

THE CWE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

APRIL 19th, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. at Kingside Diner.

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

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Derek Gamlin moved to approve the March 15th minutes; Pete Rothschild seconded. All in favor.

FINANCIAL REVIEW & ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

March Financials. Kate reviewed the March financials and stated that the NCID had collected almost \$70,000 in tax receipts in March, ahead of the projected monthly collections. She stated that due to the NCID's current surplus, the board was in position to fully fund the TIF if requested, and still have funds available to allocate to other projects.

Kate reviewed the March expenses, which were standard for the month (though payroll was slightly higher because there were three pay periods in March). Trip asked that Kate continue to work on anticipating exactly when expenses will be incurred by looking at the calendar and past trends.

Pete asked about opportunities for the NCID to collect and analyze data that might be helpful to understanding business patterns in the neighborhood, such as how revenue correlates to day of week, time of year, the weather, etc. He suggested that might be a better way to predict expenses and inform the board's priorities. Kate stated that she would propose data to be collected and review with the board. Derek said that he has software that tracks weather against sales, and would be happy to share of that information.

Jim questioned how valuable this information would be, and suggested that the board focus on crime and parking, two factors that are consistently cited as affecting business in the CWE. He suggested that it might be possible for the NCID to arrange free parking to promote business during certain times or days. Trip added that he would like to see data on what times or days would be most advantageous to the NCID. Kate stated that she had pricing information that had been previously reviewed with the board regarding free parking days and suggested that the board revisit that.

Budget. Kate reviewed the proposed FY 2016-17 budget, which she explained is a template that can be adjusted if new projects arise during the year. Trip asked Kate to add additional columns to the budget that reflect percent increase and percent of total in each category.

Kate said that the proposed budget showed an increase in administrative costs, which would be necessary if the NCID opted to bring on a full-time maintenance staff person. Kate said she had several bids out for maintenance work and would compare costs before finalizing this line item.

Kate also pointed out some changes to the NCID's operating expenses, which included reduced legal fees, and lower costs for marketing and creative services. One of the biggest items in the marketing budget is the cost of the CWE map; Derek questioned whether it needed to be a printed piece, or whether there was an option to consider an app or other digital version. Kate stated that she and Elisa would work with Brevity to explore cost-effective options, but that the printed piece was well-utilized by the community (especially the WUSTL medical campus).

Trip also asked Kate to consider eliminating the expense of a landline.

Kate also reviewed event-related expenses, stating that the budget includes increased funding for Window Walk — which will be held on three Saturdays in December, 2016 — and Halloween, which continues to grow. Pete questioned whether it was valuable to invest so much in Window Walk, which he views as a retail centric event in a neighborhood driven by its restaurant business, but both Derek and Chris assured him it is a positive for all businesses in the neighborhood and that their restaurants have had strong sales on Window Walk days.

Kate said that the budget also includes funding for increased summer programming, including music on all Fridays from May-September, the June cocktail party, Make Music, a July sidewalk sale and special Saturday events in April and August/September (TBA). Derek questioned whether it was beneficial to have events on Saturday, which is already a busy day in the neighborhood, but Chris said that he sees even stronger sales when there is additional programming.

Pete stated that he would like to see more “destination” events, similar to what he sees in Maplewood, The Grove and The Loop. Kate said she would share her list of recent findings, but that it was important to think about the balance of large and small events, and think about what is reasonable for our neighborhood.

MARKETING & EVENTS

Kate stated that details of all three summer events — including the CWE Cocktail Party (June 4), Make Music STL (June 21) and the CWE Sidewalk Sale (July 23) — were progressing well.

Kate added that she was anticipating \$19,000 in sponsorships for the cocktail party, but that she is waiting to see what level Eagle Bank would come in at. She stated that she had received verbal confirmation of participation from more than a dozen businesses, and that she had set a deadline of Friday for applications to officially be turned in.

She stated that she and Elisa were working with Dustin Parres of Gamlin Restaurant Group to finalize details for the various elements of the cocktail competition and will start promoting the city-wide competition ASAP. This part of the event will be open to any bartenders from the St. Louis area, but will primarily be promoted through Dustin's connections with the U.S. Bartenders Guild.

PUBLIC REALM

Kate provided the Board with an update on ongoing public realm enhancements. She stated that the new parking signs would be in place within the several weeks, with installation of the new directory signs to follow in June. She added that funds from the Kingshighway project and TIF would allow for the replacement of trash and recycling receptacles throughout the entire CID area, and that she and Elisa would develop decals to brand these as provided by the CID. Finally, she reported that, 40 new planters have been ordered to line Kingshighway from Lindell to Straub's alley and were anticipated to be installed in July.

Kate added that she is researching various building lighting and streetscape options in other cities and would send those details out to the board.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.