



## WA Business Association Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 11th 2017  
G & L Furniture- 320 West Lake Street  
4:00 - 5:30 p.m.

### **Attendees:**

Andy Cohen	The Bad Waitress, <i>Chair of Business Association</i>
John Galvin	Tilt Pinball Bar
Martha Nemesi	Learning in Style
Chelsea Adams	MPD 5th Precinct
Emanuel Tekle	Preservation Alliance
Michael Malone	WA Board Member
Jesse Oyervides	WA Board Member
Patti Christi	Pet Doctors
Andrew Nordick	Logica Law Firm
Ibrahim Demmad	Owner, G & L Furniture
Cedar Phillips	Hennepin History Museum
Kenya Weathers	WA Board Member
Jasha Johnston	Tilt Pinball Bar

**WA Staff:** Ricardo McCurley, Joey Whitesman

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### Introductions/Call to Order - Andy Cohen

Meeting begins at 4:09pm. Introductions are conducted and the meeting agenda and November meeting minutes are approved.

- Ricardo describes November Meeting- Local hiring, Allsquare business- still looking for space
- Suggestion that the One Minneapolis organization/ NCR could assist All Square owner

### Tilt Pinball Bar-Liquor License Approval and Business Presentation- Jasha Johnson and John Galvin

“Tilt” is the name of a new business opening at 26th St and Stevens Ave new business. Tilt will be a Pinball Bar with some food. John grew up in the family business of owning and operating pinball machines. They are hoping to draw diverse audience- families and weekend night out crowd and are trying to differentiate from uptown in uptown by encouraging kids before 9pm. The menu was created by Jasha’s wife who owns Nightingales on Lyndale. The door is on 26th street, first floor of Chroma, next to Wesley Andrews. There will be a small bar with 6 or 7 seats in one big room with tables, around 20 pinball machines, and a kitchen/ bathroom in back. 25 actual seats, capacity around 70 (formally 76). Attendees express interest and excitement in having things for kids in neighborhood. Pinball has a culture around it. Beer, wine and liquor will be served. Tilt will transition to nightlife spot during evening. They are looking to open in March.

Comments/ Questions follow:

- Carag neighborhood wanted uptown to be for kids and it's not so it is exciting for neighborhood
- Hours of operation? 11am- 2am 7 days a week

- Have you thought about safety and impact on community? Chelsea Adams of the 5th precinct addresses concerns- discusses city requirements for security with liquor license and protocols
- Jasha worked in restaurants for over 20 years and has personal stake in neighborhood as a resident

**Motion** is made to support liquor license.

**Motion** of support for Tilt and for liquor license **approved**

### **Spotlight on Business - G & L Furniture- Ibrahim**

G & L used to be a bar for 33 years. They sell custom furniture with free delivery services at affordable prices. Lots of customers all over U.S. because of custom designs. The furniture comes from Texas and California. G & L does Layaways, any color, any fabric, works frequently with downtown clubs and bars, and has been in Minneapolis 20 years. Upstairs there are 5 apartments. Ibrahim mentions liking the diversity of the neighborhood and that word of mouth is their main form of advertising . Currently not doing repairs but trying to open shop on east lake street. G & L has 6 employees at this location.

Ibrahim also describes neighborhood Soccer Program he is part of and Chelsea of the 5th precinct describes similar PAL program- police activities league if he is ever looking for partners. PAL has a soccer team, brain camp, and bike cops for kids program-they give out free helmets, sometimes bikes for kids. They also meet with kids at the Red Wing correctional Facility and do some minor bike repair.

### **New Business Growth Task Force- Andrew Nordick**

Andrew is an Attorney who runs a small law firm downtown. He spends 90% of his time in Whittier working from home. Does pro-bono work and idea to help the neighborhood business community grow came from December WA Volunteer Appreciation event. Community could close gap between New entrepreneurs and established business/ resources. A Common problem of entrepreneurs is where to start.

Aggregate information exists that allow entrepreneur to start business and grow it

- Problem is information very scattered
- How can we make it easier for Whittier residents to access this information
- Create a repository the Alliance can point them to? This is trackable and can be followed-up
- Motivation along with information is important. Entrepreneurs need support.
- Partnering with affirming mentor increases chances of success dramatically
- This seems like a scalable thing- could be entrepreneurs starting/ helping established businesses
- Business mentorship program/ synergy of common vendors

Andrew opens ideas to BA meeting with the following key suggestions and concerns being expressed:

- Would include both brick and mortar + online businesses? Yes
- Ricardo- idea fits with some of office funding/ priorities in WA strategic plan. 200 grand exists in funds for loans to business, Micro grants? Materials? Down payments on ideas?
- Resources- The WA had a basic business directory but capacity to update difficult. Not sure what to do now with it.
- Ricardo introduces asset-map project, what are underutilized spaces in Whittier. Where do we have spaces to grow in business/ other areas and what do we want as a community
- Of the grants that are available, vetting process could make sure they are used appropriately
- Create Building space dedicated to incubating new businesses?
- Artists in storefront program mentioned- If storefront is vacant, have business incubation advertised in that empty window. Feature new businesses on eat street

- What's the goal, is it to make an incubator? Andrew: Help new business owners start and develop their business. Slow outroll to see what works. Hear criticism before making bigger commitments.
- Central Goal- centralizing resources (can be scaled up or scaled down)

What kind of resources for growing businesses and entrepreneurship are available- city, state, federal government?

- Minnesota small business assistance office- has great book on starting a business. Info on what to put in your business plan. Andy mentions issues with city process and "wheel of confusion." Goal would be to provide context to resources that exist
- Mentors are available. SCORE- they offer mentors to businesses (former CEO's). Local mentors would be good. Pair.

Ricardo- 1st step is aggregating resources but also surveying community about difficulties starting up or midway through opening/ "3 mistakes I made and here's what I learned." We have a diversity of neighborhood businesses. Let's plan a follow-up meeting at WA office to about aggregating data for entrepreneurs. The Legal part is big challenge for new business owner. Andrew plans on helping in some legal capacity, but in limited, volunteer way. Alliance is better repository for that (is that in our strategic plan? In our personnel capacity?)

- A Repository that accumulates is what we want
- Following up with entrepreneurs
- Perhaps this means bringing on staff or loans or small grants
- Let's focus on taking smaller first steps to start
- Cross-mentoring

What is the endgame for this project?

- Centralizing information
- End-game malleable (but helping people who want to start a business, start a business)
- Action item- figure out what information to include (set up meeting at office). Huge piece is organizing structural questions etc.

#### **Franklin/Nicollet Safety Group- Chelsea Adams (crime prevention 10 neighborhoods 5th precinct)**

- Franklin and Nicollet has issues: crime, traffic, one of the most dangerous intersections travel-wise
- Major bus route, major everything route
- Chelsea: 9 years working at this intersection
- Recent meeting to address issues: had st. stephens come in, beat officers, block patrol (longest running, restorative justice based)
- Same issues across all businesses
- Initially focused on corner but now reaching out to more businesses on Franklin & Nicollet
- Another meeting in spring

This past year intersection crime has increased. Shoplifting major problem (especially in corporate stores) frustrated staff trying to intervene and assaults have occurred. How to respond:

- Whatever they're taking is less important than your health and safety
- We are recommending having people "trespassed"- you don't have to wait for someone to commit a crime to call 911
- "Trespassed" title changes status from theft to a burglary (which means felony) Doing it for people who are chronic.
- Whittier and Stevens Square are part of bi-weekly tracking of crimes/ people.

- There is a Clean List- top 30 chronic offenders. There are a lot of specialty courts, so if you feel hesitant that they offenders sent to prison know that this is not exactly the case. There have been some success stories on the Clean List
- List available on 5th precinct website
- Ibrahim mentions Steve Peterson- tv burglar guy. Not a mentally stable guy so charging doesn't seem like it would help. Chelsea explains process and answers questions and encourages utilizing victim impact statement.
- Ricardo mentions Whittier Alliance could write neighborhood statement. Nothing exists now, but we could create a policy if there is community interest
- Opinion shared that In places that are attracting crime, we should push out chronic offenders. Most chronic offenders don't live in neighborhood but could be being housed in neighborhood. Our stance should that entities that support clients that might be chronic offenders are responsible for their guests
- Communication with these entities and police force is important

### **Old and New Business**

#### Eat Street 20th Task Force

- 2 weeks meeting to plan
- Beginning of June festival between 24th and 26th on Nicollet

#### From Eat Street with Love Cookbook

- On 3rd printing due to popularity
- Proceeds support WA

#### Whittier Farmer's Market

- In its 3rd year
- Majority of businesses were start up businesses
- They are looking for Business Sponsorship
- Whittier alliance has committed funds

#### Announcements:

- Jasha will be taking over Mortimers
- Chelsea introduces Securonet surveillance cameras that put crime on map in efficient way  
Ricardo- neighborhood could set goal of security/ grant for that neighborhood-wide (Stevens Square has it)

Meeting adjourns at 5:45 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Joey Whitesman.