

THE CWE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

October 17, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. at the Chase Park Plaza.

PRESENT were Commissioners Jim Dwyer, Ken Fowler, Chris Sommers, Peter Cassel and Trip Straub; Kate Haheer, Executive Director of the CWE North Community Improvement District; Elisa Essner, Marketing & Communications Coordinator for the CID; and Maggie McCarthy, Marketing Intern for the CID.

Derek Gamlin moved to approve the September 19, 2017, minutes; Chris Sommers seconded; the minutes were approved.

FINANCIAL REVIEW & ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Review of September 2017 Financials

Trip Straub reviewed the draft September financials. Kate advised that the state was in the process of changing its reporting system and that the tax information had not yet been received and that the TIF calculation had not been input. Trip noted that, overall, CID income is up for the year versus budget. Trip Straub added that the CID was in the process of moving funds from the Repurchase Agreement account to a Money Market Account at Enterprise Bank and Trust which would yield higher returns.

Sponsorship

Kate reported it has been a struggle to secure event sponsorships this year. She explained that she raised \$14,000 in sponsorship funding for BookFest vs. a budgeted \$20,000, noting that BookFest sponsorship was more difficult to establish as it was the first year for the event. She explained that Anheuser-Busch has scaled back their Halloween sponsorship from \$16,000 to \$10,000, and that Citizen Park had committed \$3,500 but pulled out due to damage sustained during protests following the Jason Stockely verdict. Kate said she anticipates \$28,000/\$36,000 for Halloween. She added Anheuser-Busch has stepped back completely from Window Walk sponsorship. Jim Dwyer noted that Anheuser-Busch has shifted their approach to sponsorships and that the Central West End is not as essential to their current marketing efforts.

Kate mentioned the need for new strategic planning in securing event sponsors, noting that many companies suggested in the past will not sponsor CID events since the CID is not a 501c3. Despite the loss of some major sponsors, Washington University Redevelopment Corps has been a consistent source of funding for neighborhood events. Several commissioners noted that the decreased funding from Anheuser-Busch could open the door to new partnerships and possibly allow businesses a more flexibility to serve different beverages at events.

Jim Dwyer proposed offering annual sponsorship packages, rather than approaching businesses one event at a time, suggesting that it might behoove the CID to approach businesses that align with the specific crowd and branding of each event rather than making multiple sponsorship requests to the same business.

Peter Cassel inquired as to whether the CID adjusts event programming when sponsorships fall short. Jim Dwyer said that the CID tries to focus on enhancing events to build attendance and promote the neighborhood, and does not reduce the overall budget based on sponsorship revenue. Peter also noted that it might be beneficial to include the variance on the budget reports to follow the CID budget more closely.

MARKETING & EVENTS

BookFest

Kate Maher provided an update on BookFest. She stated that the event was a success with more than 40 authors, 28 vendors and programming from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. She noted that the attendance was slightly lower than expected, possibly due to the extreme heat and protests in the neighborhood the weekend before, but overall attendance was strong.

Despite the weather, many book lovers came out for the event and were attentive and enthusiastic during author readings. All the authors and vendors were pleased with the level of attendance and audience engagement. Businesses around the festival zone reported improvements in foot traffic.

Trip Straub proposed setting a date for next year's festival and sending out a survey to vendors and authors to improve the event for next year. Jim Dwyer noted that the event served its purpose reinforcing the CWE's reputation as a literary neighborhood and celebrating its unique history.

Halloween

Kate Maher provided a brief update on Halloween festivities scheduled for October 28, 2017. She reported that the event will run like previous years and that additional daytime programming will occur again this year. She added that the event has a long history in the neighborhood and is well established with a great management/production team in place.

Window Walk

Kate Maher provided an update on Window Walk. She explained that programming is scheduled this year for every Saturday in December, the 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd, with additional programming on Small Business Saturday November 25th. Kate noted that prize money for window design has been reallocated to provide a bigger design budget, and advised that the CID is planning to hang garlands and bows throughout the neighborhood, as in previous years, with additional garland being provided to businesses to hang in their doorways.

Ken Fowler asked if interns have been paired with window designers this year. Kate stated that 12 interns from local design schools are working with designers to provide more creative input and assistance to the designers.

Derek Gamlin noted that community members are often confused about the schedule for Window Walk. Many people do not realize that the programming occurs every Saturday throughout of December. Trip Straub suggested additional signs and flyers to build awareness throughout the neighborhood. Chris Sommers recommended creating "check presenter" inserts for local restaurants. These would be a low-cost item and would be seen by every diner.

Elisa Essner presented the two Window Walk design concepts and the board members agreed on their preferred design.

OTHER BUSINESS

Kate Maher reported that the parking inventory that Washington University Redevelopment Corp interns were doing is underway and presented an RFP for a Parking Analysis and Plan for review. She explained that engaging a professional consultant will offer additional legitimacy to parking proposals made to the city and help identify achievable solutions. The expected budget is \$6,000-8,000.

Kate announced that Elisa Essner will be moving on from her role at the CID and advised that the job for marketing coordinator has been posted online. Elisa will remain on board with the CID through the month of October and will pass along some essential pieces of her role to intern, Maggie McCarthy.

Chris Sommers asked about any new or pending developments and suggested this topic be adding to the agenda monthly. Ken Fowler confirmed the acquisition of the Art Glass building on Euclid Ave., noting that the space will be converted to two commercial spaces on the street level and apartments above.

Ken Fowler also provided an update on the development at the former Frontenac Cleaners. This space is being converted by a couple who are building a living space on the upper level and will also open an art gallery and studio on the first floor.

Jim Dwyer noted the construction of a hotel on York, being developed by Koplar. Derek Gamlin provided an update on the opening of his new restaurant, 1764 Public House, noting that they had received their occupancy permit and will open their doors for business as soon as possible.

Trip Straub noted that the Commission currently did not have a treasurer and moved to appoint Derek Gamlin as treasurer, cautioning Derek that this position involves additional meetings with the executive committee. Chris Sommers seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the board agreed to schedule the next Commission meeting on Tuesday, November 28, 2017.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

James Dwyer