



FALL QUARTERLY MEETING - MINUTES

September 19, 2017 @ Brann's W. Leonard @ 4PM

PRESENT: Taylor Wieck (Geek Group), Barry & Susan McKey (Shade Shop), Captain Matt Ostopowicz (GRPD West Service Area Commander), Tom Bradley (Crosswinds Church, WGNO), Doug & Vicki Nyenhuis (Able Manufacturing), Rob & Bob Schellenberg (Turnstiles), Julie Niemchick (GRPD Crime Prevention Liaison), Kent Gagnon (Choice One Bank), Dan Grinwis (OHC), Annette Vandenberg (WGNO), Dan DeVries (DeVries Jewelry), Johnny Brann Jr. (Brann's Restaurants), Cathy Zyskowski (Westside Fitness)

- Call to order/Welcome/Introductions – Johnny Brann Jr
 - Brief presentation by Taylor from The Geek Group NSI
 - Focus on employment and work force development
 - Located right in our neighborhood (former West YMCA bldg)
 - Encourage local businesses to hook up and partner with them
 - Focus on teens and young adults; diverting their energies into doing something enjoyable and constructive
 - Trying to cultivate problem solvers
- Previous meeting's minutes (2017.06.20): Approved
- Treasurer's Report – Dan Grinwis
 - Financial
 - Changeover in financial oversight for WLBA; Dan filling in temporarily
 - Getting final arrangement for all that made at Mercantile Bank
 - Summary of financial reports distributed
 - Began the quarter with approximately a \$2500 balance
 - Wrote a number of checks for necessary obligations and to support a few neighborhood/district events; examples:
 - Gilda's West Side Walk
 - Mitten Foundation Golf Outing with proceeds going to underwrite food trucks for the West Side for a year
 - WGNO block party
 - Received several annual membership contributions
 - Ended the quarter with approximately at \$2500 balance
 - Membership

- Report distributed by Dan
- 15 paid or pending memberships for 2017/18?
- Last year's membership amount was very low; this year is even worse
 - People don't seem to want to join because they don't see a return on their investment; but most do not know what is accomplished by a few on behalf of the many behind the scenes and without fanfare
 - Suggestion made to contract with and compensate WGNO to knock on business doors and solicit memberships – Dan will follow up
- Up to date on required reporting
 - Submitted 2016 and 2017 reports to Ste of Mi LARA
 - Secured new EIN from IRS
- Treasurer's reports accepted and approved
- Public Safety Update
 - GRPD – Captain Matt
 - A few robberies; GRPD has at least one suspect on their radar
 - Stolen guns; several recovered already; 13/14/15 year old kids
 - BB Gun vandalism in West Side and elsewhere; 40 vehicles; GRPD has leads
 - New recruits entering the flow
 - One of Captain Matt's biggest emphases is to 'get cops out of cars'
 - Search for replacement for retired Deputy Chief of GRPD Operations Dan Savage
 - Captain Matt thanks everyone who submitted letters of support for his bid for this position
 - He will remain as West Service Area Commander
 - Captain Eric Payne will assume the Deputy Chief position
 - Caution to sift media reporting carefully; often they foolishly associate neighboring businesses with negative incidents thereby leaving them 'smeared by association' when they actually are not connected at all
 - GRPD – Julie Niemchick
 - Julie introduced herself as the recently hired GRPD Crime Prevention liaison to neighborhood organizations and business associations and other groups
 - Part of Julie's background is with the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Org.
 - GRFD: n/a
- Neighborhood Business Alliance (NBA) Update – Dan Grinwis
 - Attended quarterly meeting July 19
 - District Reports from around the City
 - Financial: Good shape
 - GRCity
 - New website
 - Crosswalk initiative
 - New city meeting portal
 - neighborhood summit for the Spring
 - Putting together a quarterly joint meeting for all CIDs

- Suzanne Schultz – City Planner – Presentation about their work
- Grandwich: Biggest and best ever
- 2017 NBA Awards
 - Wealthy Theater
 - November 2;
 - Taste of GR, free beer, etc. 500p till 630p
 - 28th Annual Business Awards: 630p till 800
 - WLBA made nominations in several categories
- West Grand Neighborhood Organization (WGNO) Update – Annette Vandenberg
 - Held successful ‘dumpster day’ on Sept 9
 - Busy with Art Prize Preview week
 - Successful Block Party held on Sept 16 raising needed funds for WGNO
 - Gearing up for ArtPrize; multiple exhibits; offices will be open; need staffing
 - September 23: free VIN etching
 - Every Friday: resident led two-way street event to teach English and learn Spanish
- WestSide Corridor Improvement Authority (CID) Update – Johnny
 - The three WestSide business districts working together (W. Leonard, W. Fulton, Stockbridge)
 - Good funding this year from ‘tax increment financing’
 - Able, for example, to allocate \$5,000 to each of the three districts to support their respective initiatives
 - W. Leonard money went to support the mural project
 - Marketing Committee, Design Committee and others open to interested parties
 - Bi-annual citywide CID meeting coming in October; Mike Lomonaco from OST will represent the WestSide CID
 - City created a new position to provide administrative support by one person to all the City’s five (so far) CIDs/BIDs; this has been a huge help to our CID
- President’s Report – Johnny
 - If you are looking for other opportunities to make a ‘business’ difference in your community, please consider joining the GR Chamber of Commerce
 - The lobbying, support and advocacy services they provide are huge
- Old Business
 - Website Upgrade
 - Desperately needed
 - Dan will follow up; will likely take advantage of WGNO’s offer to help
 - WestSide Mural – Annette
 - Amazing project successfully completed
 - Art Prize entry
 - All bills are paid
 - Fund needs additional \$3,000 to fund the long-term maintenance package
 - Thank you to all who contributed in whatever way you did
- New Business
 - Treasurer Position at WLBA is vacant and needs to be filled

- WGNO may be willing to pick up some duties for us
- WLBA to Neighborhood Business Alliance liaison position needs to be filled; fairly minimal requirements
 - Quarterly meetings downtown at 7:30 AM with coffee and pastries
 - One would be expected to make a brief report on highlights of WLBA activity
 - One would be expected to submit a report back to the WLBA of significant items from the NBA meeting
- Turnstiles: new bar proposed for 520 W. Leonard (former Lord's Bounty)
 - Bob and Rob Schellenberg presenting
 - Proposed new neighborhood bar
 - Seats 97; Hours from 4p till 2a
 - Live music on Th, Fr, Sa till 1:30; Security during the live music events
 - Geek Group cameras for enhanced security
 - Opening TBD but soon
 - No food initially
 - Just gourmet munchies at first
 - Though they would allow food brought in from other establishments
 - Kitchen in the rear would be a later phase
 - Local draft beers
 - License applications in progress: liquor, zoning, etc.
 - 'not a lot' of renovation; just what's necessary
 - Possibly an overhead door out to Leonard street
 - Noise abatement will be part of the renovation, especially at the overhead door
 - Possible sidewalk seating
 - Parking plan in process
 - Captain Matt doesn't see an issue with a bar open till 2 on W. Leonard
 - Have addressed WGNO with response pending; plan to present to the CID on October 6 and ask them to recommend one of those \$20K redevelopment licenses
 - Claim there are no quota or escrowed licenses available
 - Not real clear about neighborhood approval
 - Alley management plan, though a bit vague
 - Option to lease from Chris Nicholson
 - Rob with 13 years in the business to manage
 - Bob as investor and financial overseer (CPA and lawyer); 15 years operating as a CPA firm in the Stockbridge district
- WODA Group: Redevelopment of old Hope Network site on Stocking
 - Craig Patterson and Heather DeKorte presenting
 - 745 Stocking Project
 - 50 units

- 4 story
 - General occupancy
 - Parking on-site
 - Architecture designed to fit the neighborhood
 - Across from Stocking Elementary
 - 3 live/work units on the ground floor front
 - Rates in line with median income in area; ranges to fit income
- Redevelopment of former Hope Rehab site
- WODA is a 27 year old business with 200 properties; own them and manage them internally
- Julie recommends a CPTED analysis (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design); suggestion well-received by WODA
- November 9 at 1:30p meeting with the Zoning Board
- Neighborhood/Business Watch
 - Issues with ODs, Graffiti, Loitering, Vandalism, Prostitution
 - Private Facebook group available for businesses for communication
 - Response by businesses; communication with GRPD
 - GVSU students can't do ride-alongs but can do survey/poll work
 - Need volunteers
- Other Business
 - Discussion of WODA project
 - WGNO supports the project
 - WLBA consensus is to write a letter of support; Dan will follow up
 - Discussion of Turnstiles project
 - Honesty and Transparency seem to be lacking
 - Need a letter stating no consideration of support without:
 - Zoning approval
 - Support from within 350 feet
 - Alley plan; fire egress, etc.
 - Liquor license issue clarification
 - Letters from parking and neighbors written & signed
 - Clarification of Chris Nicholson's involvement
 - Noise abatement plan clarification
 - Security plan clarification
 - WGNO nervous as are others
 - Dan to write a draft and get feedback from Board and edit accordingly before sending
- Next Meeting: Tentatively December 19 at 4PM at Brann's/Leonard
- Action Items Summary
 - JB and DG: Complete account management changeover at Mercantile Bank
 - DG and AV: Discuss with WGNO a plan to canvas the business corridor regarding membership and involvement

- All: Neighborhood Business Awards and reception November 2
- All: WGNO needs volunteers to staff their facility during Art Prize; contact Annette
- All: Consider Chamber of Commerce membership
- Dan: website
- All: consider funding the mural project
- All: consider if you could fill WLBA's Treasurer position
- All: consider if you could fill the liaison position to the NBA
- Dan: support letter for WODA
- Dan: letter to Turnstiles
- Adjournment

Other outstanding items from earlier discussions:

- Replace 'welcome to the West Side' sign on W. Leonard east of the overpass
- Board should consider another membership solicitation of some sort
- Create a budget and a goals statement
- Get GRFD involved
- Board should investigate embedding a link in our emails and on our website to access membership application and electronically collect dues payments
- WestSide Trolley
- WLBA Committees
- Christmas lighting
- Trash receptacles
- Relationship with CID/BID
- Newsletters
- FB/website/gmail maintenance