



**THE DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT, INC.
BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

March 11, 2022
Innovation Pointe Media Suite /Zoom

Board Members Present:

Larry Donald, Phillip Roberts, Lucero Tennis Kieffer, John Lamb, Stephanie Terry, Amanda Schmitt, Dwight Emmert, and Stephanie Engelbrecht

Board Members Visible on Zoom:

Kelley Coures, Randy Hobson, Anna Jordan, Jared Smith, and Stacey McNeill

Board Members Absent:

Johnathan Pope, Tresa Miller, Kendra Vanzo, and Heather Vaught

Counsel Present:

Mike Schopmeyer and JR Trockman, KDDK

Staff Present:

Joshua Armstrong, Adam Trinkel, and Alli Turpin

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman, Phillip Roberts, called the board meeting of the Downtown Evansville Economic Improvement District to order at 7:31 a.m.

Quorum was present.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Approval of Minutes (action)

Secretary, Lucero Tennis Kieffer, mentioned that the minutes from the January EID Board Meeting were sent out via email prior to today's meeting. Phillip Roberts sole moved to approve the minutes, Stephanie

Engelbrecht seconded, none opposed; motion was carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Approval of financial reports January/February (action)

Treasurer, Stephanie Terry, reminded the Board that the January/February financial statements were sent out prior to today's meeting. Stephanie gave an overview of the reports.

The Sponsorship line is reflective of what has been billed so far this year. There are other committed sponsorships that will be billed in the future. Stephanie noted that the sponsorship dollars are strong with \$73,000 secured of the budgeted goal of \$77,000.

Stephanie explained that the Board will see the Marketing & Branding line go up in March due to additional purchases for the Ohio Valley Conference tournament banners.

Event expenses are at \$14,000 this is mostly due to the deposit for the Fireworks on the Ohio event.

Stephanie clarified that the Professional Development line shows an increase due to credit card payments for training for the EID team.

The bottom line is a bit skewed, but Stephanie reminded the Board that the EID receives two large payments in December and June. This is also the first year without a PPP loan. Stephanie announced that the EID will most likely have to access the line of credit this spring. Josh Armstrong mentioned that this is normal.

Stephanie Terry asked for a motion to approve the financial reports for January/February. Phillip Roberts sole moved, Stephanie Engelbrecht seconded, none opposed; the financials were approved.

Phillip Roberts took a moment to recognize the EID team for the total amount of secured sponsorships this early in the year.

EVENTS & MARKETING REPORT

Marketing and Events Director, Adam Trinkel, gave the Events and Marketing Report.

Upcoming Events (report)

Adam announced that the EID team is gearing up for the start of events in 2022. The first event to be held is the Spring Wine Walk on Friday, April 22 at 5:30 PM. The Spring Wine Walk has not been hosted since 2019. Romain Cross Pointe Auto Park returns as the Presenting Sponsor for this event. Ticket sales are live, and the goal is to sell 1,200 tickets, which would make it the largest Wine Walk to date. Adam noted that this event will help introduce two new retail establishments to the community: Merrymint Celebration Boutique & Event Space at 318 Walnut Street and Emerald Design at 425 Main Street (behind Sixth + Zero).

Josh Armstrong reminded the Board that this is a retail-focused event. The idea is to get people into the Downtown shops as well as dine at the Downtown restaurants. A second ticket tier option has been introduced for this event. The premium ticket will allow the attendee to pre-pay for additional drink tickets.

The EID began the partnership with Oliver Winery in the fall and they will return to provide wine for the Spring Wine Walk. Adam Trinkel explained that the partnership with Oliver allows for the wine to be drunk on the street and in the shops (that do not already own a liquor license for their store) without having to fence in a perimeter.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Discussion on 2022 Projects

President, Josh Armstrong, provided an update on a few 2022 beautification projects that were discussed at the last meeting.

1. Micro Dog Park

The micro dog park is moving forward. Josh met with Lang Young who runs the Evansville Water and Sewer Utility. The EWSU will acquire parcel soon. The parcel is located where 3rd Street, the old Pearl building, AR Lofts, and City Church comes together.

This parcel will be unable to be developed for many years so it gives the EID a chance to place a temporary (15 year) dog park at this location. This parcel is within 500 feet of two relatively large apartment communities and 750 feet from the new Central Lofts apartments.

Josh presented the Board a rendering of the proposed park. It is a simple, squared off park that includes two vestibule entrances so dogs cannot escape as well as a service gate for mowers. There are two landscaped signage areas.

The EID team is putting together a one-pager of the sponsorship opportunities for this project. The fence costs around \$40-45,000 due to having to be “puppy proof.” The EID, EWSU, and the Mayor are excited to move forward with the micro dog park.

Josh reminded the Board that there is another green space project that will be located where the former Holy Trinity Church stood.

2. Replanted Traffic Island

The island located on 2nd Street, where Carpenter meets 2nd, has been replanted. There was a littering problem that the old landscaping helped hide. Two bald Cyprus trees were planted and new ground covers will be tested at this location. The trees are about 12 – 15 feet.

Josh announced that later this year, 2nd Street will be repaved all the way through Downtown. This will help beautify another entry point to Downtown.

Randy Hobson asked Josh if Wilde Horticulture would be working on the Dog Park project. Josh explained that Wilde provided the rendering, but the fence will be put up for a bid. Pinnacle Contractors provided the estimate of what the fence would cost. Josh said he isn't sure if Wilde, Keep Evansville Beautiful or PMG will be working on the limited landscaping of the project just yet. Randy Hobson announced that he is looking to make some improvements to the lot across the street from 2nd Language and AR Lofts and would like to discuss it with Josh.

Value of Downtown Evansville Study Highlights

Josh Armstrong provided an updated on the Value of Downtown Evansville Study. At today's meeting the Board will discuss Inclusion, Diversity and Affordability. As a reminder, the study includes two Census tracts – 17 and 18. Most of the EID is located within Census Tract 18.

Josh shared that the EID has a diversity index of 48. The city as a whole has a diversity index of 39. Josh explained that the index of 48 means that there is a 48% chance that two people would be of different races within the area. One thing that the study pointed out is that our Black population has declined from 772 to 361 between 2014 and 2019. Josh explained that is partly due to the continuing reduction in population in Census Tract 17 as all of the demographic trends of smaller household sizes, low birthrate, and a lower life expectancy.

Other highlights:

- There has been a threefold increase of multiracial residents in Downtown since 2017.
- 1 in 5 jobs of the city are located within the two Census tracts.
- Downtown does skew a bit older than the rest of the city and there are not a lot of children that live in the two Census tracts.
- Downtown has a higher level of college graduation.
- Household income overall, Downtown's median income is \$31,000
- 31% are considered middle class households
- 19% of Downtown households have an income of over \$100,000
- Census Tract 18 (most of the EID) has the highest average income in a Census Tract for 100 miles
- Median income is dramatically less than the highest average income
- Homeless and unhoused individuals are located in Census Tract 18
- Census Tract 17 shows very low incomes. This Census Tract ends at Garvin.
- Housing and transportation index – 41%

Josh opened the floor for a discussion on what the EID can do and we can assist our nearby neighbors.

Phillip Roberts asked if there was leadership in the nearby areas that the EID could begin a listening session with so we can better understand their needs and identify where the EID can assist.

Josh met with the 3rd Ward City Councilman, Zach Heronemus. The 3rd Ward is Jacobsville, an area of longstanding disinvestment, and has had recent positive changes with jobs that have higher pay than average but the residents have a low income. Josh also met with the 4th Ward City Councilman, Alex Burton, to talk about the EID's connection with the rest of the 4th Ward.

Josh met with Community One that does a lot of work in Tepe Park, which is located on the other side of Haynie's Corner/Goosetown Area. Josh attended a Goosetown Neighborhood Association meeting which was a listening session for Alex Burton and Billy Bolin. Many of their residents are concerned about what this summer will look like from a crime point of view. Josh will continue to attend these meetings to see who the EID needs to reach out to get more information and how we can help.

Josh reminded the Board that EID dollars cannot be spent in other districts but there are other roles that the Board can serve that do not take dollars. Josh explained the goal of today's meeting is to help him identify who or what organizations he should be reaching out to. The Executive Committee has met twice to talk about these issues and will continue to meet.

Counsel, Mike Schopmeyer, added that Tepe Park is doing a great job with their spring clean-up. Boys and Girls Club is a benchmark. The Walnut Street connector project will be funded by the Regional Cities dollars so the connectivity will vastly improve over the next two years. Josh noted that one thing that came from meeting with Community One and Alex Burton is that the people that live in the 4th Ward do not consider Downtown to be a part of the 4th Ward. Specifically, people in Tepe Park are not accessing the services that are available to them because they do not feel comfortable being in Downtown. The Indiana Small Business Development Center (ISBDC) is hosting a "Launch Your Own Business" workshop event at Nazarene Baptist Church on Walnut. The EID will provide snacks and water.

Josh is also working with the Indiana Procurement Technical Assistance Center to do Diverse Business Certifications at Tepe Park. Tepe Park has a clubhouse with heat/air, laptops, and Wi-Fi so people can go in and register there. Josh believes that it is appropriate for the EID to help get these services out into that community if those residents do not feel comfortable coming to Innovation Pointe to access those services - so the EID can assist small businesses and entrepreneurs seek opportunities in the neighborhoods right near Downtown.

Amanda Schmitt asked Josh if there were any opportunities to create more connectivity with North Main and Main Street. Josh met with the Northside Business Association in 2021, which is predominately the Jacobsville area.

Kelley Coures added that the EID is a Promise Zone Community. Kelley explained that prior to the pandemic, regional small business convenings were hosted all over Jacobsville, Tepe Park, the west side, and more communities with the ISBDC once a quarter.

Counsel, Mike Schopmeyer, added that Keep Evansville Beautiful has tried reaching out to the new Housing Authority office to plant trees around the fencing of empty lots (North Main) where housing is being built to make it more inviting but have been unsuccessful. He noted that the Housing Authority is now outsourced by a contractor. Mike also added that lights on the underpasses of the Lloyd Expressway would help connect North Main Street to Downtown. Josh stated that he has spoken to Mayor Winnecke about putting lights on the underpasses. Josh has asked Hafer's engineering department to give the EID a cost estimate of this lighting project. Mayor Winnecke is very supportive of this initiative, the next step is finding the dollars to fund a LED, color-changing, lighting system.

Josh explained that pressure washing, sidewalk repair, and having the lighting installed in the underpasses from Governor to Fulton would make a huge difference in people's comfort level coming into Downtown at night.

Regarding the listening sessions mentioned earlier, Stephanie Terry recommended reaching out to pastors of Nazarene and Memorial because they both have done some development of schools and housing throughout the area and even beyond the 4th Ward. Stephanie Terry also recommended the Boys and Girls Club, Carver Community Organization, and Christian Life Center.

Josh mentioned reaching out to the principals of Culver, Glenwood, Delaware, and Lincoln schools.

Josh also has met with the Dream Center. They have a focus of cradle to career.

Echo, Southwest Behavioral, the Trails were also recommended to reach out to.

Phillip Roberts asked Josh what he thinks should be the next steps. Josh shared that the next step is hosting some kind of lunch event for people to come and talk. These events should be split up with no more than 4-5 people at a time. The EID will ask them what they are prioritizing in their workflow and how do we make sure that we understand that, that we lend support where we can, and that the EID can advocate with them on what's important in their community. Josh mentioned that he wants to investigate other funding sources to assist with litter removal in some of these key corridors.

Josh will communicate and keep the Board informed on the next steps of this process. He will reach out to Board members to make sure that all of the talking points regarding the EID are covered.

BOARD COMMENTS

None

RATE PAYER COMMENTS

None

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the EID Board is scheduled for Friday, May 13 2022 at 7:30 a.m. at 318 Main Street or via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 a.m.

John Lamb asked for a motion for a roll call vote to ratify all actions that were approved during this board meeting. All in attendance and on zoom voted "yay." None were opposed.

Approved: Minutes from the January Meeting

Approved: January/February financial reports

Submitted by,



Prepared by,
Alli Turpin, Marketing and Events Coordinator