



SPRING QUARTERLY MEETING – MINUTES

March 19, 2019 @ Brann's W. Leonard @ 4PM

PRESENT: Johnny Brann Jr. (Brann's Restaurants), Dan DeVries (DeVries Jewelers), Dan Grinwis (Oasis of Hope Center), Officer Tony Leonard (GRPD), Julie Niemchick (GRPD), Annette Vandenberg (WGNO), Brian Chovinard (Nature's Releaf), Tony Goff (Nature's Releaf), Kent Gagnon (Choice One Bank), John Wynbeek (Genesis Non-Profit Housing), Doug & Vikki Nyenhuis (Able Mfg.), Tyler & Jeff Joyce (Mieras Family Shoes), Rob Miller (Born Clinic), Deandre Jones (Rose's Astroid Co.), Cathy Zyskowski (Westside Fitness), Caylie Peet (Rockford Construction), Greg Maki (Agri-Med), Aaron Smith (Agri-Med), Mike Beck, Michigan Pure Med.), Gretchen Mousel (Land Conservancy of W.MI), Ben Oliver (Grand Rapids Community Fndn.), Rick Dawst (Green Skies), John McLeod (Oak Flint), Renzo Mejin (Buchanan Development), Bob & Rob Schellenberg (Turnstiles), Eric Foster (Neighborhood Provisions), Max Trierweiler (Mitten Brewing)

AGENDA

- Call to order and Welcome – JohnnyB
 - 30 Brief 'round the room' introductions
- Treasurer's and Secretary's Reports - DanG
 - Financial – see handout attached
 - Membership – see handout attached
 - Dan noted that both reports are self-explanatory, and in the interest of a full agenda, we don't need to spend time on them this month
 - Both reports were approved by the membership
- Public Safety Update
 - GRPD (Officer Leonard)
 - Kurt Hintz retiring as the community officer of the JBAN area, so until that position is backfilled, Tony will be doing double duty covering both the JBAN area and the WGNO area
 - Attrition at GRPD is resulting in the loss of officers more quickly than new ones are coming in; you are encouraged to write your City Commissioners to prompt them to rectify this shortage of officers ASAP
- Neighborhood Business Alliance (NBA) Update – AnnetteV
 - Nothing to report from the last quarterly meeting
 - Will target to attend again in April
 - Dan has been in contact also and updated contact information
- Project One/Art Prize – AnnetteV
 - Art Prize now alternates each year with Project One
 - This year's Project One will feature events occurring in chosen locations around the city
 - Because of last year's Street Fair and Art Crawl in the West Side, they are using the West Side as a model for future Project One events; and the West Side will be among the first this year

- Looking to have an Art Crawl on W. Leonard this year, integrated with a passport system that will bring visitors into Leonard Street businesses; so far the Mitten is on-board, WGNO, the Muse
- There will be a large fund-raising dinner again, this year at Knickerbocker
- And a block party somewhere on W. Leonard
- The Committee is working with various local artists
- Both Dan and Annette are on that planning committee
- West Grand Neighborhood Organization – AnnetteV
 - Support to aspiring medical marijuana provisioners has kept WGNO very busy
 - 23 applications were submitted to the City in the West Grand neighborhood alone
 - Businesses with cameras are encouraged to register them with GRPD - not to ‘big brother’ the community, but so that if there are crimes or incidents, GRPD will know where to go to hopefully capture footage that will help solve the crimes and apprehend perpetrators; entirely voluntary
- WestSide Corridor Improvement Authority (CID) Update – JohnnyB
 - Most new CID authorities take years to accumulate enough revenue to begin doing projects of any kind; the West Side CID has accumulated over \$200,000 in 3 years
 - So we have several prospective projects being considered:
 - Façade improvement grants
 - Uniform gateway signage into the West Side districts
 - Banners branding the West Side
 - Trash receptacles
 - Involvement at the committee level is open to citizens: design, marketing, etc.
 - The Authority Board’s meetings are open, public meetings, generally held on the first Friday of each month, at 9AM, at the WGNO offices at 415 Leonard NW
 - Johnny provided a brief history of the West Side Corridor Improvement District (a collaboration of 3 business districts: West Leonard, West Fulton and Stockbridge), some of which can found at the CID’s website at <http://westsidegr.org/>
- WLBA President’s Report – JohnnyB
 - The West Leonard Business District is a model for the City of Grand Rapids
 - We can be very proud of who we are and what we do – even with no staff, no facility, no offices, etc.
 - We get amazing engagement from the businesses throughout the district
- Old Business
 - Treasurer Position at WLBA is vacant and needs to be filled – Johnny will follow up with Mercantile Bank
- New Business
 - Highlands Project – Gretchen – Land Conservancy of West Michigan (offices at Ann & Turner; member of WGNO) https://naturenearby.org/portfolio_page/explore/the-highlands
 - Former 121 acre Highlands GC purchased by Blanford Nature Center and the Land Conservancy of West Michigan and being converted to a nature preserve with trails, activities, protected wetlands, etc.
 - Phase One is the \$3,000,000 property purchase; nearly complete
 - Phase Two will cover further development of ADA trails, wetland restoration, bringing buried water courses back onto the surface (daylighting), etc.
 - Many creative ways to donate:
 - Sponsor a Square Foot
 - Business Challenge for \$50,000 toward the remaining \$198,000 for Phase One
 - Rockford Construction has committed \$5,000
 - Many benefits for businesses

- Design a 'challenge your employees' program
 - Especially as the weather improves, you are encouraged to get out there with your family and take a walk; you will be blown away
 - On the bus line
- Challenge Scholars - Ben Oliver – Dream Fund – <https://www.challengescholars.org/dream-fund>
 - The Challenge Scholars program, managed by Grand Rapids Community Foundation is an initiative that will provide up to four years of tuition free education at Michigan public colleges and universities and vocational training programs to our West Side youth who meet all the parameters – available to all
 - As a local resident, working in the neighborhood schools, Ben himself is fully –invested in the potential of this initiative
 - The program is well-worth investment by anyone who cares about our local youth, their future and their scholarship
 - The newest initiative under this umbrella is the DreamFund
 - This is a grant making program
 - Designed to invest in grassroots/community ideas for programs that will enrich our at-risk youth through creative after-school and other programs
 - Award decisions are made by the Dreamfund Committee which is comprised of grassroots people from the community
 - Grants can be made to members of the community for up to \$10,000
 - You can invest or match
- Brief presentations from a few of the medical marijuana provisioners aspiring to locate in the West Leonard Business District
 - Michigan PureMed (MPM) – Michael Beck
 - Medical marijuana grower and provisioner
 - Pre-qualified for 45 licenses
 - 31 will be in the Marshall area – 9 retail shops along with growing locations
 - Plan to operate in several cities
 - Principals have lots of credentials for this sort of business
 - Want to locate at 282 Leonard NW (former Recovery Academy/Jani-King)
 - Every intention of being a good neighbor in our business community with a solid understanding of business practices and the importance of collaboration
 - Agri-Med – Aaron Smith & Greg Maki
 - Headquartered in Muskegon
 - One of the early applicants in GR
 - Local orientation
 - Already licensed
 - Members of WGNO already
 - Have spent a great deal of time talking with neighbors and the community
 - Also reaching out to the various service providers in our district
 - Planning to locate at 1133 Leonard NW (TJ's Appliance)
 - Neighborhood Provisioning – Eric Foster
 - Have been reaching out in the neighborhood since September to churches, Oasis of Hope Center, WGNO, and others, trying to understand the community and the City
 - Strong on security
 - SE Michigan based
 - Hope to hire at least 50% directly from the community
 - Business stems from personal history of needing the product

- Family based through Kevin Currier
 - Planning to be in multiple cities
 - Planning to locate at 501/03 Leonard NW (Former Russ' Car Center)
- Nature's Releaf – Tony Goff
 - Geared to provide sensible medicine
 - Looking to locate in multiple places: 666/670 Leonard St., Ann St.
- Q & A regarding the above presentations (each of four presenting businesses had opportunity to respond, though their responses were more or less the same)
 - Concern expressed about security in light of the valuable product and, in particular, the large amounts of cash on-site, lacking banking services
 - Some banks are beginning to open up; in particular, some credit unions are willing to serve this business, LMCU for example
 - All have very tight and elaborate security plans, vetted by GRPD
 - Using reputable local security companies
 - Hiring local staff will help to keep down pilfering
 - Making a substantial investment in security
 - Concerns expressed about odor abatement
 - Not really an issue at a provisioning center; more of a concern at grow centers, but even there it is manageable
 - Ventilation, odor mitigation
 - Concerns about what will happen when legal recreational marijuana becomes a reality here
 - Medical only at this time
 - It will be at least 3 years before the recreational side goes active
 - There are opting out options for communities for both medical and recreational
 - Who can purchase at these facilities
 - Medical card is required
 - ID is required
 - Must be 18 or older
 - Licensing is 'location specific'
 - Will this business go on-line eventually?
 - All players stated that they have no plans in that direction but intend to stay in these physical locations for the long-term
 - What about home delivery – some patients will need that
 - The legal details of this are still being hammered out and it will be strongly regulated; there will be no fleet of delivery vehicles on the road; more likely there will be one person only from a business allowed to deliver
 - All stated that they are considering it and looking into it
- Other Business
 - Dan put discount cards for Office Max on the table – provided by our Chamber of Commerce
 - Renzo Mejin from Buchanan Development introduced their provisioning business briefly
 - John McLeod of Oak Flint briefly introduced his provisioning business briefly
 - Annette note that concerns had come to her from businesses on Front and Scribner related to medical marijuana facilities
 - Security, traffic, odor, etc.
 - Will our business corridors become 'green miles'?
 - Reminder that this will not happen because of spacing and location requirements in place at the City level: 2000 feet between facilities

- That's well over 1/3 mile between them; that's approximately 300 address numbers; for perspective, there are 400 address numbers between Brann's and Alpine Avenue
- Some of these businesses are interested in 'business association' support – Johnny will follow up
- Next Meeting: Tentatively June 18 at 4PM at Brann's/Leonard
- Action Items Summary
 - Johnny will follow up with Mercantile Bank about the Treasurer Position
 - All: forward any comments or perceptions about the provisioner presenters to Dan
 - Johnny will follow up with Annette regarding businesses along Front and Scribner looking for representation
- Adjournment

TREASURER'S REPORT

Small Business Checking Account – Mercantile Bank

Balance on Hand 2018.09.08	\$5,272.39
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Credits/Income

Membership – Lentz - \$100	\$100.00
Membership – Kent Quality Meats - \$100	\$100.00
Membership – Bibles for Missions - \$50	\$50.00
Membership – Allied Productions - \$100	\$94.80
Donation – WLBA Member - \$100	\$100.00
Membership – Jedco - \$100	\$100.00
Membership – German Auto Service	\$94.80
Membership – Agri-Med	\$100.00
Membership – Fox Transport Services	\$100.00
Membership – District Club	\$100.00
Membership - Northern Provisions	\$100.00
Membership – Buchanan Development	\$100.00
Membership – The Grassy Knoll	\$100.00

Subtotal Credits/Income	\$1,239.60
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Debits/Expenses

Error - \$1.00	\$1.00
GR Chamber of Commerce annual dues	\$500.00
GR Chamber of Commerce Membership App. Fee	\$25.00
SquareSpace Annual Domain Registration Renewal	\$20.00
SquareSpace Annual Domain Registration Renewal	\$20.00
SquareSpace Annual Website Renewal	\$216.00

Subtotal Debits/Expenses	<u>-\$782.00</u>
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Balance on Hand in Mercantile Small Business Checking 2019.03.19	<u>\$5,729.99</u>
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MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Supporting members for the year 2018/2019 as of March 19, 2019

Able Manufacturing	Agri-Med	Bradco Service, Inc.	(Lentz Muffler W. Leonard)
Allied Productions	Arnie's Bakery	B&E Sealcoat	Belden Brick
Brann's Steakhouse & Grille	(W. Leonard)	Bridge Street Market	Buchanan Development
Chemical Bank	Choice One Bank	Credit Union One	Bibles for Mission Thrift Store
DeVries Jewelers	District Club	Dr. James Smith	Fence Consultants
Fettig	Fox Transport Services	German Auto Service	Hoogerhyde Safe & Lock
Jack's Service Center	Jedco	John Ball Zoo	Kent Quality Foods
Long Road Distillery	Mieras Family Shoes	Mitten Brewing	North Lakeshore LLC (McDonalds)
Mr. Car Wash	Northern Provisions	Oasis of Hope Center	Rainbow Music
Ralph's Grocery	Rockford Construction	Shade Shop	Steepletown Neighborhood Services
The Grassy Knoll	Turnstiles	Two Scotts	Williams Distributing
	West Grand Neighborhood Organization		

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

OUTSTANDING ACTION ITEMS

- ALL: need a new treasurer for WLBA; Johnny will talk to the Bank
- Replace 'welcome to the West Side' sign on W. Leonard east of the overpass
- WestSide Trolley
- DASH Service
- WLBA Committees
- Christmas lighting along the main business corridor
- Trash receptacles along the main business corridor
- Relationship with CID/BID
- WLBA Newsletters
- More consistent maintenance of the WLBA website and FB page
- Review Meeting times and venues; speakers; food
- Public Safety providers' appreciation day
- Banners along Leonard St.