



## **FALL QUARTERLY MEETING – MINUTES**

### **September 18, 2018 @ Brann's W. Leonard @ 4PM**

**PRESENT:** Johnny Brann Jr. (Brann's Restaurants; WLBA Board); Annette Vandenberg (West Grand Neighborhood Organization); Cathy Zyskowski (West Side Fitness); Dan Braker (Oasis of Hope Center); Courtney Sorrell (Rockford Construction); Kent Gagnon (Choice One Bank; Bob Gilewski (Chemical Bank); Officer Tony Leonard (GRPD); Dan Hickey (Fence Consultants); Bill Bussey (XVentures); Linda Arnold-Lillibridge (Steepletown Neighborhood Services); Dan Grinwis (Oasis of Hope Center; WLBA Board)

#### **PROCEEDINGS:**

- Welcome and Introductions – JohnnyB
- Treasurer's Report - DanG
  - Financial
    - See handout (below) of summary Treasurer's Report
    - Highlight Contributions/Expenses
      - Gilda's Club GR West Side Walk - \$100
      - NBA annual dues - \$250
      - National Night Out - \$100
      - FillaBackPack Project for Harrison Park - \$100
      - WGNO annual dues - \$100
      - Membership Event - \$250
    - Website Renewal coming up in November; tried this format for a year and are well satisfied; will renew for \$250
  - Membership
    - See handout (below) of list of supporting members for this fiscal year
    - Sending emails about membership doesn't seem to garner a lot of response; but Invoicing does, so we'll continue that practice next year
    - Great response this year; thank you!
    - Several new members and returning members and even some returning lapsed members
- Secretary's Report - DanG
  - Letters to Planning/Zoning/Etc.:
    - Support for the Comedy Project at 540 Leonard NW

- Support for Mitten Brewing's expansion across Leonard street
  - Support for the Pine Street Apartment project
  - Support for the Broadway Venue project
  - Withdrawing any objections to the Turnstiles Project
  - Support of Johnny Brann Sr's flag and signage display
- Supported Bridge Street Market's acclimation to the West Side and their opening events
- We provided planning staff support Welcome West which is an annual GVSU initiative to improve relationships between permanent residents and temporary student residents in the West Side
- We provided planning support staff to the Westside Project which is Stockbridge's streetfair/artwalk project that coincides with Art Prize
- WLBA's Summer Mixer was a well-attended very successful event
- Recent surveys from WLBA membership state:
  - Good communication
  - Quarterly meetings are good enough at this time barring extenuating circumstances
  - Different Day
  - Lose the emxs re membership and send invoices
  - More events perhaps with speakers
  - Rotate meetings among businesses
- Public Safety Update
  - GRPD – Officer Leonard
    - Panhandling
      - Panhandlers are getting quite aggressive
      - ArtPrize is the 'superbowl' of events for panhandlers; they are bussing in from all over the country for this
      - See the emx distributed by Dan a few weeks ago with some tips from GRPD
      - Don't be afraid to take a hard-line approach with these folks to the extent you are comfortable
      - NEVER give them money; coupons, etc. are fine, but no money
        - It will invariably be used for drugs or alcohol
        - Give them the 311 number if they need to call and find assistance
        - There are ample resources in GR for food, shelter, clothing, hygiene, whatever they need
        - Keep in mind that most are out there by choice, and that they intentionally choose to neglect using available resources
        - You will be safe in assuming that their appeal about why they need money from you is totally fabricated

- Tony is available; do not be hesitant to call him or text him
    - 616.456.3400 for the non-emergency number
    - 616.826.5321 for Tony's cell phone
  - Recent bank robbery – GRPD has identified the suspect; just need to apprehend him
  - Prostitution
    - GRPD is getting aggressive again on Leonard St.
    - Have made numerous arrests lately of business girls
      - These are accompanied by bonding the girls: they cannot come within x number of feet of Leonard or Alpine or they'll be arrested for trespassing – they don't have to be soliciting
    - Again, do not hesitate to contact the non-emergency number or Tony directly if see activity
  - Medical Marijuana
    - It's inevitably coming and will change things on W. Leonard
  - GRFD – n/a
    - Required (for some) fire inspections coming due soon; on-line options
    - Dan sent an emx out about that issue
- Neighborhood Business Alliance (NBA) Update – DanG
  - NBA is a consortium of the 20 business districts in GR, of which WLBA is the largest
  - Support business and sponsor events to promote business; notably:
    - The Granwich competition each year
    - And the NBA Business Awards
      - 29<sup>th</sup> annual is coming on Thursday evening November 1 at Wealthy Theatre
      - The 'taste of the neighborhoods' complementary buffet is always great
      - Program with awards to businesses who have made outstanding achievements – several nominated from the West Side
    - WLBA sends a representative to NBA's quarterly meetings
    - We pay them annual dues as they are our 'mother' organization
- West Grand Neighborhood Organization – AnnetteVDB
  - Very busy as usual; big focus has been building sustainability for WGNO
    - Various things have helped this effort
      - Increased membership
      - Better tracking software
      - Getting this organization turned around positively
  - Very supportive of the business community and WLBA in particular
  - Medical Marijuana

- It will come and so we are trying to position WGNO and the neighborhood to get the greatest benefit from it
- Projects we've been working on
  - Block party
    - October 13 down by the Mitten
  - Considering opening a coffee shop in partnership with Steepletown
  - Looking at ways to make Richmond Park more ADA compliant
  - Transit shelters for neighborhood folks waiting for the bus in the rain and snow
- Always looking for additional community partners to support WGNO generally and to underwrite specific initiatives
- Supporting affordable housing projects in the area has been a large focus
  - Harrison Park apartments
  - ICCF initiatives
  - St. James project
- 21 artists in WGNO offices for Art Prize
- Supporting the West Side Street Fair with volunteer staff
- Received \$5,000 donation from Bridge Street Market along with 4 other West Side non-profits
- Heavily involved in the 'Housing Now' conversations
- WestSide Corridor Improvement Authority (CID) Update – JohnnyB
  - CID continues to explore the idea of adding the next layer: Business Improvement District (BID)
  - We are being funded by tax increment financing much quicker and to much greater extent than projected and so we will soon be in a position to do some substantial projects that will have great impact on the districts
  - Funding various community initiatives
    - For example: able to give \$500 to the Welcome West project for GVSU
  - Meet the first Friday of each month (generally) at WGNO's offices at 9am
    - Public meeting; all are welcome
  - Non-members of the Board are still welcome to participate by being members of committees: Design, Marketing, etc.
  - CIDs purpose is basically to stimulate, promote, support business development in West Leonard district, West Fulton district, and Stockbridge district, as well as to promote and support initiatives that will benefit the district as a whole
  - History
    - West Leonard and Stockbridge generated the West Side Area Specific Plan (ASP) which is a vision for development of the area; this ASP was merged with the 'GVSU to the Zoo' ASP of the West Fulton district and the total package was ultimately adopted by the City and incorporated into its Master Plan
    - It is the West Side CIDs mandate to be the authority that manages development and implementation of this plan

- Definitely interested in more ‘family friendly’ initiatives like the pocket park that went in next to Steepletown
  - We can be very proud that the City looks to WestSide for inspiration on how to achieve development, growth and vibrant business and residential advocacy organizations
- WLBA President’s Report – JohnnyB
  - Sort of rolled into the previous discussion
- Old Business
  - Treasurer Position at WLBA is vacant and needs to be filled
    - Johnny is in conversation with Mercantile Bank for assistance in this area
  - Need a representative from WLBA to the Neighborhood Business Alliance
    - Annette of WGNO will cover this need for the time being; thanks, Annette!
- New Business
  - Budget and goals
    - See handout (below)
    - Not presented as something that needs approval as a formal document but just as a set of working priorities that your Board will be trying to follow through the coming year
    - Discuss goals
      - Support of neighborhood initiatives
      - Special projects
        - Open to suggestions in this area
        - Mention made that Stockbridge is doing a banner project
          - 25 banners on existing poles along the street
          - Though is not being financed by dues; rather each business wanting a banner with their logo on it is paying on their own
        - Need new gateway signage
          - Could be a WLBA project, or perhaps get the CID involved
- Other Business
  - Presentation from XVentures – Bill Bussey
    - Working with two different entities who wish to open medical marijuana dispensaries on W. Leonard
    - Locations are still tbd; targeting to put on the east end of W. Leonard toward Turner and another on the west end near Alpine
    - Propose to develop a grant program
      - They provisioning centers would kick a percentage into a grant fund
      - Propose that funds would be administered by WGNO and WLBA
      - For various neighborhood projects that we would identify

- Could leverage this even further by using a ‘matching funds’ protocol
  - Could make micro-loans
- These provisioning centers
  - Would be regulated
  - Would require Rx from medical providers
- The City has put a moratorium on this issue until April
- Our response was that this all sounds wonderful, but a normal process will need to be followed to garner any support from WLBA – not meeting with an agent, but with the actual business owners – and our support will not be based on how much money they can provide to the district but how good they will be overall as business neighbors
- Stockbridge Street Fair and Art Walk – September 22
  - Art Walk is a coordinated tour of the ArtPrize entries in the Stockbridge district lasting the entire ArtPrize
  - StreetFair will be near Bridge and Broadway from 12 till 8 on Saturday the 22<sup>nd</sup>
  - West Leonard district will also be represented at the Fair
- Choice One Bank grand opening event
  - New branch at 330 Market
  - Tuesday, October 9 from 5p till 8p
  - “Enjoy sweet sips and delicious hors d’oeuvres throughout the evening”
  - Ribbon cutting at 5:30p
  - You are all invited
    - Rsvp at 616.887.3280 or [rsvp@choiceone.com](mailto:rsvp@choiceone.com)
- West Side Fitness – Cathy Zyskowski
  - “Rep” the Ribbon event
  - Saturday, October 27, 2018; 10a till 3p
  - In the large parking lot in front of West Side Fitness at 1618 Leonard NW (Walker & Leonard)
  - Sponsored by SHEFIT (sports wear)
  - Family Fun entertainment; fitness competitions; food; activities for kids
  - Proceeds go toward breast cancer research
  - All welcome
  - Businesses are invited to do a co-sponsorship and staff a table and be represented at this community event; great opportunity for new businesses
  - Questions: 616.791.4990
- Mark Washington: GRCity’s new City Manager
  - The community is invited to the swearing-in ceremony which is set for 6 p till 7p Tuesday, Oct. 9 in the ninth-floor Commission Chambers at City Hall, 300 Monroe Ave. NW

- The event will include remarks by Washington, a brief opportunity for community members to talk with him one on one and light refreshments. Validated parking is available in the Government Center Ramp off Monroe and Ottawa avenues. Contact the City Clerk's Office at 616.456.3010 (TDD: 616.456.3980) to request special services due to a disability.
  - The City Commission appointed Washington as city manager in late July. He will begin in the role Oct. 1.
- October 1<sup>st</sup> at 5pm there will be a reception for him sponsored by the GR Chamber of Commerce
  - Important for Mark to be introduced to business leaders and to know what an important segment of GR is the business community
- Next Meeting: Tentatively December 18 at 4PM at Brann's/Leonard
- Action Items Summary
  - Johnny to pursue treasurer assistance from Mercantile Bank
  - Annette to act as WLBA's rep. to NBA
  - All: note the various events and initiatives mentioned above and support your business neighbors by attending
- Adjournment

Some older wish list outstanding items to keep on our radar:

- Julie will investigate assistance opportunities for non-profits to get cameras installed
- Christmas lighting along the business corridor
- Trash receptacles along the business corridor
- WLBA's relationship with CID/BID
- WLBA Newsletters
- WestSide Trolley service
- WLBA Committee
- Replace 'welcome to the West Side' sign on W. Leonard east of the overpass
- More consistent maintenance of the WLBA website and FB page

## ATTACHMENTS:

West Leonard Business Association  
Treasurer's Report - 2018.09.18

### Small Business Checking Account – Mercantile Bank

Balance on Hand - 2018.06.01	\$3,402.52
------------------------------	------------

### Credits/Income

Memberships	\$2,756.65
Contributions	\$150.00

Subtotal Credits/Income	\$2,906.65
-------------------------	------------

Debits/Expenses

Expenses	- \$1,036.78
Subtotal Debits/Expenses	<u>- \$1,036.78</u>

Balance on Hand in Mercantile Small Business Checking 2018.09.08	<u>\$5,272.39</u>
--	-------------------

List of supporting members for the year 2018/2019 as of September 19, 2018

Able Manufacturing	Allied Productions	Arnie's Bakery
B&E Sealcoat	Belden Brick	Bible for Mission Thrift Store
Bridge Street Market	Bradco Service, Inc. (Lentz Muffler W. Leonard)	
Brann's Steakhouse & Grille (West Leonard)		Chemical Bank
Choice One Bank	Credit Union One	DeVries Jewelers
Dr. James Smith	Fence Consultants	Fettig
Hoogerhyde Safe & Lock	Jack's Service Center	John Ball Zoo
Kent Quality Foods, Inc.	Long Road Distillery (LRD)	Mieras Family Shoes
Mitten Brewing	Mr. Car Wash (W. Leonard)	
North Lakeshore Partners LLC (McDonalds/W. Leonard)		Oasis of Hope Center (OHC)
Rainbow Music	Ralph's Grocery	Rockford Construction
Shade Shop	Steepletown Neighborhood Services	
Turnstiles	Two Scotts Bbq.	Williams Distributing
West Grand Neighborhood Organization (WGNO)	And a few others who are 'pending'	

WLBA target budget for Fiscal Year 2018.07.01-2019.06.30

- Carry-over from previous year as of 06.30.18     \$3,095.94
- Projected Revenue
  - From Annual Dues             \$3,000
  - From Donations             \$150
  - From Other             \$0
  - Subtotal Revenue             \$3,150
- Projected Available Cash             \$6,150
- Projected Expenditures
  - Membership Events             \$400
  - Supplies/Postage             \$75
  - Dues & Subscriptions             \$350
  - Website             \$250
  - Ste of MI filings (LARA)             \$20
  - Contributions             \$1,000



- Special Projects (TBD) \$2,500
- Subtotal Expenditures \$4,595
- 5% Contingency/Other \$230
- Subtotal Expenditures \$4,825

○ Projected Expenses (\$4,825)

○ Net Income \$1,325

WLBA goals for Fiscal Year 2018.07.01-2019.06.30

- Increase membership and revenue
- Increase contributions
- Identify worthy and appropriate projects
- Increase involvement and activity