

**Whittier Alliance Board Meeting Minutes Draft
December 16, 2020 6-8 PM
Zoom Meeting**

Present: Stephanie Brown, Nate Rastetter, Nate Broadbridge, Shinjan Sengupta, Daniel Perez, Aldona Martinka, Abigail Speller, Cyndi Hovey, Erin Sjoquist, Brigid Higgins, Katie Heimer

Non-board Community Members: Nicholas Hutchinson, Steven Frich, George Rishmawi, Kami Brodie

Staff: Kaley Brown, Julie Strand

Call to Order at 6:05pm by Cyndi Hovey

-Cyndi shared the agenda. Motion to approve the agenda. Seconded. Motion passes.

-Cyndi shared the Standard of Conduct policy with a note on conflicts of interest.

-Cyndi shared the community agreements and read through them aloud.

Introductions & Check In: ***Brainstorm and identify 2-4 individuals you will share about the WA AND ask them to run to serve on the board? Be ready to share.***

In the spirit of board recruitment, Brigid led the check in and asked for Board Recruitment Ideas or Questions. Board members shared out names, pronouns, and which neighbors they are going to approach.

Secretary's Report

- Board meeting attendance: 6-0, 4-1, 0-2, 0-3, 0-4, 0-5, Reinstated-0, Resigned-4, Terminated-2, Vacancies-13, Total Seats-23
- A few things will change with attendance and board make up with the bylaws changes are approved. We are working on further integrating the business association into the larger board. The number of board seats related to businesses will change instead of at large board members. There will be residents, property owners and business owners. There will be more flexibility with absences if involvement is upheld. The total number of seats will be going down too.
- **Exec Recommendation: Appoint Katie Heimer**
Aldona brought forth a recommendation from the exec com to appoint Katie to one of the vacant seats since she can no longer hold a business association seat because of her employment change. Katie is a Whittier resident. Katie provided context about the need for the seat change then left the meeting for discussion to take place.

Motion to appoint Katie Heimer to a 2018-2021 term vacant seat that will end its term this year. Seconded. The motion passes unanimously.

- Aldona shared the Oct 22nd minutes for review. With no discussion or suggested changes **Motion to approve the October board minutes. Seconded. Motion passes.**

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer presented the Oct & Nov 2020 financials. With no questions **Motion to approve the October and November financials. Seconded. Motion passes.**

Budget 2021

-This is the start of the 2021 budget cycle; it usually happens in October, but with the city budgeting process in flux we waited to see what happened at the city level before budgeting with uncertain numbers.

-At the City level: essentially the city council decided the proposed Neighborhoods 2020 program guidelines were approved and will go into effect July 1, 2021. Jan-June city will end us a contract extension for the amount we got this year prorated for 6 months. \$133,200 from the city per year. This new program replaces that and will give half. They are planning to use the same formula in 2022. We won't see a huge change, we will get about the same yearly amount as last year. We put a lot of energy into pressing for more funding in overall allocation for the neighborhood system. The system did get around \$400,000 more. Now the conversation is about coming up with a plan to get a larger increase in 2022 to grow neighborhood capacity. Not every neighborhood saw what we did, some had dramatic shifts in their funding.

-As we were looking at line items, we decided this year to play it more conservatively than in years past. Many line items last year had a large amount and this year has \$0. This is mostly program related. If a program is not a sure thing, like the festival, it didn't get a line item in the budget this year. This isn't to say we don't want to do more programs, we do, this just gives us a clearer picture of what money is solid.

-The board identified the open items that changed in the budget because of how 2020 went and what 2021 looks like, which is unclear.

-The biggest expenses we incur on an annual basis is staffing and the associated costs like payroll taxes. Next is contract service expenses which round out our work. What needs discussion are pink highlighted fields. Staff reviews and discussions are underway to help clarify 2021 proposed compensation.

-2020 was a stress test and showed how much the city values neighborhood orgs. They didn't give a big cut when they could have. Neighborhoods demonstrated their critical role in grassroots community work during crises.

-If we walk away today without full approval on the budget, that won't be a problem. It was understood that this might not be all figured out at this meeting. The Treasurer asked for questions on the income side. Seeing none, the board turned their attention to expenses.

-One of the big things the board looked at in the 2020 budget was emergency aid. Staff spent a lot of the time on that project in 2020, tracking funds coming in and going out and being reallocated.

-The new community activation budget is separate from the emergency aid funding which falls into grants to individuals in the budget. WA has a duty to the neighborhood to be good stewards of the funding and make it accessible to the neighborhood. This fund is a budget for the unknown needs of the community for 2021. There will be parameters set and WA will conduct this like LHENA has.

-Members expressed concern around the money being used to serve a small amount of people rather than neighborhood. Members also expressed interest in this flexible unrestricted opportunity to be responsive and to listen to community member needs and interests.

-Group as a whole discussed needing to be strategic and think more about the two buckets, relief and community initiated efforts.

-Those two types of grants are separate in the budget and they have different funding sources; NRP money can potentially help fund community activation projects, but it won't fund direct relief. We would need to fundraise to keep that going.

-This budget encourages us to create a system and an initiative for relief and community ideas funds so that it can reach a wide net of people. This is something sustainable and strategic.

- Members discussed what our purpose and mission is as an org and how that might influence the amount we budget for those funds.
- Cyndi reviewed the strategic fund pillars to help guide the conversation. Community Engagement, Organizational Sustainability, Housing, Business/Institution support.
- \$7,000 was set in the draft budget for relief funding.
- \$6,000 was set in the draft budget for community activation.
- The group noted the line item for sponsorships for other nonprofit work like the Whittier Farmers Market and talked about desire to fund the market and other ideas. In years past we had \$4-6k in that line item. \$5,000 agreed upon.
- Kaley shared that she talked with staff about what is missing in the budget and they expressed interest in having funding for a community event of some kind.
- Looking at options for consulting for anti-racism work that is no small investment and will need to be discussed in depth with the full board.
- The board discussed the possible need for a budget for the office build out/move needs.
- Members suggested a budget line item for getting out the vote for local elections and organizing for anti-displacement strategies.
- The group paused the discussion for a further secondary budget meeting and discussion.
- There is no exact date by which we need to approve the budget. It will start to affect our financial review so we want to land on a final budget soon, but we will probably go through a few more smaller group meetings with a goal to approve in January.

Acting Committees Asks or Discussions -

- Housing Issues **(A)** - The chair presented a letter of support for the new design at the 112 E Lake St. development. The housing committee recommended to support the letter and the variances needed. **Motion to send the letter to the city. Seconded. Passed unanimously.** The chair said she would follow up to write letters of appreciation to the planning commission.

Anti-Racism Consultant

- The subgroup did outreach, had profitable conversations with options and orgs who work with those options. Equity Literacy institute, YWCA, and Team Dynamics are the options.
- Team Dynamics estimate was more detailed and the most expensive- \$26,000 (150X70 hours)
- YWCA offered essentially the same services plus community meetings which are free with a budget around \$10,000 as their hourly rate is \$70/hour
- ELI did not provide a clear estimate and has not been responsive to communications.
- Erin will reach out to anyone interested in this project to continue talking it through. If any questions come up reach out to Erin, Daniel or Cyndi.

Special Meeting- Abbie

- There is a video now up on the website to guide people through the proposed bylaws changes. The mailer went out. There is a fb event. Please spread the word through your own text threads, Discord threads, and other ways of reaching your network in Whittier. Please think through questions people might ask and be ready and willing to take on a role for the special meeting.

Announcements, next steps

- Question/Concerns on non-agenda Cover Memo items - (none)

Ongoing Projects, Board Projects List, Board Tracker

- 2020-2021 Board Projects List
- Board Recruitment Reminder
- Special Meeting January 14th
- Annual Review Survey
- Other topics for future consideration-We will be sending out the survey for the ED review to all board members
- Also look for e-thank you cards we will send to former board members that served, but left the board this year.

Closing & Check Out

- What was a truly joyful moment you experienced in 2020?

Motion to adjourn. Seconded. Motion carries.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31pm. | **Minutes respectfully submitted by Julie Strand.**