

**AURORA DOWNTOWN
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

Minutes

September 3, 2015 – 8:00 A.M. – 5th Floor Conference Room B – City Hall

Members Present: Jimi Allen (at large), 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): None

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 – 8/6/2015

Terry Michels suggested that the minutes be done more in a bullet point format. A discussion followed regarding the minutes format.

Karen Kramford made a motion to approve the August 6, 2015 minutes. This was seconded by Eva Luckinbill. The motion was unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report – Doug Cheatham

Doug Cheatham said we have \$93,000 in the bank. We are due to get that other quarterly payment from the city, so everything is a little bit understated from where we really should be at this point. I met briefly and handed over a report to Rory. I think I've been charging too much to Marketing that should have been in other categories. I haven't made any changes to that yet, but the bottom line would remain unchanged, but something might shift around a little bit. Sometimes when I get a bill it is hard to tell what to charge it to. We're \$71,000 behind budget, but really we are due for another \$67,500 payment, so we are just right about right on budget. Some of these things are seasonal, so think we will be fine relative to budget for the year as a whole. The decorations tend to run ahead of budget and then catch up and also the landscaping tends, although it is under budget now, by the end of the year it peters out and we're not really

paying anything. I think we will be in good shape relatively speaking compared to budget. The distributions for the month are on the last page.

John Nachtrieb made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. This was seconded by Karen Kramford. The motion was unanimously approved.

Old Business

a. LaSalle Street Grant Update – Bob Reuland

Kim Granholm said we feel that the responsible thing to do would be to ask for it back. We could use that \$75,000 internally on some maintenance that we think needs to be done downtown. The city has confirmed that they are not going to do anything on LaSalle at this point, so shame on us if we just let that money sit there and not put it to good use because it is our money. Although we do think that LaSalle Street would use it appropriately, it's not up to them at this point to decide to hold it or not. That's our decision. We are not going to make friends. They are going to be extremely upset with us. There have been comments about how this isn't fair and that they don't want to give the money back. They feel that it is in good hands and they won't spend it, but we're going to continue moving forward and taking it back. I just wanted to make sure everyone here on the Executive Committee is in favor of asking for it back. It is \$75,000 that we gave them over a 3 year period. We gave them \$25,000 a year in the hopes that there would be some other beautification to the streetscape, some bump outs and things like that. That was never done. The city has confirmed that it is 100% their fault. Bill spoke several months ago that as of right now they have no plans on doing anything, at least for this calendar year.

Bob Reuland said I think the time is right for us to ask for the money back. It was a noble cause. We thought it was a good thing at the time, but now times have changed.

Doug Cheatham said we were very clear.

Kim Granholm said technically we should have never given them the other 2 installments. In the original motion it says given that work is done we'll continue to give you the other \$50,000.

Doug Cheatham said I think I added that on the original motion because we wanted to see progress on the project in order to even get a second and third installment. We were given a lot of assurances and that's the only reason we gave them money, but it never happened.

Further discussion followed on the repairs that were needed on LaSalle Street and that we not lose focus on what needs to be done there.

Terry Michels said I do want to assure them that we are going to do 2 things. That we are going to visit and arrange with city folks to look at the street as a whole in terms of improvements that can be made and then to stimulate growth in that area, which is part of what Aurora Downtown is, we are going to focus on that and what needs current and/or prospective owners locating in that area would need to improve their business to run fiber optic to a building, etc. Once that's

determined, then a request and/or consideration to use some funds from Aurora Downtown, whether it is out of that \$75,000 or something new from budget, would be given to them. In essence we are saying to them it's not that you are forgotten. We recognize that there are some improvements that need to be made here. It is not the streetlights, but there are other things. You've got a business owner on the street who is saying there are other things that need to be done and we are willing to look at that and we want to look at that to see what we can do.

After further discussion the consensus was that Aurora Downtown would take the money back and maybe earmark it for a little while until a commitment can be reached.

Terry Michels said I would make a motion that Aurora Downtown seek the agreed fund of \$75,000 for monies given to the Friends of LaSalle Street and that this Board supports unanimously the request for the refund of \$75,000. Doug Cheatham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Bob Reuland said by our regular meeting, which would be September 17th, we should have some semblance of a logo and tag line. Rory is very close to having it done. We are moving along and we should have a full report to the Board on the 17th.

New Business

a. Committee Chairs for 2016 – Kim Granholm

Kim Granholm said the Committee Chairs are really the bread and butter. They are the ones that get things done. If you have any suggestions for committee chairs for 2016 let me know.

Bob Reuland said I'm going to propose Helen Nowak to be Legislative Committee Chair. I think she will do it and I think she will be effective.

Dan Hites said the elections will bring in some fresh blood and maybe some of those can pick up some of the chair positions.

John Nachtrieb said I am certainly willing to be replaced. A Co-Chair would help. I will continue to work on the committee and I will continue to be the Chair if there is nobody else stepping up.

b. Budget for 2016 – Kim Granholm

Kim Granholm said I'm going to ask the committee Chairs to submit to Bob and myself and Doug what their proposals are and then at the committee level we'll sit down and hash it out and decided. We did take out last year an extra fund that we could use as we saw fit. I would like to put something back in there. I think it is important that we do have some additional funds for when First Fridays has a trolley that's not built into the budget that we can pull from those funds.

Consultant Report

Bob Reuland said we are at that time of the year again where we are looking for committee Chairs and we are looking for new blood and we are looking for new members to run. I think our committees are getting tired. Marketing is not showing up the way they should and BAR Committee is not showing up the way they should. I think that the logo will energize our Board when we show that and I'm going to make sure Rory has that here for the 17th. I'm going to meet with individuals on the Board here and see your sense of commitment and what you want to do for next year because I think planning now is the way to go.

Committee Updates

Kim Granholm said we went over the budget committee. Bob and I have put some names together for that.

John Nachtrieb said for Business Attraction and Retention the focus has been lately on the pop-up shops and trying to make sure that we don't lose momentum on the First Fridays. At the August First Friday, the pop-up shops really performed magnificently. The current trajectory of thought is to try to expand and support the idea of expanding it, certainly keeping the LaSalle Street presence. I think it is a wonderful opportunity for LaSalle Street. I also think that we need to push to get on Stolp and that would be an expansion and not taking anything out of LaSalle Street. I have reached out to Waubensee, but have not had a response from them yet.

Karen Kramford said the Float Task Force has been talking with the city about Winter Lights on November 20th. The pop-up had been discussed as occurring on Water Street, which would allow more businesses and it would be easy for people to get to because all the activity happens right out here. That's still in the early stage, but just so you are aware of that.

John Nachtrieb said the next BAR Committee meeting is next Thursday at the usual time.

Karen Kramford said we had an initial meeting. We are going to participate in Winter Lights. We will have the float as part of the procession. We will have more characters. One of the things we are looking to sponsor and be part of is they want to set up a s'mores tent for the kids for an activity.

Bob Reuland said for the Holiday Committee we are going to try out an idea. The old lights that were at the casino location on New York Street last year caused problems with the street lights blowing out the GFI's and so on. We still have those lights and I'd like to try them over at the new library since the library has new lighting and new wiring and maybe they will work so we are going to try them as a test over there because we have a whole new light scheme for the casino this year.

Kim Granholm said Joe Hopp is also going to be hanging some lights in Rotary Plaza.

Bob Reuland said the Landscaping Committee met last Friday. We talked about a number of issues. One was the light poles and the railings need to be painted. We talked about the flowers, maybe we have too much pink. We've had pink forever. We are going to be talking about that. We may pick some different colors for next year.

Karen Kramford said for the Legislative Committee we have Mike Saville coming on 2 Friday's from now and he will be talking to us about what Aldermen do. We will be looking to see how we can work more closely with him.

Kim Granholm said we discussed the new logo and branding of Aurora Downtown. I think that's the main focus of Marketing right now.

Karen Kramford said Rory also got with U Samba for the mailer. He was looking to incorporate advertising with local businesses. U Samba was chosen. He is looking to do a test market of 10,000 pieces that are going out with Aurora Downtown on one side and then the business on the other side. U Samba finalized theirs yesterday and it goes out in the mail this month.

Bob Reuland said we are going to have a co-chair on the Nominating Committee. I'm asking Tom Bartlett to work with John Galles.

Dan Hites said I think we should also consider splitting up the Marketing Committee and breaking out some of the events under this committee.

Dan Hites said I think there was a general consensus that the Parking Committee wants the different entities to put together plans for themselves. Instead of a big general plan, each of these entities would be responsible for their own parking problems. There was a general consensus that we will work happily with the city.

Kim Granholm said I did notice that they did implement the 1 Hour parking on Downer in the morning right in front of River Edge Café over there to try to prevent some of the students from parking there.

Announcements

Dan Hites said we are probably going to put together a Caribbean cookout a week from this Friday behind River Edge, which is going to be open to everyone and anyone. It will be BYOE, bring your own everything, and we will provide the condiments and the bar-be-ques to cook on and some music. If you want to eat and drink, bring your own.

Kim Granholm said All Spoked Up is having a ribbon cutting, kind of a grand opening for all Spoked Up at the First Friday event.

Terry Michels said the Casino is going before the Design Review Committee for our new signs.

Karen Kramford said the city approved U Samba's liquor license. They are waiting for the State's approval.

Dan Hites said don't forget that First Friday is this Friday.

Adjourn

Dan Hites made a motion to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Doug Cheatham. The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 a.m.