

THE CWE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

APRIL 21, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. via Zoom.

PRESENT were Commissioners Kyle Bozoian, Jim Dwyer, Paul Filla, Ken Fowler, Derek Gamlin and Trip Straub; Kate Hafer, Executive Director and Erica Lembo, Marketing and Communications Coordinator for the CID; and Jes Stevens (Washington University Medical Center Redevelopment Corporation).

MINUTES

Kyle Bozoian moved to approve the March 31, 2020 meeting minutes. Ken Fowler seconded. Minutes approved.

FINANCIAL REVIEW & ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Review of March 2020 Financials

Kate Hafer reviewed the monthly financial statement for March, noting that sales and use tax revenue came in relatively strong (just under \$53,000). 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 March was a pretty quiet month for expenses and that there was nothing major to report.

Review of Approved Budget Items

Kate highlighted one change on the last page of the CID's Profit & Loss Budget Performance Sheet. She stated that she's added two new line items (Public Realm- Special Project and Special Projects Fund) to help track the CID's additional special project expenses. She explained that these special projects are funded from the CID's reserves, and that these new line items will help the Board stay up-to-date on approved projects and its annual operating budget.

Kate referred to an email she sent that contained a simple spreadsheet with budget items that were approved beyond the operating budget. She stated that the largest line item on the spreadsheet is the CID's Gift Card Relief Program (\$300,000), which provides a much-needed revenue stream to businesses in the District. She mentioned that she has distributed checks to almost all of the businesses in the CID, and that there are a small handful of businesses who are still working on getting their gift cards together. She stated that she continues to receive positive feedback from business owners and that the program has been very well received.

Kate noted the other approved budget items on the spreadsheet, including the meal donation program, the Maryland and McPherson streetscape projects, the retail study, and the facade lighting design plan.

PUBLIC REALM

Streetscape Update

Kate stated that the CID's streetscape pilot program is still in a holding pattern. She explained that she is working with Alderwoman Heather Navarro to get information from the Treasurer's Office regarding the revenue history and the charge for the metered spots that would be eliminated by the pilot program. She explained that Alderwoman Navarro had received information that the holdup is due to a technology issue, and that the Treasurer's Office is currently unable to determine how much revenue the affected parking meters generate. Kate stated that Alderwoman Navarro had emailed the Treasurer's Office

yesterday to inquire when this technology issue will be fixed. Kate said she will email commissioners when she has an update.

Despite the holdup at the Maryland intersection, Kate stated that John Hoal of H3 Studio has started to move forward with the design process for the McPherson streetscape project. She mentioned that stakeholder meetings for the McPherson intersection will be combined with phase one of the CID's retail plan, since they are both based around information gathering. She noted that she has a call scheduled with John tomorrow, so they can start identifying community stakeholders and focus groups.

Building Lighting RFP

Kate stated that the RFP for Randy Burkett's building lighting design project will be sent out to electrical contractors early next week. She advised that she anticipates receiving pricing information within a few weeks.

Digital Information Kiosks

Kate provided a brief update on the City of St. Louis' digital information kiosks. She stated that the first round of kiosks were deployed downtown before the COVID-19 crisis began. She explained that she has been working with the City on finalizing their proposed locations in the CWE (at McPherson, Maryland, and Lindell). She stated that the location for the digital kiosk at McPherson has now been approved (after a few tweaks and recommendations from the CID and Mission Taco), and that it will be the first one installed in the CWE. She mentioned that she is still working with the project team on placement at Maryland and Lindell, but noted that all kiosks should be deployed in the neighborhood in the next eight weeks or so.

MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS & EVENTS

Meal Donations

Kate stated that the CID had allocated \$32,700 dollars for its meal donation program (which would fund 175 meals, 3 days a week). Kate mentioned that the program will run through May 8 and that meals will be delivered to BJC and City Hope STL. She explained that meals were capped at \$15 and that 15 restaurants had signed up to participate. Kate stated that she had created a schedule and that the CID is placing orders with participating restaurants on a rotating basis, so it's fair for everyone involved.

Kate stated that the CID had promoted an opportunity to contribute to the meal donation program on its website, and in three days had generated \$4,613 from community members.

Incentive Program

Kate stated that the CID launched its brand new incentive program last week. She explained if someone spends \$100 in the District (from now until May 15), they'll get a \$20 gift card and if they spend \$200, they'll get a \$50 gift card. She stated that Novella (the CID's Marketing and PR Consultant) had helped craft messaging around the program to ensure the rules and expectations were clear.

Other Marketing Initiatives

Erica Lembo stated that she's been working with Novella on a few other marketing initiatives for the CID. She explained that they've helped craft positive messaging for new neighborhood signage, promoting the theme that "we are all in this together" during the pandemic. She noted that these signs will serve as a positive reminder for people in the neighborhood. She also mentioned that she'll be launching a new blog series on the cwescene website, which will highlight different business owners who are forging ahead and trying to stay positive during COVID-19.

Merchant Meeting

Kate stated that the CID will hold its next Merchant Meeting (via Zoom) on Thursday, April 23. She mentioned that it will be a good opportunity to not only discuss the CID's current marketing programs and initiatives, but to hear from businesses about how they are adapting to this challenging time. She stated that it's important for the CID to keep communication open during this crisis and be prepared to support the businesses when they reopen.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:29 a.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

JAMES DWYER, SECRETARY