering (among retailers and businesses), and that this phase would go hand-in-hand with the McPherson streetscape meetings. Jim Dwyer expressed support for proceeding with the project. Ken Fowler agreed. Following discussion, there was consensus to proceed with the Retail Vision Plan.

OTHER BUSINESS

Kate stated that The Euclid Shuffle has been halted temporarily due to social distancing guidelines. She noted that the shuttle company typically requires a 30-day notice to cancel, but that they agreed to temporarily suspend the contract at this time. She mentioned that when the pandemic is over, the CID will continue its contract where they left off. She stated that the Euclid SCID was in agreement to halt the service.

Kate mentioned that the Euclid SCID has allocated \$20,000 to fund meals from their businesses that are then being delivered to medical centers (Children's Hospital and BJC). She stated that the SCID has reached out to the NCID to see if they would like to participate by providing 150 meals three days each week. Kate noted that the SCID is currently funding 150 meals a day, four days a week.

Kate stated that 12 businesses in the NCID are currently doing takeout or carryout. She mentioned that the NCID's total budget would be \$27,000 (\$15 a meal; 150 meals for four weeks) if they decided to

participate in this program. She stated that the NCID could develop a schedule and split it evenly between the businesses that are open. She explained that this would put additional dollars into neighborhood businesses, and it would be something positive for the NCID to promote. She mentioned that CWE residents could even get involved and help fund a meal for an emergency worker through the CID's website.

Trip stated that Kate should reach out to the hospitals directly to see what their need is and to manage the project separately. Ken Fowler agreed that the NCID should do this on its own. Kate said she would contact the hospitals.

Peter Cassell expressed his support and suggested that the NCID could also deliver meals to police officers and other first responders, not just hospitals. He said the most important thing right now is getting money into the local restaurants.

Kate stated that Jim Whyte, Executive Director of the CWE Neighborhood Security Initiative, would like to pair a North SBD officer with the CID's foot patrol officer. She noted that these two officers would be in an ATV and would be able to cover more ground. Jim Dwyer noted that due to COVID-19, some offenders have been released from jail and have already been observed in the CWE. He stated that having police presence in the neighborhood is extremely important. The Board was in favor of Jim Whyte's recommendation.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

JAMES DWYER, SECRETARY