

CITY OF PALOS HEIGHTS



Business/ Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes July 20, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Grossart called the electronic GoToMeeting of the Business/Economic Development Advisory Committee to order at 12:00 Noon via Go to Meeting. Present were: Bob Grossart, Barbara Bergamo, Alderman Jeff Key, Lori Mazeika, Paul Meuhlnickel, Dr. Chuck Polcaster, Carri Sirigas, Judi Weber, Ken Busse (liaison to the City), and Recording Secretary Charlotte Moore. Rick Powell and Michael Coogan were absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Grossart made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2020 meeting, seconded by Barbara Bergamo. On a unanimous voice vote, the motion carried.

Welcome Back – 2020

Chairman Grossart and Rick Powell had a meeting with Trinity College. The college was disappointed that the Committee decided to not have the full Welcome Back program this year. The 2020 program will consist of 150 Welcome Back signs placed around the City. There will be no activity on campus for the welcome back.

Holidays in the Heights - 2020

Bob Grossart mentioned this event is pending but feels it would be proper to cancel this year. The virus is not going away and we have no staffing this summer to help with an event. Bob will send out a letter to the committee stating that the event is cancelled for 2020.

Intern 2020

Ken Busse will revise draft job description and send to Chairman Grossart when revised. Bob mentioned that the draft proposes spending \$40,000 on staffing for various projects including: Holiday in the Heights, Occupancy Report, Welcome Back Trinity and projects for Ken Busse. This position can be shared with Channel 4, Recreation Department & Lake Katherine. Discussion ensued. Ken Busse sees the need to have certain skill sets for the position.

Provide Support for “Gateway”

Chairman Grossart mentioned that the City Council meeting to vote on the gas station has been moved to August 4th. In order for this to pass it would require the approval of 6 of the 8 alderman.

Jeff Key made it clear that he is against this gas station for many reasons. During the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planned Unit Development Commission hearings each board had unanimously voted against the gas station development. There is a lot of animosity right now. Discussion ensued.

Chairman Grossart still feels this is not the best use of the property at Route 83 and Harlem. On multiple occasions Ken Busse requested the asking price for the property and was never given the asking price. It was not until the ZBA and PUD public hearings that the asking price of \$2 million was provided.

Paul Muehlnickel asked if there was any talk about the City purchasing the property. Ken Busse said not for \$2 million dollars. Paul wonders what happens when another gas station wants to buy it if the vote gets denied for 7-Eleven. Mr. Busse reported that the same proposal cannot be resubmitted for one year.

Open Air Pavilion/Splash Pad

Jeff Key has a phone call into Matt Fairbanks to discuss. It's hard to make decisions right now because of COVID-19.

Help for Local Businesses

Chairman Grossart opened discussion about help businesses may need, and asked how to move forward. Alderman Key feels it's hard to be serious about helping businesses while COVID is still impacting hours and operations. We don't want to promote people coming together. It's hard to get back to normal when you don't know what will happen in five days. Alderman Key suggested any promotional ideas committee members come up with be sent to Ken Busse.

Dr. Polcaster felt the Shop Local Business program developed by the city was great. People really took advantage of the program.

Judi Weber mentioned that she missed a lot of events and holidays that hurt her revenue. Judi would like a program for all businesses.

Barbara Bergamo thought a weekend long grand re-opening would be a good idea. Barbara doesn't feel the tree lighting will happen this year. Maybe the people that help with that event could help out with a grand re-opening event.

Chairman Grossart would like to know how much the city gave out in free stickers and vouchers from the program. Ken Busse will get some numbers from Dan Nisavic. Discussion ensued.

Chairman Grossart will look for volunteers in his next letter.

Fusion 59

Chairman Grossart understands that Trinity College will open in the fall. They have hired a new professor who is in charge of Fusion 59. He is enthused about moving forward with Fusion 59.

Judi Weber would like to give feedback for the program. Judi was very happy with Fusion 59. She received great ideas from the students and believes it is paying off.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Charlotte Moore
Recording Secretary