

**AURORA DOWNTOWN
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

Minutes

September 17, 2015

8:00 a.m. – 5th Floor conference Room B – City Hall

Members Present: Jimi Allen (at large), Lulu Blacksmith (WCC), Rory Bolen (at large), Doug Cheatham (Old Second National Bank), Clara Diaz (at large), Kim Granholm (at large), Fred Harrison (at large), Dan Hites (at large), Kimber Howard (at large), Karen Kramford (at large), Terry Michels (Hollywood Casino), John Nachtrieb (at large), Helen Nowak (at large), Jorge Pacheco (at large), Megan Paul (at large), Daisy Porter-Reynolds (Library), Bob Reuland (ex-officio)

Members Absent (Excused): Jane Abe (Aurora Regional Chamber of Commerce), Harish Ananthapadmanabhan (at large), Katie Arko (ACCA), John Galles (at large), Keith Gerald (at large), Eva Luckinbill (at large), Melissa Mercado (at large)

Members Absent (Unexcused): Cort Carlson (AACVB)

Others Present: Bill Wiet (COA), Joe Hopp (COA), Officer Tracey Archer (APD), Justin Root (COA), Cadence Peterson (Seize the Future), Marissa Amoni (Aurora Downtown), Hector Ochoa (Aurora Hispanic Heritage Board), Birnie Harper (Wayside Cross), Michael Cobb (Hesed House)

Call to Order and Introductions – Kim Granholm

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

Approval of Minutes – 8/20/2015

Kim Granholm said the Executive Committee talked about the minutes and keeping the recorded file on the City of Aurora server so it is documented, but just kind of maybe bullet pointing the minutes so they are a little bit quicker to read. There are some regulations that we do need to follow, so we want to make sure that we are in compliance with all that.

Lulu Blacksmith said what I have seen other groups do is they write down a summary of what they are going to be talking about and if everybody submitted that to Sue then it would be very easy for her and then that summary you talk about and you are still in compliance.

Kim Granholm said then we'll probably take Lulu's suggestion and I'll be asking the Committee Chairs to provide me with your information so we get it to Sue in a timely fashion so she can get it out to us in a timely fashion.

Terry Michels made a motion to approve the August 20, 2015 minutes. John Nachtrieb seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Treasurer's Report – Doug Cheatham

Doug Cheatham said we have \$93,000 in the bank and we are in very good shape relative to budget if you add in the next quarterly payment that we will be getting. We're in good shape within the categories. As I mentioned in our other meeting, Marketing looks over, but I think we, over the course of the year, have dumped a lot of things in there that probably weren't really marketing, so it is a classification issue. The bottom line is we are in good shape. The last page is the checks that were written during the month.

Dan Hites made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. Karen Kramford seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Old Business

a. LaSalle Street Grant Update – Bob Reuland

Kim Granholm said as of right now there is no update. We did discuss it at length at the Executive Committee meeting. We are moving forward with asking for those funds back. We are going to try to be sensitive to what it was given for in the first place, but we do feel that we need to be good stewards of the money and ask for it back if it is not being utilized for what we intended the purpose to be.

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

Kim Granholm said Bob, Rory and I met last week to find out the status of where we were at.

Rory Bolen said we are moving along. I think we are getting really close. I think we are getting to the point where we will be able to present something real soon.

Kim Granholm said the timeframe that we're thinking of, and we want to launch the new brand, hopefully at our December Annual Meeting, so that will be ready January 1st to really put it out there. Nothing has gone to the Executive Committee as of yet and we want the Board's approval as well, so that's my timeframe.

New Business

a. Committee Chairs and Budget for 2016 – Kim Granholm

Kim Granholm said Bob and I are gearing up for next year already. We are trying to plan ahead and do some strategic things for the next year. The Committee Chairs that we have right now are phenomenal, but it is a lot of work throughout the year and some of them have been in those

Chair positions for several years, so I'm looking for some new people that want to step in. It would be really nice to be able to transition into a new Committee Chair, so if you are interested, please let me know and we can try to look at who would fit well with that committee and just keep it going.

Consultant Report – Bob Reuland

Bob Reuland said Clara Diaz is going to be coming onto the BAR Committee. We've got the election coming up, so if you have recommendations, please call me and let me know who is interested because the election is coming up fast. I think it is very important that we get some new fresh faces. We want to thank all the people who have helped us over the years. We are really moving forward as a Board compared to where we were a few years ago.

Kim Granholm said Doug and myself and Bob and the Budget Committee will be submitting the budget to the city soon. I think we do that usually the end of October or the beginning of November, so I'm going to reach out to the Committee Chairs and ask for your budget by the next Board meeting. If we don't get them, don't expect that your budget will stay the same as this year.

Committee Updates – Budget/Bar/Float/Holiday/Landscaping/Legislative/Marketing/Nominating/Parking

John Nachtrieb said the BAR Committee is about to award our final grant for the year, which will execute our entire budget for the year. Our existing grantees are doing well. We haven't had any failures. We have a couple of new members who have been asked to serve on the committee, so the BAR Committee is looking forward to another busy year.

Karen Kramford said for the Float Committee we will have a float in the procession for Winter Lights. We have budget for it. We will have costumes again. I think we are also going to sponsor a s'mores tent for kids activities.

Marissa Amoni said for the Holiday Committee they are doing a Winter Lights Window Decorating contest, so we would appreciate all you storefront owners signing up and being part of our festive Winter Lights holiday celebration, which is going to be Friday, November 20th. It is from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Since the official celebration is pared down, we are hoping that more businesses will be involved. We are having a pop-up shop in November 20th that will be from 6:00 until 9:00 p.m. We are hiring street musicians. We encourage everyone to participate and we are excited about the Winter Lights event.

Joe Hopp said for Landscaping, we are kind of winding down. We'll probably keep the flower pots out as long as we can. The hanging baskets are starting to die off. We'll pull them down as necessary. The sidewalk pots last a little longer. They'll probably get to mid-October.

Karen Kramford said the Legislative Committee did not meet last month. We are meeting this Friday at noon. We will have Mike Saville coming and talking with us. It is open for anyone who would like to visit.

Rory Bolen said for the Marketing Committee the logo and naming stuff is going on. We recently launched an ad campaign that's on cable and Comcast TV, radio and direct mail, so some of the stuff is hitting right now. We have roughly about 300 commercials and a lot of them are prime time. I've got samples of the money mailer that is going out right now. U Samba is being highlighted in this go around. We also have the First Fridays stuff going on.

Marissa Amoni said First Fridays is on October 2nd. We have 16 venues and we are not doing music anymore. That was just a summertime only thing that we hope to continue next summer. We are continuing the trolley indefinitely. Kimber is working on the analytics of First Fridays and we've received really great feedback. We have the food trucks and we are having the pop-up on LaSalle on October 2nd. We did the ribbon cutting for All Spoked Up. We will be doing Gillerson's Grubbery at First Fridays in November. Gillerson's Grubbery is doing a friends and family weekend at the end of this month, so look for them to announce their official grand opening at the beginning of October.

Fred Harrison said the Parking Committee met last month and we are meeting again today at 2:00 o'clock. Last month we brainstormed on some of the objectives that were working on. We did list a few objectives. One of the ones was coming up with a parking plan for business entities. We'll work on a plan to where we would distribute that to the business entities to where they can kind of come up with their own parking rules or their overall parking plan. One of things that we talked about was building owners pretty much owning their building parking plan. The other thing I wanted to talk about is that the committee is not comprised of many business owners either. I've reached out to some business owners. Business owners have their own parking issues. We have a set of issues ourselves with parking that needs to be addressed and that may be a little different than some of these other issues that we are addressing.

City Department Updates

Officer Archer said last month we had approximately 493 calls for service downtown. This month we've had 593 calls for services downtown. That has to do with the directed patrol that we've been doing at far as foot patrol. We've had a dedicated car down here almost every shift as much as we could. The big thing downtown now is skateboarders on the sidewalk. We're trying to alleviate that problem. A big city ordinance got pushed through. We are working on the list for the pub patrol drunkards on the no buy list, so that should be rolling out here within a month or two.

Bill Wiet said we are status quo on what I mentioned last month about all the projects downtown. Everything is set to be completed at the end of this construction season for everything. The onion dome has been stabilized and the building is still being marketed for developers.

Dan Hites said will the old VNA come down this year?

Bill Wiet said we are working on an agreement with the owner with that being the goal. We're going to try to RFP the whole block so that maybe we can get a development along the river where Building and Permits and our parking lot is.

Dan Hites said you have a demo order also on the old gym over here.

Bill Wiet said I don't know that exact status is. The city has been working with the neighboring property owner. There are a lot of things that are common to the building next to La Franz's gym, so I think there was some discussion about how that building could be rehabilitated.

Dan Hites said any word on the PNC building?

Bill Wiet said no. It is still on the market. Seize the Future is working with potential buyers of that as well.

Dan Hites said anything new on the Terminal?

Bill Wiet said there is some developer interest in that building as well. The real kick is the fact that the State Legislature has not approved or added the extension of the River Edge Zone Historic Tax Credit yet to the budget. All the local state legislators are all for it. They have been pushing it. I do want to say, however, that for the last year or so, every vacant building that has been vacant for many, many years in downtown is being looked at by one or more entities.

Kim Granholm said is there any update on the old library building?

Daisy Porter-Reynolds said nothing solid, but we have a few people interested and it is just a matter of one of them actually having the right proposal.

Announcements – Everyone

Michael Cobb said October 3rd we are having our Hike for Hesus. It starts at 9:00 o'clock. There are still sponsorship opportunities. The HEAT program is still going good. I'd love to have another opportunity for our kids to participate in the window decorations. Again, thank you. We appreciate it.

Birnie Harper said we are totally moved into the new building. It is much better. They are about to tear down Building C. It is 4 inches from the other building. Then they will be able to put the brick up on the new building. Then that area between the buildings will be turned into a little park. It is going to be very nice and then we will finish that last section of the sidewalk.

Hector Ochoa said we just had our festival this past Sunday. It was a very good festival overall. I did want to mention also today they are celebrating the Chamber of Commerce Week, so right now between now and 10:00 a.m. their offices are open so you can meet the staff. All are invited, non-members and Chamber members, so if you have some time stop by over there. On Saturday, September 26th at the Historic LaSalle Street Auto Row there is going to be a Roots Aurora festival there between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 8:00p.m. There will be main stage acts. There will be several food vendors. There will be 3 cultural champions announced there.

Marissa Amoni said Jose Torres is planning once again on a Day of the Dead celebration and he is bringing it back downtown Aurora this year. That is on Sunday, November 1st. He is using Sci-Tech and it is rain or shine. We are also closing off the streets on Benton. He is going to have dancers.

Joe Hopp said next week we are going to start a 2 week minor project at the Stolp Island parking deck where the top deck will be closed.

Helen Nowak said Blue Bird Beat should be opening in the next week at Leland, a coffee/café shop and also a convenience store too.

Adjourn

Kimber Howard made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Doug Cheatham seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 a.m.