

CITY OF PALOS HEIGHTS
Business/ Economic Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2019

Call to Order

Chairman Grossart called the meeting of the Business/Economic Advisory Committee to order at 12:00 Noon at the Palos Heights City Hall. Present were: Bob Grossart, Ken Busse, Rick Powell, Lori Mazeika, Dr. Chuck Polcaster, Judi Weber, Alderman Jeff Key, and Recording Secretary Charlotte Moore. Barb Bergamo, Mike Coogan and Paul Muehlnickel were absent.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Grossart hadn't received the minutes, so they were not approved.

Old Business

Update on the Comprehensive Plan: Ken Busse informed the group that the consultant has provided us with the updated re-draft of the comprehensive plan and the revised Parks and Rec Plan. Ken and Dan Nisavic will be reviewing them, making comments and sending them back. Next week the consultant will turn around the next draft and then we will go to the steering committee. After the steering committee meets, we will set up a public hearing toward the end of April.

Jeff Key asked if the pavilion is in the comp plan. Ken mentioned it now appears in a couple of areas in the Parks & Rec. plan. Dan Nisavic explained to Ken that the areas the Pavilion would likely go would be in a Park.

Open Air Pavilion: Bob Grossart hopes there is a recommendation for a Pavilion from residents and if it's in the plan we wouldn't have to start from scratch. Bob would like the committee to make sure the Pavilion remains in the Plan. Jeff Key commented that the splash pad was the number one thing, out of 5 or 6 things, that the community said they would like to see. A splash pad as a new feature in the park system. Ken Busse did see a number of comments about the splash pad in the raw data.

Bob Grossart spoke about the Bridge Teen Center as a great place for young people. They have revenues now over 1 million dollars and they do a lot of fundraising. There was an event at Silver Lakes Country Club where restaurants gave food away as samples and had raffles. They raised over \$240,000. It just shows the power of what you can do. Bob suggested we could have something like a Taste of Palos Heights to raise funds.

Bob Grossart believes we should form a committee to decide how to move forward and would like the committee to be more organized before approaching Mayor Straz & Dan Nisavic.

Regional Start up Hub: Bob Grossart mentioned a few members attending this event at Trinity. Betsy Ziegler the CEO of 1871 gave a presentation on how business is changing. She showed how some of the big companies took a long time to get big and how the newer start-up companies move faster getting as large.

Bob Grossart spoke with John Wightkin from Trinity College and talked about using some of the techniques from Fusion 59, with a business in town. The owner of Simple Taste has agreed to work with Trinity on marketing. John is ready to move forward with Simple Taste.

Staffing-Intern: Bob Grossart feels the intern has an impact on starting Holidays in The Heights, the welcome back program and other marketing work. Bob believes we had a modest number of around \$6,000-\$7,000, then Ken was up in the \$15,000 range (which included other items).

Ken Busse mentioned that Abby will be resuming her role as intern this summer and then we would bring on a second intern. The second intern can assist in other areas as well, such as updating city forms and marketing signs. Bob Grossart suggests we start looking for the next intern very soon.

New Business

Business Occupancy Report: Ken Busse provided the Business Occupancy Report and reviewed the contents. The findings compare 2017 to 2018. We are at 86.4% occupancy. The big drag is still Dominick's. In 2018, sales tax revenue totaled \$1,253,814.03. The SW suburbs had a 1.3% increase in vacancy rates, Discussion ensued.

Holidays in the Heights 2019: Bob Grossart pointed out there are 17 or 18 people on the committee this year. We are in the process planning what each person will work on.

The proposed budget includes not receiving money from the Beautification committee this year and reducing the City's request from \$7,000 to \$6,000. The committee's intent is to try to keep stepping this down and eventually receiving no money from the City. For the Kris Kringle market we have \$7,600 in revenue. There is the possibility of cafeteria type pricing, where vendor can pay for what they need. We are hoping to raise another \$2,000 in sponsorship money.

The quote from the tent company is \$8,400.00. We are in the process of trying to get the City to use the same company for the 4th of July. Then we can try to get a reduced rate from the tent company.

The cost of portable toilets is going up, because we had a shortage of units last year.

Some new ideas that were suggested included having a grand opening with ribbon cutting, music, kids singing in front and possible food court. We also need to look into more volunteers for parking issues. It would be great to get support from the restaurants.

Bob Grossart mentioned that we want to keep in mind that this is a City event. We can't lose sight of that. Our goal is the keep driving the City costs down. Not only is the City giving \$6,000 or \$7,000, they are providing Public Works and Police services. Maybe we need to ask the City if they want us to still do this event.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Charlotte Moore
Recording Secretary