

**AURORA DOWNTOWN  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Minutes**

**July 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), Karen Kramford (at large), Eva Luckinbill (Aurora Public Library), Terry Michels (Hollywood Casino), John Nachtrieb (at large), and Bob Reuland (ex-officio)

**Members Absent (Excused):** Jimi Allen (at large)

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** None

**Meeting Highlights**

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

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

**Approval of Minutes – 6/4/2015**

The minutes did not get attached to the packet. They will be tabled until the next meeting.

**Treasurer's Report – Doug Cheatham**

Doug Cheatham said our balances are as strong as they've ever been, \$171,000 in the bank. From a budget standpoint, we are in real good shape. I may have some classification issues between accounts. The bottom line is the same either way. For the year to date, we are \$24,000 ahead of budget. We have a lot of seasonal things that we'll use that up, but I would say at this point we are in real good shape.

Karen Kramford said how do you see the flow going with the new debit card?

Doug Cheatham said we'll need to kind of get used to that. We have a debit card now on the account. I think there were all of 4 transactions on it. I'll just need to know when those go through. I can look up who the payee was on those and see the after the fact. I'll just need to find out from Bob what they were for and what account I should charge them to.

John Nachtrieb made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. This was seconded by Eva Luckinbill. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **Old Business**

a. Hesed House: Task Force Update – Jimi Allen

Kim Granholm said Jimi is not here. I don't know if there has been any communication with the Hesed House. I want to keep it under old business because I know that it is an important topic for us, so I will get in touch with Jimi sometime in the next few weeks and see if we can get something in the books and on the schedule.

b. New Logo/Branding of Aurora Downtown – Bob Reuland

Bob Reuland said we have good news. Kim and I met with Rory Bolen and we are moving forward with a new logo, a new tag line, and a new branding. Rory is hot at work on this right now. Rory feels that he has something to prove that we can make his logo much better than the Aurora Downtown logo that we paid all that money for. So he is real excited and real happy about this. It is a good thing. I think we are going to have something to show in a month.

Kim Granholm said we were hoping to have something at the next Executive Committee meeting, maybe a couple of different designs so that we could kind of analyze it on our end before it goes back to Marketing and they kind of decide what is going on.

### **New Business**

a. Appointment of New Marketing Chair – Kim Granholm

Kim Granholm said I know we talked a little bit about who was going to take Benjie's role. Benjie was great at keeping focus and really taking some of the passion that we have and refocusing it into what can actually be accomplished on the Marketing Committee and the time that we have. We're thinking at this point Rory is the best person for that. He owns a marketing and advertising company. We've supported him in his new venture and we thought that this would be a good opportunity to let him kind of prove what he can and can't do on the Marketing Committee and what he's happy with. I just wanted to talk a little bit about that and make sure that you were comfortable with that or if you have any other recommendation at this point.

Doug Cheatham said the only thought that comes to mind, and this is not to impugn Rory in anyway, but just from an expense standpoint he is a marketing professional and we are engaging his services and now he is going to head the committee that can approve marketing expenses.

Bob Reuland said Rory actually e-mailed me his morning and said I'm submitting this invoice. Is this the proper way to do it? Will you approve it and will you move it on for payment? I think I'm going to act as the clearinghouse for that.

Doug Cheatham said so if Bob will be kind of the watchdog on that. That's the only thought that just comes to mind.

Kim Granholm said I definitely would agree. He does own an advertising agency and a lot of his ideas are he wants to do TV and radio. I'm not opposed to that, but it is very grand scheme and I just don't know if we have the budget for that. Hopefully what we need to focus on is it is a committee decision, it is not just his decision, and yes he can kind of map out a game plan, but is really the committee that finalizes that direction because I had the same concern as well in how good is he going to be at managing the budget.

Bob Reuland said I think Kim and I should manage the budget for the time being.

Kim Granholm said I'm just not sure who else. I know Kimber has been working with Marissa for the First Fridays, so that seems to be working really well, so we'll maybe keep that relationship and then Rory can maybe focus on some of the other marketing things, because right now it seems like the Marketing Committee, when they have meetings, focuses on First Fridays. They spend a good hour just talking about First Fridays. It's great. I love it, but there's other things that we need to be doing besides First Fridays.

Karen Kramford said part of being a Chair is learning new skills and developing skills and I think Doug's concern is valid, but also if that's an area where Rory excels or there are other areas where he needs to grow, it is the same for all of us. It give us an opportunity to expand.

Dan Hites said I think Rory is a good choice. It's probably late into the year now, but one of the concerns I had with the new budget is that we were consolidating everything into the Marketing Committee. I think for the next year we should consider breaking off into a festival group or something for all the outside activities and then have the Marketing Committee.

Kim Granholm said I think that we were, especially with Benjie's organization, you should see Benjie's Excel spreadsheet for his budgeting. It was very in depth and so that's kind of why we consolidated some of it, but I think that next year we need to sit down and say okay marketing you can spend this amount on your website, and this amount so that there are some parameters there. This year we trusted Benjie enough to stay within budget. I think he was really good at that as to what they wanted to do, but I think we need to give some more direction going forward as to what we want to see on the Marketing Committee. He's not on the Executive Board so he is not privy to some of the conversations that we have and where we want it to go, so I think we just need to provide some guidance and make sure that Doug is watching the numbers and if something arises he can let Bob or I know and we can have that conversation with him.

John Nachtrieb said well part of it too is effectiveness. We want to make sure the money is spent effectively.

Karen Kramford said the other part too is not necessarily moving it over to festivals, but one of the other opportunities would be to make it like subcommittees or task forces within the committee so that they are not spending all their time in that one area and you can then get a higher view of what's going on and what the different groups are doing within it.

Eva Luckinbill said it sounds like the next 6 months or the rest of the year will be a good test for our thoughts and Rory.

Kim Granholm said I will announce that at the regular Board meeting.

### **Consultant Report**

Bob Reuland said 2 of the charges on our check register were for Ballydoyle. We had a going away party for Benjie a week ago today. We actually did transact business at that meeting also, but it was a very good time. It was mixed feelings because we are losing somebody who is really valuable to Aurora Downtown and has been able to do a lot for us and he is moving on. So we wish him well and we are going to miss him, but we have to march forward. In that connection, I want to talk about Eva. Eva has been on the Executive Committee through the library and, of course, her term with the library is over. So I want to nominate Eva for the Executive Committee and also for Aurora Downtown and then in December she can run for a position on the Board. She is very valuable to us and I would like to get the sense of how this committee feels about that.

John Nachtrieb said how do you feel about that?

Eva Luckinbill said I'd love to stay on and see through some of the things as I think about my transitioning into whatever is next, but I'd like to stay on.

Dan Hites said are you referring to the opening arising from Benjie leaving?

Bob Reuland said right, because Benjie is leaving. Daisy Porter-Reynolds, the new Librarian, will be taking a seat on the Board, I believe. She did attend our last meeting and so Kim and I need to really sit down and talk with her.

Kim Granholm said I haven't mentioned that she does have a seat, but she expressed interest, so I invited her to the last meeting so she could kind of see what we do and where to go. We'll obviously reach out to her and see if she has an interest in filling the rest of Eva's term for that.

Dan Hites said if Eva agrees to mentally remove herself from here, I'll tell my opinion. I think it is a good idea.

Terry Michels said do we have a policy or is there anything on that the member of the Executive Committee has to be a representative from a business downtown or a business at all?

Kim Granholm said no. The only thing in the bylaws is that they have to express interest in Aurora Downtown. Whether or not we want to change that going forward, it might be something that we need to look at in the bylaws. We've had some people that get nominated that you think what interest do you have downtown? You don't have a business, you don't have a building and some of them don't even live in Aurora. That might be something we need to look at going forward because I just feel like those decisions, if you don't have a vested financial interest or a business, sometimes I don't think we see eye to eye on some of the things we are spending money on. Right now it just states they have to have an interest in downtown.

Bob Reuland said so what is our sense?

Kim Granholm said I think it is a great idea.

That was also the consensus of the rest of the Board also.

Bob Reuland said welcome Eva.

### **Committee Updates**

John Nachtrieb said there is not a whole lot to report for Business Attraction and Retention. I still have to schedule the follow ups with the awardees. I am going to reschedule the BAR Committee's scheduled meeting for next Thursday because I will not be available, but unless you have some news for me, I think things are going along splendidly.

Bob Reuland said I have all of the rent checks and I am going to deliver those, so we are moving along well. We had one other inquiry from Harriet Parker and I said that they could get on for next year. We still have \$10,000 left for the Business Retention Grant.

Kim Granholm said it is July already. Should we start focusing on moving that Business Retention money to Business Attraction?

John Nachtrieb said yes.

Karen Kramford said I would like to see it kept in Business Retention. There are other businesses that have expressed an interest, but I think there is a fear in a sense of one exposing your financials again and working toward getting beyond that.

John Nachtrieb said I think there is open mindedness about it. We certainly do want to make sure that we've got our budget committed. There is no reason not to.

Kim Granholm said I didn't realize that there were more people that were interested in the Business Retention, so that's good.

Karen Kramford said for the Float Committee the float looks so cool. The float is moving along nicely. It is no longer red, white and blue. It is red and gold. It is drop dead gorgeous. Hessed House actually brought people over from their HEAT group and did the redecorating for us. It went really, really well. We are well within budget. We do a step off for those of you who are participating or interested in participating at 9:30. Bob Roth is driving. He is a friend of Kaye's. He has a truck. This year the kids cannot ride in the back of the truck. The kids will be on the float. We have characters. It is just going to be a fun time.

Kim Granholm said for Legislative I did e-mail out the last minutes that you had.

Karen Kramford said for Legislative part of that was also the document that we have been working on for the 4 a.m. liquor license. I had hoped everyone had reviewed it because I want to

give final approval for the final payout for that. If the Executive Committee didn't see any major issues with it then I would just go ahead and approve the payout for it.

Karen Kramford said one step back, for the Parade Task Force, we are meeting July 10<sup>th</sup> to do a review of how this one went. Next year the Task Force is going underneath Seasonal Decorations.

Karen Kramford said back to Legislative, we will be meeting at our normal time and the agendas should be going out on Friday.

Kim Granholm said I know Fred had a parking meeting and I did attach the minutes from that in the e-mail that Sue sent out. I did not attend the parking meeting.

Bob Reuland said the parking meeting went well. There was a recommendation that you and I would talk to the Finance Committee at their regular meeting on Tuesday, the following Tuesday, to discuss that we support parking and we support them and we support Bill Wiet and we want to move forward in whatever capacity that we can to help them. It was well received by Bob O'Connor and I thought the Parking Committee itself did a fine job.

Eva Luckinbill said I think everybody got their voice heard and it is just a matter of bringing it back and what do we do now.

Kim Granholm said at the Finance Committee Bob O'Connor asked Bill and Carrie Anne to go back and put into the contract with Waubensee some timetables so that they are not having this discussion again in another year, which I thought was really positive. Bill is working on that right now to submit to the Finance Committee. Bob had asked him to go back and add some timetables into the contract even if they are going to extend it another year.

Terry Michels said are they looking for a long-term recommendation at the conclusion of the year?

Kim Granholm said they are looking for a long-term recommendation definitely. I think the feedback from the city staff was that in a year I don't know if we can have a long-term recommendation put together, but we can have the data compiled so that we can talk about a long-term recommendation.

Kim Granholm said for the Friends of LaSalle, we had talked last month about asking them for the money back. We reached out to Bill Wiet and he said it absolutely is the city's fault that the work isn't getting done at this point and he was going to have an answer for me at the Executive Committee as to whether or not yes we were moving forward or no we're not. Our intent was to ask for the money back from Friends of LaSalle just because Joe Dispensa and the Friends of LaSalle are kind of dissolving and we were concerned about where that money was going to go if it hasn't been used already. He had sent me an answer. I'm just going to read it. "Unfortunately I don't have an answer to whether the LaSalle Street project is moving forward. Before I get a solid answer, I need to create a spreadsheet of overall TIF 1 funds that are available, committed and committed but possibly won't be spent. This will get me a financial

forecast that will show that this project can or can't move forward at this time." He said he'll definitely be able to inform Joe prior to the regular Board meeting.

Karen Kramford said is Friends of LaSalle dissolving or are they transitioning leadership? I'm hearing 2 stories.

Bob Reuland said they are transitioning leadership is my understanding and they are going to be transferring, again from what I understand, they want to transfer the \$75,000 to Post 84 or 48 or whatever it is, the American Legion, and I am opposed to that.

Karen Kramford said are the funds staying in Friends of LaSalle or are funds being transferred to the American Legion?

Bob Reuland said to the American Legion.

Doug Cheatham said that is not remotely the purpose that we delegated the funds.

Kim Granholm said I have the minutes from the original motion from 2010, so I have it ready. I think Joe was angry that he was asked for the money back. When I talked to him he claims that he wouldn't do that, but we may need to hire legal counsel if something goes forward. At this time, he was saying it is 100% the city's fault. Bill said yes it is. We would like to see the project happen in this calendar year so that's what Bill was giving me an answer for. If it doesn't happen, then we might need to ask for the money back.

Dan Hites said why don't we just have them prepay the city so that the city already has that money and if the city doesn't do the work, the city can pay it back to us?

Kim Granholm said that's not a bad idea.

Doug Cheatham said we gave them money for a specific project with the intent of developing a portion of our downtown. As I recall, there was discussion and may have even been in the motion that with each \$25,000 installment we wanted to see assurance of some kind of progress, which clearly demonstrates that we were focused on the project. They can't just take the money and do something entirely different with it.

Kim Granholm said right, and it was in the motion. It was in the revised motion. It was revised several times and in the end it was saying we'll give you the first \$25,000 now. We want to see something going forward every year that we give it to you. We probably, quite honestly, should never have even given them the second 2 installments.

Terry Michels said so we gave them 3 \$25,000 installments. Did we see any forward motion?

Kim Granholm said we saw some plans, but nothing concrete was ever done on that block as far as what was done. There was discussion in the minutes as well about Joe wanted to do an archway and that we definitely did not want to give money toward the archway and this money specifically has to be for the street itself, kind of like on Downer how there are the bump outs.

John Nachtrieb said honestly I think the reason for confidence and releasing the other payments was the involvement of the city.

Doug Cheatham said speaking for myself, it was not because I had great confidence in Friends of LaSalle organization, it was because the city was saying they were intending to do this.

John Nachtrieb said and they have admitted that they dropped the ball.

Kim Granholm said are we comfortable with Dan's suggestion, just saying you know what Joe, let's write the City of Aurora a check and let them handle it if it is not done by the end of the year even? Because if it is done by the end of the year, we don't have to worry about.

John Nachtrieb said is there more specific language like they would hold it in escrow or something. That would give them some assurance that the money was still going to be available if anything was going to happen.

Doug Cheatham said we might need involve Bill or the city on the receiving end of that if they are willing to cooperate with sort of keeping that money set aside or however they want to handle that.

Eva Luckinbill said committed to this project.

Bob Reuland said I think it is a good idea that we transfer the money to the city.

John Nachtrieb said I think the language is important though.

Karen Kramford said the wording is not going to make the difference. I think the critical part is our follow through. We are not going to make friends doing this anyway. I think Dan's view, we bring the funds back to here and put it in an account that says this is for LaSalle Street or prepay the city for it.

Terry Michels said can we bring it back to our, not the city, but can we have an escrow or a holding account?

Doug Cheatham said sure. We can do it if they will give us the money.

Kim Granholm said he was not comfortable giving us the money back, but maybe he would be if we have the conversation we'll definitely use it for this project.

Dan Hites said what is the basis of his discomfort?

Bob Reuland said just that it is our money and it is our plan and it's our wish and it's all the city's fault.

Doug Cheatham said well fault is irrelevant. Is the project going to happen or not? If it's not then we want the money back.

Kim Granholm said right, and even if it is the city's fault it is still our money regardless. Let's reach out to Bill and see if he can prepay. He might be more comfortable with that. We'll reach out with Bill and Joe in the next couple of weeks and have an update at the next Executive Committee meeting. I don't know that I will bring it up again at the regular Board meeting until we have a final consensus of where it is going.

### **Announcements**

Dan Hites said we have little kids in tutus running around.

Kim Granholm said I have seen that AKA Dance is open.

Dan Hites said they should be up and running probably by the end of the week. They are shifting from temporary quarters in Suite 16 of my building to their permanent quarters in Suite 10. In their shifting, the remnants of Business Solutions is moving to Suite 16. They are opening up a kind of a rent your own cubicle, start your own business entrepreneurial little place there, come reception hall, come art gallery, come whatever they can throw in there and make money with.

### **Adjourn**

John Nachtrieb made a motion to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Eva Luckinbill. The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 a.m.