



West Bank Business Association

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thewestbank.org - members: wbba.thewestbank.org

November – Monthly Member Meeting

4:00pm Thursday November 21 2013

Oren Gateway Center, Augsburg College

Agenda / Notes

I. Welcome & Introductions - 4:00 (5 mins)

(Started at 4:10pm)

II. Board Update (10 minutes)

- Bylaws were passed
- Executive Committee was voted in
 - Susannah Dodge - President
 - Jim White - Vice President
 - Todd Smith - Vice President
 - Mark Dudek Johnson - Vice President
 - Damon Runnals - Secretary
 - Jeff Radnich - Treasurer

Also noted that two members have stepped forward looking to also be on the board: Anna Lohse from Hard Times and Phillip Kelley from Turtle King Longboards / Resident. They are voted in to the board unanimously.

III. Loyalty Card - Opportunities (5 minutes)

The Loyalty Card program has begun. Over 2,000 brochures have been distributed and more than 50 stands all throughout the West Bank. Participation is open to all businesses and businesses and is open in a variety of ways. (Discounts, event tickets, etc.) More info can be found at: <http://www.wbba.thewestbank.org/?p=1012>

IV. Strategic Planning Review / Recap/ Next Steps (30 minutes)

Jamie reviews Strategic Plan updates. Document contains:

- General background info (why we do planning)
- Some highlights from the long-term plan
- Notes on progress / accomplishments made in 2013
- 2013 SWOT Analysis (unedited - straight from the post-its.)
- Notes from the brainstorming session itself (unedited - straight from the post-its.)
- Recommendations for committees (from members and a summary from the director)
- Recommendations for priorities for 2014 with consideration given to capacity

Discussion about document, priorities, and committee work.

Jamie notes: With priorities for 2014, tried to highlight things we could work on that we can all agree on / important things for next year. Anything beyond this should only be done with / if funding is secured.

Example: Any work that doesn't fall into those windows can be done - at a billable rate. Suggesting a starting point for possible billable services.

Example: Good Neighbor Fund, we've traditionally offered fiscal agency services at no cost. This is something traditionally other orgs charge for and we don't have the capacity to do for free. If we consider doing this, the recommendation is that we charge an administrative fee for this service.

Summary of priorities:

- Organization/Admin (includes supervision of volunteers, interns, training - maximizes our capacity.)
- Grants / seeking new opportunities and additional funding
- Programs (three key: West Bank Ride, West Bank Music Festival, Graffiti Removal)
- Marketing / Communications - With a particular emphasis on LRT opening planning. (also technically a program... but a big, year-round one.)
- Member Services (also technically a program)

Discussion: There is some conflict over work that's being done in the committees. (Particularly the WBID.) How do we avoid a situation where committees are moving forward with something that wouldn't be approved of?

Jamie notes - the goal is to focus on the priorities as outlined. (the WBID is not in these five key priorities for 2014.) If funding was found for any of this work, those committees would need to go to the board / evaluate expanding that work. (Further discussion about timeline.)

Jamie requests from the members to at least review five priorities - that gives a foundation with which to work on so she can get started with grantwriting, fundraising, outreach, budgeting and planning for those priorities.

Discussion about potential funding for BID committee: we have a 15,000 grant for McKnight. This grant has two components. One is research and advocacy - we have helped shape policy at the city council level and have served as a resource for other organizations working on BIDs. The other component is researching the WBID on the West Bank. Discussion about this funding and if it's wise to pursue or turn down this funding, especially considering our current financial circumstance. Discussion about the work that we're doing that's important on the city level, but perhaps should be discontinued at the West Bank level. Some members feel they do not yet have enough information to make an informed decision. It's noted that if funding was received, a component of that work would be an educational forum. Members: How can we make sure this forum is actually educational, and not advocacy?

Cadillac proposes "No advocacy will be done without a formal vote of the board."
Sharon seconds this. Approved.

This allows for continued research to be done and for us to continue to working with the city and other nonprofit partners, but does not allow for advocacy of the BID without prior, formal approval of the WBBA board.

Jamie notes - would still like to see the 5 priorities reviewed/approved and/or discussion about any changes. Members take some time to review and read through (pages 18-1st half of page 19)

Russom motions to approve priorities as outlined. Eunice seconds. Passes unanimously. Full copy can be found here: http://www.wbba.thewestbank.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/2013_SPlanningSession.pdf

V. Meeting topics for 2013-2014 (5 mins)

Jamie notes - most meeting topics were requested by businesses via survey or at in-person meetings. A few were ideas that I had that I thought would be beneficial to members (example: the meet-and-greet with our council members, including our new council member Abdi Warsame.)

Meeting topics include:

- Marketing & Branding
- Social Media
- Search Engine Optimization
- Permits, licenses, and working with the city
- Event planning / (Hosting your own, + External events on the West Bank)
- Language barriers and translation help
- Increasing pedestrian (non-vehicular) traffic
- MNSure and Employee healthcare coverage
- Cross-marketing and collaboration
- Integrating arts and visual arts into your businesses
- Meet your council members
- Credit Card / Merchant Processing (ways for small businesses to save money and take advantage of new technologies.)

VI. New Business (5 mins)

None noted

Adjourn 5:30pm