



WA Business Association Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 14, 2018
Mortimer's 4:30pm - 6:00pm

Attendees:

Andrew Nordick- Nordick Law Firm
Paul Jablonsky- Nicollet Car Wash
Nancy Sjoquist- AAUW
Grant Rockwood- Realtor/Health Insurance Agent
Jasha Johnston- Mortimers/Tilt/Nightingale
Denise McAlpin- NuWay
Felino de la Pena- Spanish Academy
Martha Nemesi- Learning In Style

Guest Speakers- University of Minnesota Humphrey School of Public Affairs
Michael Prideaux
Elizabeth Dressel

WA Staff: Dan Stanton, Kaley Brown, Marcus VanderSanden

Introductions/Call to Order

Call to order at 4:35pm by Andrew Nordick, Business Association Chair.
Agenda is reviewed.
Minutes from January BA Meeting are reviewed.
Introductions.

Host Highlights - Mortimer's

Jasha has been working at Mortimers for over 20 years and he and his wife Carrie took over ownership of Mortimers in June adding it to Tilt and Nightingale as Whittier businesses the couple own. Mortimers has seen some recent changes with renovations that included the closing of the back area of the bar and the addition of a brand new kitchen and a refresh of the exterior. The couple also put up a wall that Jasha says was torn down sometime in the 90's to create a separate room for live music to be added to the bar. The changes are being well received by the bar regulars and the addition of new menu items, Carrie is the chef, and live music are going well. Lack of parking is putting a small strain on business at the moment but Morts will have a parking in June or July when the development next to the bar is finished.

Current News & Events

Nancy informs on some of the winter programming AAUW did including providing mittens and gloves for Whittier International and an over \$1000 grocery drive. Gerri Burns of AAUW has retired. AAUW runs the Gale Mansion and maintain it in its historical setting to host weddings, corporate events and offer tours. There was inquiries as to how Super Bowl week went. Morts saw a below average week with a busier Saturday.

Whittier Alliance Offering NDC Entrepreneur Training Scholarships

Marcus informs attendees about the NDC PlanIt! Program a 12 week training class put on by the Neighborhood Development Center. Whittier is promoting this program and offering a \$100 scholarship to offset the cost for

Whittier residents. Asks attendees to promote this within their circles and encourage anybody who may be interested to apply or reach out to Whittier Alliance for help.

Whittier Alliance Board of Directors Seeking One-Year Business Chairs for 2018-2019

Business Association Board Appointees one year term is ending as of the March 28th annual meeting. The 5 Business Association representatives will be elected at the April BA meeting. The 5 representatives consist of 2 non-profit, 2 for-profit and the BA chair. Kaley makes that timeline known for anybody seeking election or re-election. Martha announces her intention to seek re-election.

Old & New Business

Whittier Alliance is still seeking nominations for the Good Neighbor and Good Business award. Nominations have been low so everybody is encouraged to promote or nominate.

Whittier Alliance is also still promoting the Strategic Plan Questions that are available on the Whittier Alliance website, there is still time to fill it out and would love more business feedback as well as to promote it to other stakeholders.

Speaker - U of M/City of Minneapolis Small Business Resilience Project

Elizabeth Tressel and Michael Prideaux are part of a team of graduate students from the Humphrey Institute working with the City of Minneapolis to help neighborhoods and small businesses during times of transition. They sought input from the group on several questions regarding what are barriers or difficulties to their business.

Responses centered around several themes:

Taxes- people felt that taxes are prohibitive to small businesses when there are factors that are out of their control that drive it up including larger developments and infrastructure projects. This factor is compounded that in most sectors the consumer is price increase sensitive so the business is unable to keep up with tax rate.

Parking- Parking can be difficult in Whittier and there is a feeling that as development and density has increased there has been an increased strain on street parking. Parking percentages have been decreased to in construction which has put additional pressure on neighborhood streets. Winter adds additional safety concerns on this subject given the congestion on some Whittier thoroughfares.

Engagement- There is a feeling that the city council and other governing bodies don't engage with or listen to the neighborhoods as much as they once did. There is feeling that meeting times are prohibitive and that local input doesn't have enough impact. This is felt acutely regarding development projects and variances surrounding them.

Meeting adjourns at 5:47

Minutes respectfully submitted by Marcus VanderSanden