

**AURORA DOWNTOWN  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Minutes**

**April 2, 2015 – 8:00 A.M. – 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room B – City Hall**

**Members Present:** Doug Cheatham (Old Second National Bank), Kim Granholm (at large), Dan Hites (at large), Benjie Hughes (at large), Karen Kramford (at large), Eva Luckinbill (Aurora Public Library), John Nachtrieb (at large), and Bob Reuland (ex-officio)

**Members Absent (Excused):** Jimi Allen (at large), Terry Michels (Hollywood Casino)

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Bill Wiet (COA), Gina Moga (COA), Ed Sieben (COA), Joe Hopp (COA), John Curley (COA), Cadence Peterson (Seize the Future), and Hector Ochoa (Old Second Bank), Karina Garcia (ARHCC)

**Meeting Highlights**

**Call to Order and Chair's Remarks**

Kim Granholm called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

**Approval of Minutes**

John Nachtrieb made a motion to approve the March 5, 2015 minutes. This was seconded by Karen Kramford. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Treasurer's Report – Doug Cheatham**

Kim Granholm said I believe Doug is actually on Spring Break this week.

Bob Reuland said we are working with our accountant to firm up the new format for the balance sheet and income statement to look like we had before, so we'll all know where we are. We are in the process of learning, but the money is safe.

**Old Business**

None.

**New Business**

a. Pro-Up Shops – Kim Granholm

Kim Granholm said I just wanted to kind of keep everyone in the loop of the pop-up shop idea that we talked about at the last regular Board meeting. We've had two meetings now with Seize the Future and some people from the City of Aurora. Right now we are in the stage of figuring out. There are a lot of questions on the table, so we spend a lot of time asking questions and answering questions at this point. We are in the steps of finding space right now to see what we can put in that space rather than go out and find the people and then find the space, because it will really be determined on the space that we have available as to what we can do. So Seize the Future, Cadence and Brett, I believe, are going around right now.

Cadence Peterson said we've gotten a couple of no's, but no yes's. But we haven't called all the landlords yet. Some people are a little harder to get in contact with.

Kim Granholm said well I am hopeful that we'll find someone to say yes. I have some other ideas that I'll share with you later as well. If you know of anyone who might be interested, we have a date. The first date is going to be August 7, 8, and 9. Gina has some things planned, so we are kind of tagging along with that so it would be that same weekend. It is the first weekend in August. It will coincide with First Fridays and some other events that Gina will probably tell you about later. If you have any input or want to be involved, our next meeting is April 10<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m., which is a Friday. I'm kind of excited about the idea. I'm hoping that it will work. If it doesn't, I'm going to be very disappointed, but we are going to try it twice. If the first one doesn't kickoff, we're going to try it again during the holiday season and we'll kind of format it based on some of our findings from the August weekend.

Karen Kramford said I thought Helen Nowak was going to be our representative for the pop-ups based on the Business Attraction and Retention. Has something occurred that we're having to elevate it out of the committee? Is there a reason it's at this level as compared to allowing the committee to do their work and to bring it forward?

John Nachtrieb said no, I think people are involved just because they are excited about this.

Kim Granholm said I think it is just a collaboration of a bunch of people and she is the committee as far as I'm concerned from Aurora Downtown. I've been attending just to kind of get everyone together and introduce everyone. We can bring it to the BAR Committee level, but I was under the impression that this was going to be a separate effort on its own, obviously with input from BAR.

Gina Moga said I think having Seize the Future involved gives us more of an in toward some of the landlords and some of the properties that are available downtown, so I think that's why there is some more input than just the BAR.

Karen Kramford said I wasn't concerned about the input because Cadence is obviously on the Business Attraction and Retention as well, but I thought the work was being done within the committee as compared to separating the effort from the committee from an Aurora Downtown

perspective not from a pop-up perspective. I was just wondering if something has occurred that we're separating that out.

John Nachtrieb said no.

b. Hal Beebee Memorial Donation – Bob Reuland

Kim Granholm said I e-mailed you all Hal's memorial information yesterday. If you didn't get it, it is on April 9<sup>th</sup> from 4-8 p.m. is the visitation, which is at Healy Chapel over on Downer and April 10<sup>th</sup> at New England Congregational Church at 3:00 p.m. is the church service for him. If you can attend either one of those, I'm sure his family would appreciate it.

Bob Reuland said we have sent flowers. They will be there at his showing at Healy Chapel. We also have a request, I think, from Kiwanis for a donation in his name.

Kim Granholm said Hal's wishes were that if anyone wanted to make a donation or anything in his name to donate it to the Kiwanis Foundation itself, or the Kiwanis Club, not the Foundation. I just wanted to bring that up. Before we had sent flowers, I kind of talked to Bob about possibly doing some sort of a donation in his name. He was one of the first Board members ever of Aurora Downtown and pretty much his entire career has been a Board member.

Bob Reuland said what do you think about \$250?

Kim Granholm said I was even thinking just \$100, but \$250 I think is really nice.

Bob Reuland said I think \$250 would be appropriate. How does the rest of the Board feel?

John Nachtrieb said I agree.

Dan Hites said we should have kind of a memorial program of some sort for downtown where we can plant a tree in the four corners there or get a brick with a name and put it by the Paramount or something like that, just have a memory place for everyone instead of giving money to Kiwanis or some other organization. It just kind of disappears and that's it.

Kim Granholm said I like that idea too. I'd be happy with something like that. I don't know how much a brick costs. I'm sure Joe could probably fill us in on that. A tree would be nice with a plaque. Let's look into that. I think that would be a better idea.

### **Consultant Report**

Bob Reuland said I have a duty that I have to perform with the Board that I don't enjoy. Kim and I have made an agreement that we want to have attendance at the Board meetings and Charlie Zine is not coming to the meetings and hasn't been for a long time and I think it is time that we got a hold of Charlie and told him that he is going to be off the Board and we would like to have a new Board member that would participate. What is the feeling of the Board?

Dan Hites said he's been warned a few times hasn't he?

Bob Reuland said we've warned him.

Kim Granholm said unfortunately it is in bylaws that there is an attendance requirement, so we'll have to start enforcing that. That was one of my goals this year to really try to be rigid with that. People want to participate, so we need people that are going to participate and be hands on.

Bob Reuland said and we have people waiting to be Board members, so that's important too.

John Nachtrieb said I think it is necessary just for the functioning of the Board.

Kim Granholm said we will be contacting him in the next week or so.

### **Committee Updates**

John Nachtrieb said the BAR committee has finished the application for our program. We've united the Rent Subsidy Program and the Business Retention Program into one application because the questions are basically the same. We tried to make it an app where anybody could evaluate the answers to the questions on the app without necessarily knowing who the applicant is to make it anonymous. We'll weight them according to the type of answers that they provide. So that's online at the auroradowntown.org website. I got an update just this morning from Harriet, who is our first line of filter for an applicant. The very first thing that happens when an application is received is that it goes to the Small Business Development Committee at Waubensee and Harriet Parker and her staff run them through the process of getting a business plan put together if they don't have one or evaluating the business plan that they have. At that point then it comes back to Bob and the committee and we run it through our internal process for the decision. We have 4 people in our queue at this point. One has been funded. All 4 have submitted applications and 1 is funded. Two of the unfunded ones are in the process and the third one has not yet had their initial meeting with Harriet, so they are in the pipeline.

Bob Reuland said we were talking about refurbishing or replacing the lights/decorations on the New York Street Bridge by the casino. We are approaching the casino about a donation to help us with that. The cost of refurbishing is almost the same as new, so we've got to find the money in our budget to be able to do this. It looks hopeful. Melissa wants to look at refurbishing and using a low cost refurbisher.

Karen Kramford said for the document for the Economic Benefit Study of Aurora Downtown Arts and Entertainment District of Extended Liquor License Until 4:00 a.m., we have received a final draft this week and the committee will be looking at that next week and hopefully bringing it forward in probably May from a timing point of view to the Board. The meeting with Seize the Future with Dave Hulseberg was really quite good. As I mentioned earlier, we are going to look at opportunities to develop that relationship deeper. Cadence is very involved with Business Attraction and Retention. We are looking at it more from a legislative point of view. We are going to start working on the next steps in our building of relationships for the next time too.

Joe Hopp said the sidewalk pots will be coming out in mid-May. Riley will probably start up on all the landscaping as far as getting a lot of beds ready probably about the same time as well. That's about it for landscaping.

Benjie Hughes said the Marketing Committee met last week. We had a good meeting. We talked a lot about First Fridays and what we will and will not pay for. We are considering doing some street musicians and things like that sort of out and in between the venues in the summer. We are actually going to make a final decision on that next month because Kimber is going to start doing measurements for us this month, so she is going to start getting a gage every month of how many people were there, who those people were, how they found about it, why they came and all those kinds of things and will be kind of a work in progress, so she will be doing that for us every month. Hopefully we'll start getting some statistics on First Fridays next month and we'll be able to make some decisions.

Bob Reuland said the Parking Committee met with Bill Wiet yesterday. We're having questions and good cooperation between the 4 of us. Things are coming along. Fred is going to have a future meeting, but wants to get his feet wet and understand what the issues are and so on, so it is coming along well.

Bill Wiet said just an FYI, we don't have the ability to do traffic counts and counting cars like we had planned in the next 2 weeks just because of staffing shortages. Until we know what the State budget is going to look like before the July 1<sup>st</sup> fiscal year, things are kind of on hold around here in terms of rehiring, so we are trying to do what we can with the folks we have. We have noted various things that we will be discussing. We know that there are some hot spot issues that we will be investigating along with the entities that we think can work with everyone to better those hot spots or try to improve upon them.

Karen Kramford said the Float Committee has started the preparation for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade. We are meeting later today at 11:00 o'clock. I think we are finalizing colors today and the theme on the float. We will be working on that today.

### **City of Aurora Updates**

Gina Moga said we're just working on everything that I talked about last time. Everything is kind of in the queue. People are coming in with Special Event permits all the time. There is a lot going on.

Kim Granholm said can you share what's going on the weekend of August 7, 8 and 9 too?

Gina Moga said it is a First Friday. It is also the emergency vehicle show and that is the show that has traditionally been in conjunction with North Aurora Days up there by the old Aurora Pump and Oberweis. It has been there for years. They are moving it to Aurora this year. On Friday they start in Tinsletown and they do a processional. They go through North Aurora. They are coming down Randall. They are going to go through part of Aurora. They are going to Downer to Le Grande to Prairie to River, go through Montgomery Fest, they come up Route 25 and end up here. It is going to be like 60 or 80 emergency vehicles, lights and sirens, starting at 6:30. Then they will have their event on Saturday from 10:00 to 3:00 or 4:00 at and around the

Fire Museum. There will be a Downtown Alive that Friday night or Saturday night at RiverEdge Park. Then Sunday morning about half of those vehicles will have a processional again where they will head to Naperville and they are going to be on display in Naperville for a while. On Sunday morning they will be lights only.

Bill Wiet said we are in the works right now to have the 2 properties on Broadway, which are Randy's Auto and the law offices, down by the season of RiverEdge Park. We are actually doing that in conjunction with the properties over by the new library. The demo bids are due in, I believe, Tuesday and then they take the normal steps through the Council. Our plan is to get these properties down, at least the ones on Broadway, within the first couple of weeks in May and hopefully even earlier. As some of you might have seen, there are some barricades along the corner of the Hobbs Building. The onion dome is starting to lean toward the east. The owners did get an estimate or proposal to shore up the dome and do some improvements to the west wall. We were prepared to do whatever it took to stabilize that onion dome. One of the members of the LLC decided to go ahead and fund the stabilization of the dome. They decided to sign the contract to get it shored up and Monday you might start seeing the canopies and the scaffolding going up. You are going to see a lot of support leading from the corner up to the dome itself. You are going to possibly see a net around the dome itself. You are possibly going to see some cabling that's going to be in and around the dome to stabilize it to the parapets. While this work is progressing, if there is any way we can try to do some repairs or do something that might be able to get the entire dome down, we'd be willing to engage in discussions on helping. They are looking for an exit strategy for that building. If you see something going on there they are trying to stabilize the dome and trying to market it and get some rehab going. The building's been vacant since 1982, I believe.

Bill Wiet then gave updates on various buildings in the downtown.

Eva Luckinbill passed out a letter regarding the request to help underwrite the ribbon cutting festivities. Eva Luckinbill said the RFP's for the old library were due earlier this week. I do know just from discussions that that Indian Museum had been to the old library 4 or 5 times. I don't know if they actually submitted a proposal or not. By prior agreement, if there is no viable proposal then the library is obligated to take down the building by next year, so we'll have to see what happens there. The new library is still scheduled for a June opening. The furniture and shelving are being installed now. A lot of the fiber, some of the work you see on the street is the city fiber being established into the building. A lot of technology components are coming in. It is very exciting. The goal is for the construction company to turn over to the library the building and the keys so to speak on June 1<sup>st</sup>, at which time we will be moving from the old library to the new. We will be closing the old library to the public at the close of business Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> and that's Memorial Day weekend and we will not reopen in there. Library services will be available at our other locations. The ribbon cutting to the public is on June 14<sup>th</sup>. It is a Sunday afternoon. We expect a huge turnout. We plan to have a huge celebration with live entertainment and have the community go through the building. You'll see demonstrations of some of that technology we talked about. There will be a special donor preview the night before this event, so with this level of commitment the Aurora Downtown Board would be invited to that special preview event before the public event.

Kim Granholm said Bob and I will talk because right now the committees have the level of support. If we decide to bring it to one of the committees we'll get back in touch with you in the next week or so.

### **Announcements**

Joe Hopp said on April 11<sup>th</sup>, the Kiwanis is having their Day One Project. Every year the Kiwanis Club does a community service project and we are cleaning up the banks of the Indian Creek on the northeast section of town. We are going to meet at the ATC. It is from 8:00 to 12:00 if anybody is interested.

Gina Moga said that's also the second annual Experience Aurora Homeownership Expo over on River Street. Neighborhood Development is coordinating that this year.

Dan Hites said a week from Saturday we'll initiate the first bike ride from All Spoked Up at Rivers Edge. That will be on a Saturday at 9:00 o'clock in the morning.

### **Adjourn**

Eva Luckinbill made a motion to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Dan Hites. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 a.m.