

**Whittier Alliance Board Meeting Minutes**  
**September 24, 2015 6-8:30 PM**  
**Whittier Park**

**Present:** Erica Christ, Andy Cohen, David Bagley, Ted Irgens, Laura Jean, Christina Le, Natascha Shawver, Erin Sjoquist, Brett Vandebussche, Kenya Weathers **Absent:** Charles Nguyen, Mike O'Dell, Araceli Perez, Jesse Oyervides, Joan Vorderbruggen, Daphna Stromberg **Staff:** Marian Biehn, Lucy Lawson **Guest:** Dylan Thomas

**Call to Order** at 6:15 by Erica Christ, Board Chair. Standard of conduct and conflict of interest were reviewed. **Motion** to approve the August 27 agenda, with addition of Fall Fundraiser under Finance Committee and some additions to Old/New Business, **Carried**.

**Comments from the Chair**

Erica Christ

Marian announced her retirement as ED at the CI meeting. Board members can help with recruitment. Job ad going up on website Monday. Some experience with non-profits desirable (not an absolute necessity) because contract management, finances and tax law can be byzantine. Four good applications so far. Applications open till 15 October. Erica will email the job ad to all board members. May need to call a special meeting in November so board can approve the Task Force's choice.

**Secretary's Report**

Natascha Shawver

Minutes from August 27, 2015, were reviewed and a **Motion** to approve as written **Carried**. The board attendance was reviewed. Mike O'Dell and Joan Vorderbruggen have regretfully resigned because of time commitments.

**Executive Committee**

Erica Christ

**Personnel Policy Updates**

Official revised Personnel Policy is not ready yet, so the motion to adopt it will stay postponed until the October meeting. Whistle Blower policy was reviewed, and it was agreed to insert a phrase for clarity. Record retention policy is standard but has been adapted to documents that the WA has.

**EC Motion 2:** The Executive Committee approves the inclusion of the Whistle Blower Policy in the Personnel Policies, and directs the Executive Director to ensure that it is given to and acknowledged by all employees. In addition, the Executive Director will ensure that whistleblower protection notification is posted in the workplace(s) as required by state law. **Carried: 10-0-0**

**EC Motion 3:** The Executive Committee approves the adoption of the Records Retention Policy as part of its standard operating procedures. **Carried: 0-10-0**

Board members discussed Miscellaneous Policies document. Mid-month issues procedure is already covered in the by-laws, so can be deleted. Re the prohibition of electronic taping policy, currently the CI public meetings are sometimes recorded by participants who use their phone or tweet. The policy is a hold-over from a time when the technology was more obvious. Board members discussed whether it is problematic that the policy is inconsistently enforced, whether people would be happy about showing up on YouTube, and whether it discourages people from speaking. Who is defined as a journalist is a can of worms these days. Will look into what other n'hood groups are doing, and table vote on Miscellaneous Policies to review with the Personnel Policies.

**Executive Director Review**

Thanks to board members who responded to review. Will be completed in next couple of weeks.

**US District Court Claim Status Complaint – Sabri et al vs WA**

The claim has been appealed. They now have 40 days from 10th September to file their appeal.

**Finance Committee**

Andy Cohen

**September 2015 Financial Statements:** Board members requested a more longitudinal view of the

finances, and will have three-month cash balance presentations in future. The financial report was presented. The balance sheet was reviewed. In August had a more typical payroll than previously since we have been at full staff for a few months. The performance, budget, year to date and contract fund reports were reviewed. The Stevens Ave house sale skews the income. If that \$165k was removed, the income and expenses are close to the budget projection.

**FC Motion 1:** The Whittier Alliance Board accepts the August 2015 financial report for the Whittier Alliance. **Carried.**

The purpose of moving funds from Franklin to Whittier Branch of TrueStone is, firstly, risk aversion, as covered for only up to \$250,000, and, secondly, moves funds to another institution in the n'hood. The funds would be liquid and set up similar to the funds at Sunrise. They would not be in a checking account. The savings rate is better at TruStone. There is a membership fee but the interest rate will cover that and more. Adequate funds will still be available at Sunrise/Franklin to cover day to day expenses and any unexpected financial need.

**FC Motion 2:** The Whittier Alliance Board authorizes moving up to \$250,000 of the Whittier Alliance unrestricted funds to the Whittier Branch of the TrueStone Financial savings account. **Carried. 10-0-0**

#### **Contract Scopes and Budgets for Reallocating Funds – Marian Biehn**

With the reallocation of the program income in April, 21 NRP scopes of service needed updated language and scopes. Some of the action items were in the NRP plan but not funded. Now that they are funded they needed a budget and proposed action. That has been completed. The documents have been submitted to Mpls Finance Dept/Bob Cooper who will process them and get them allocated to the correct NRP contract. It will be another month before the funds will be available, and a new schedule will have to be put together to reflect the newly funded action items.

#### **2016 Budget**

Whittier's budget is on a calendar year and so has to be approved by board no later than December. The Citizen Participation Program has one more year in the 3-year funding cycle. CPP provides \$131k of our annual budget. The balance comes from NRP contacts. If board members think of anything that might be important as a budget expense for next year, bring it up so the budget can be included in both the financial but also the work load planning. The 1<sup>st</sup> draft budget will be presented in Oct.

#### **2014 Audit**

Comprehensive audit is in progress. Auditor examined a lot of invoices, checks, etc., but also wanted a lot of narrative. They recommended the two personnel policies adopted earlier in the meeting. Audit should be complete in first two weeks of October and will be sent out to board members, as board needs to endorse it. The auditor is also preparing the 2014 WA 990 and Charitable Organization filing for the IRS. These need to be submitted by November 15.

#### **Fall Fundraiser**

Get ready for the Fall Fundraiser – generally board members make a pledge (whatever they can afford, or whatever contribution they can make) and those pledges are used as a challenge to the neighborhood. The letters are sent to residents, rental property owners, businesses and friends. The WA usually raises about \$7k which is put in our unrestricted funds for future use and security.

### **Acting Committee Reports & Motions**

#### **Community Issues**

Brett Vandebussche

Over the past several months there has been a lot of discussion about traffic at CI meetings. In Sept a Parking enforcement representative from the City attended the CI meeting and answered a number of questions. The Q&A made it obvious that Public Works needed to address some concerns. Main issues were parking enforcement and speeding, which led to the Livable Streets Task Force. Task Force is looking at trouble spots. Paul has been collecting data, which was shared with Councilwoman Lisa

Bender, and can make recommendations to Public Works. The Parking representative could only answer questions about parking so a moving traffic representative is being invited to the CI in Oct. Jesse and Brett will be on the Task Force as that moves forward. The task force has a lot of different and new people on it. People are really fed up and worried about safety. The Mpls Park & Rec presentation at CI meeting revealed that parks are shockingly underfunded – millions of dollars behind. Park commissioners and board members are doing informational sessions around the City. This might be setting the stage for a levy on the next ballot. The speaker made it clear that the parks they were talking about were City Parks in neighborhoods. Parks with pools, playground equipment, rec buildings, etc – not regional parks like those around the lakes and along the river. Board discussed Parks, including history of Fair Oaks Park master plans. Complaints at CI meeting about lights being off at Whittier Park led to simple technical fix, and issue is resolved.

## **Business Association**

Andy Cohen

### **Great Streets Storm Water Run-off Remediation**

Metro Blooms received a grant to consult with businesses to and assist with developing a storm water runoff plan. The Black Forest Inn redid their storm water management with Metro Blooms assistance. It is not known if it works since the project isn't complete.

### **Working Families Agenda**

Councilwoman Lisa Bender presented on the initiative, which focuses on paid sick time and scheduling. Business owners at meeting raised their concerns, including: paid sick time will be a further increase in payroll costs on top of minimum wage rises since 2014, scheduling 28 days in advance is difficult in restaurant industry, and which department will handle enforcement is up in the air. Council is getting input currently. Many of the issues the proposal is trying to solve would probably be better handled at a state level. The intentions are good but the plan would cripple small businesses.

## **Strategic Plan**

### **2118 Blaisdell Historic Designation Grant (FYI) – Marian Biehn**

Preservation by Design is working on the historic designation study for 2118 Blaisdell Ave. There is an upcoming meeting with Brian Schafer of CPED and the PbD staff person to go over what has been researched and whether there is adequate documentation to support the nomination. They have inspected the house and taken a survey and pictures. Needs to be done by October/November to get into Historic Preservation Commission calendar, for a public hearing Jan/Feb.

### **Reopen Nicollet – Cuningham Group – Meeting Saturday October 3 & 10**

The draft schedule for the series of workshops is in the board packet. The workshops will gather input to establish what the n'hood wants on that site. Cuningham will be taking feedback and then boiling it down. Will be broad-brush – e.g. how transit will interact with the Greenway. May establish an electronic process for input as well. The results of the workshops will be developed into a narrative and visuals to be presented at a CI meeting vote. The ultimate goal is to have a plan so stunning that the City will support it. May be good idea to ask community participants to bring pictures of what they want, as architects often need visual prompts. Spanish and Somali translators available at meeting. Ben and Christina Le will also talk about their plans for the Old Arizona building.

### **Lake Street Energy Challenge**

Paul has been going to the meetings. Their 'Energy Parties' probably won't be a big hit in Whittier – not enough single family homes and a previous push for home energy parties did not take off. Paul can perhaps synthesize a report or a recommendation on the energy challenge for next meeting. Initiative is a better fit with high home ownership n'hoods, but could perhaps market it to rental property owners. Board raised possibility of Energy Challenge presenting to the CI meeting again, with something tangible that fits with the n'hood.

**Staff Reports:**

Marian Biehn

Reports from Paul and Marian are in the board packet.

**Old & New Business:**

**Safety Task Force – Crime Reduction – Bike Patrol proposal**

Police patrols have been and are part of our NRP plan. The patrols are one of the active contracts, so money is already there for it. Previously, police patrols were added to the normal scheduling. Officers would sign up for the overtime work. But they didn't sign up for the times when additional patrols were needed. Another problem was that they spent all their time in the car. We have the option now to do bike patrols that would be enforcement as well as police outreach/crime prevention. The bike patrols will only take place in the summer because too hard to schedule around winter weather. Whittier has beat cops along Nicollet and Lake Streets. The bike cops would be in addition and would be throughout the neighborhood not just Nicollet or Lake. There is \$62k in funds remaining or about 35 weeks out of a year of bike or foot patrols. Car break-ins were lower when Nicollet beat cops walked Nicollet. It was recommended to postpone further discussion and action until the Oct meeting and to present the plan at the CI meeting in Oct.

**Volunteer Appreciation** is Mon. Sept 28, 6-7:30. **Fall Clean Up** is Sat Oct 17. **Cheapo Records** has opened. **Jabbok Family Services** has closed. **Blaisdell Manor** is under renovation.

**Adjourned 8:30PM**

**Minutes respectfully submitted by Lucy Lawson/Marian Biehn.**

Meeting Minutes Approved on \_\_\_\_\_

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Erica Christ, Board Chair

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Natascha Shawver, Board Secretary