

**AURORA DOWNTOWN
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

Minutes

October 15, 2015

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

Members Present: Jane Abe (Aurora Regional Chamber of Commerce), Jimi Allen (at large), Katie Arko (ACCA), Rory Bolen (at large), Clara Diaz (at large), John Galles (at large), Keith Gerald (at large), Kim Granholm (at large), Fred Harrison (at large), Dan Hites (at large), Kimber Howard (at large), Karen Kramford (at large), Eva Luckinbill (at large), Melissa Mercado (at large), Terry Michels (Hollywood Casino), Ellen Mueller (AACVB), Helen Nowak (at large), Bob Reuland (ex-officio)

Members Absent (Excused): Harish Ananthapadmanabhan (at large), Doug Cheatham (Old Second National Bank), John Nachtrieb (at large), Megan Paul (at large)

Members Absent (Unexcused): Lulu Blacksmith (WCC), Jorge Pacheco (at large), Daisy Porter-Reynolds (Library)

Others Present: Bill Wiet (COA), Gina Moga (COA), Officer Tracey Archer (APD), Marissa Amoni (Aurora Downtown), Hector Ochoa (Aurora Hispanic Heritage Board), Birnie Harper (Wayside Cross), Karina Garcia (Aurora Regional HCC)

Call to Order and Introductions – Kim Granholm

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

Approval of Minutes – 9/17/2015

Terry Michels made a motion to approve the September 17, 2015 minutes. Karen Kramford seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Treasurer’s Report – Doug Cheatham

Kim Granholm said Doug isn’t here yet with the Treasurer’s report, so we will table that until he can be here.

Old Business

a. LaSalle Street Grant Update – Bob Reuland

Kim Granholm said Bob and I will be meeting with Joe Dispensa and Sandy Spang.

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

Kim Granholm said this was discussed at length at the Executive Committee meeting and there was a motion and an approval by the Executive Board to hold off on some of the new logo.

Bob Reuland said the discussions centered around who we are and what we are doing. A motion was made at the Executive meeting that we hire Jimi Allen and Benjie Hughes. Benjie is going to work on a little content for us. We suspended our work with the logo and branding with Rory until we have this document. Benjie will be contacting the Executive Committee members for additional information and updates. The new document will reflect what the Board feels and thinks.

Kim Granholm said we talked about the logo and when it was going to be approved and the consensus was we want to reflect what we're about. We have to cut our budget and what's on our agenda next year and that kind of spurred this conversation that we didn't want to just create a logo just to do it and get it done for the annual meeting. We really wanted it to reflect us and what we do.

New Business

a. Budget for 2016 – Kim Granholm

Kim Granholm said we have met once and will meet again next Wednesday at 10:00 o'clock in Doug's office. We are going to get our budget cut this year. We were notified that we should discuss an A and a B budget. We are having to cut quite a significant amount of our funds. The target that we are cutting from the city is \$25,000 and we were over budget last year about \$30,000, so we are looking to cut \$55,000 from the budget this year, which is huge on a \$270,000 budget.

b. Secretary for 2016 – Bob Reuland

Kim Granholm said Bob will be our new secretary for 2016.

Bob Reuland said Sue is being relieved and leaving us. Be prepared for the first of the year it is going to change. Sue will still be with us through December, so we were very happy and grateful for that. We would have loved to have Sue stay with us, but such is not the case.

c. First Friday Liquor Update – Kim Granholm

Kim Granholm said we have a meeting tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. at the Metropolitan Co-Working Space, which is Dan's building. It is just to kind of review with the venues the current state and local liquor laws and just to make sure that everyone is abiding by the rules. We have not had any problems downtown and we just want to make sure that that continues to happen. The bigger this venue gets, the more it is drawing attention and we want to make sure that these venues are just aware of some of the fines and some of the things that can happen if someone is

overserved or if something does happen. We want to make sure that everyone is doing their due diligence on when they are serving and who they are servicing. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Consultant Report – Bob Reuland

Bob Reuland said it is time for elections. Jimi Allen, Kim Granholm, Keith Gerald and Kimber Howard will need to run for re-election. Nominating ballots are in the mail. Eva Luckinbill was appointed to fill in for Benjie Hughes. Eva voiced to me that she does not choose to run this year. Her term lasts until 12/31/16, so I think we are going to need Eva to resign if that is her wish and then we would appoint someone to take her place.

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

Kim Granholm said for the budget we are looking at a pretty significant cut here and it is going to hit every line item in the budget right now and it is going to potentially exclude some 100%. I'd like to have this approved before the December annual meeting, which is the 1st Thursday in December. If you want to participate, you participate now.

Bob Reuland said for BAR, there was a discussion regarding the Blue Bird Convenience Store. They are applying for a \$10,000 grant. They are near completion, but until that time nothing can be put in place.

Dan Hites said at the next BAR meeting the Arts and Entertainment District will be brought up and we will be revising it.

Karen Kramford said we are moving forward with Winter Lights. We have agreed to sponsor for the costumes. We will be part of the float coming through on the procession.

Bob Reuland said for Holiday Decorations, the holiday lights are going to be put up the weekend before November 20th. Everything should be ready so that the city will look all festive for the Winter Lights celebration. The Santa will go on the old library and the reindeer will go on the other side.

Kim Granholm said for Landscaping, I did notice that they did do some fall plantings in the Rotary Plaza. They did take down the hanging baskets and the planters have been removed.

Karen Kramford said for Legislative, Alderman Saville has been at the last 2 meetings to talk and discuss. He focused on the Riverwalk Commission and working with the Riverwalk, but also on the process of being an Alderman. We are exploring with him on how to work more closely. Helen Nowak is taking over the Legislative Committee starting next month.

Helen Nowak said the next Legislative meeting is going to be November 13th at noon. I'm looking for some new faces. I would like to the committee to work a little bit more closely with the city and Seize the Future to see if we can move forward.

Rory Bolen said for Marketing, all the ad campaigns are in full swing right now. We are wrapping up some small year-end projects and we started to pre-plan for ideas for next year.

Marissa Amoni said First Fridays is going very well. We are preparing for the November 6th First Fridays. We have several venues on board. We will have the trolley again. We are doing a Grand Opening for Gillerson's Grubbery. For the First Fridays on December 4th, we are looking to have kind of a more holiday feel to it. We will also have the trolley on December 4th. We are having the pop-up shop on November 20th for Winter Lights. We are having music and things like that and there will be some food trucks also for Winter Lights and that's all on the Water Street Mall. There will not be a First Fridays in January and it will resume in February. We are having a Santa on Winter Lights, November 20th. It will be in the parade and then in front of GAR and then on the stage at Riverfront Playhouse. We will not have Santa on December 4th for First Fridays.

John Galles said for Nominating, there was nothing more to add to what was already discussed.

Fred Harrison said the Parking Committee did meet last month and we put a stake in the ground to establish a parking plan. I'm in the process of creating a draft plan for us, more of a skeleton view to where the team can go out and make updates, etc. The other items that we talked about were the business owner parking in the Stolp Street garage, and also a loading zone on Downer Street for the business owners that may need loading parking.

Bill Wiet said we extended the agreement with Waubensee Community College on their timetable for us to get a permanent solution to their parking. A couple of representatives of Waubensee sat down with our own internal parking committee last month and had a dialogue on what our committee members wish to ask Waubensee in terms of information that they would like above and beyond what we may know regarding how we can best work toward maybe incorporating what the downtown committee does as well as what we do in terms of not only at looking at tweaking the downtown parking plan, but as we go with this permanent solution as well. We did talk about loading zones as well. Every block in the downtown is eligible for a loading zone. We will also be taking some parking counts of the downtown. I also put out the committee to see if we could offer a monthly reduction in employee parking for the Stolp deck as well.

Further discussion followed on the capacity of the Stolp and Casino parking decks and the number of accidents occurring on Broadway.

City Department Updates

Tracey Archer said about 75% of our accidents happen on Broadway and they are sideswipes when people park too far out, especially when those turn lanes went in. That's when they increased. The ban letter for the drunkards has been put on hold until the 19th. We're working with Hesus House and Mercy to try to get a transportation van for the homeless that are downtown so we can take them right back to Hesus House. If people are coming up to you and asking for money, call and report it.

Bill Wiet said the Indian Trail Bridge will be open tomorrow. All the work on the widening of New York Street will be completed by October 30th. The New York and Galena two-way project should be finished a month from now. The Route 59 Tollway Diversion Diamond Bridge has been opened. The whole Route 59 is supposed to be done by Thanksgiving. Lake and River Street should be done late November or early December. City Council approved a half a million dollar Home Grant for the St. Charles Hospital. It will consist of a senior living facility. The city was officially award the \$8.6 million dollar CMAP grant to relocate the bus pulse point from in front of the Roundhouse. It is going to be relocated to the ATC parking along the tracks. Part of this grant is also for the pedestrian bridge across the river.

Gina Moga said for Veteran's Day on November 11th we will have street closures that morning for the parade. The Winter Lights event this year has been shortened this year. It is from 6:30 to 7:30. After the parade, the tree will be lit and we will have an extended fireworks display. Our hope is that we will have Santa bring everybody over to Water Street Mall to partake in the pop-up shops where the food vendors will be and Santa will go on stage at Riverfront Playhouse. Applications are available for the Window Decorating contest, so please participate.

Announcements – Everyone

Kim Granholm said for the November Board meeting, we will be moving our meeting to a different location, as this room is being used for another seminar that day. We will let you know where the meeting will be held.

Jane Abe said Shop Small Saturday is coming up the Saturday after Thanksgiving. We are a Champion Neighborhood. The Chamber will be receiving a whole bunch of good stuff to share with our small business people. If you are interested in finding out more and how you can get the stuff, just contact me at the Aurora Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Ellen Mueller said the Visitor's Bureau is hosting Cory Joe, the Director of State Tourism, October 29th. He is going to be visiting the Paramount and the surrounding area. If you have any material that I can share I can post events on the state Enjoy Illinois website for the entire State of Illinois to view.

Dan Hites said the general opinion is that downtown has turned and that it is looking a lot better down here. The security is here and it is a more receptive clientele that would help really build the downtown.

Helen Nowak said we are having a little health fair Saturday at Leland Tower.

Bill Wiet said I forget to mention the Mitchell Road Bridge being open because they are shutting down Farnsworth next year. They are going to do a complete rebuild of the Farnsworth Bridge. That's why they did Church last year and Mitchell this year because they are taking Farnsworth out of commission next year.

Katie Arco said the Paramount just last week hit 29,000 subscribers to the Broadway series. We are projecting over 32,000 and we are very confident we will get there. The Christmas Story is going to be the second show. Oklahoma closes this Sunday. Jay Leno is sold out for the end of October. There is lots of good stuff.

Karina Garcia said the Hispanic Chamber just started having our Women's Luncheon the last Tuesday of every month. Everyone is welcome to come.

Birnie Harper said the building next to the new building is now gone. That area between there, part of it will be a park. There also will be a covered walkway from the new building over to where the Chapel is in the other building. It is just really nice.

Marissa Amoni said I have a new issue of the magazine out. Jimi Allen wrote the cover story.

Adjourn

Karen Kramford made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dan Hites seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 a.m.