



APPROVED

**Central Street Evanston
Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 9, 2022, 9:00am
Zoom Meeting**

Attendees

Mari Barnes
Simone Oettinger
Peter O'Malley
Rachel Hershinow
Aim Larrabee
Paula Danoff
Paul Zalmazek
Angela Shaffer

Not Present: Julie Mathieu, John Tasi

Minutes

1. Meeting called to order at 9:01am
2. Treasurer's Report: Peter O'Malley
 - a. Budget:

Peter gave a budget update and shared the current healthy financial state:

 - To date our expenses are \$7,874 leaving a budget of \$240,926. Reserves = \$44,649.
 - Snow removal. After doing research, Peter determined that hiring a snow removal service for the district is too costly. He reported that you must also have a surplus \$ amount set aside if it snows more than what is in the budget. It's too unpredictable.
3. Governance Committee: Mari Barnes
 - a. Mari reminded us that we need to pick a date for our Annual Meeting. Aim suggested that we make it a big party and Mari agreed. Typically it would be held in the first quarter of the year, but we will plan to hold it later in the year with good weather. Angela will start thinking of a good date for this.
 - b. Regarding SSA public meetings, Mari announced that meetings are always open to the public, but the public is only able to come and listen.
 - c. Regarding Board minutes. They will be posted to the website in draft form. They will be adopted as is, unless further notice.

4. Marketing Committee updates: Angela Shaffer
 - a. All Together Branding Campaign: Angela provided updates.
 - Survey promotion: Posters were printed and distributed to high traffic businesses. We had a social media campaign in addition to information posted on our website. We sent information in the Central Street newsletter, and Councilmember Revelle also shared the survey in her newsletter.
 - Survey Responses: 167 Community Responses. Expecting a minimum of 200 from the community. Only 5 business responses. Out of 64 newsletter opens, 14 clicked on the survey, and only 5 submitted. We have a newsletter open rate of 46%. Only 14 clicks on the survey out of 64 opens.
 - Focus groups are underway: Northwestern, Curt's Cafe, realtors, Mitchell Museum, and restaurant owners.
 - Survey responses submitted to-date are positive and really helpful. About 76% of respondents live in the neighborhood and 10% work in or nearby the district.
 - Branding meeting will be closed and only for the Board.
 - b. Planter Updates:
 - Brightview quotes came in. We budgeted \$17K for planter maintenance. Option A: \$16,800. 6 additional 36 x 36 planters + maintenance, added maintenance plan to include weeding of tree grates, sidewalk weeds, etc. Option B: 8 additional planters + maintenance, added maintenance plan to include weeding of tree grates, sidewalk weeds, etc. = \$20,400.
 - Central Street was included in a citywide planter maintenance RFP. Waiting on results. RFP closing date is 2/24.
 - c. Holiday Lights:
 - We need to let Scott know when we want him to take the lights down (3-day process). Angela suggested at the end of February, weather permitting. Rachel agreed.
 - d. Annual Report: First draft almost complete
 - e. Rachel mentioned it might be a fun idea to look into getting a free library. Angela already looked into this based on an earlier conversation, and there are regulations we must follow. And, there are concerns with having to pay for a new library box if it gets vandalized. Angela also suggested we keep it on the wish list for now, and address it at another time. Perhaps it's something that can be added to the new Independence Park buildout.
5. Event Committee updates from: Simone Oettinger
 - a. April 30 event still in the works. The committee would like to consider adding a charitable angle, possibly related to food insecurity. Simone asked Angela to connect with Maggie Quinn to learn more about the community fridges and how they work. Would it make sense to consider funding a fridge in our community or another community? Angela shared that we have a mission and a vision for Central Street. We need to make sure that our dollars and programming support efforts that bring people back to supporting the Central Street business district. If any type of nonprofit fundraiser is considered, it should be to support the nonprofits in our very own district.

6. City and other: Paul Zalmezak
 - a. Board Structure: Paul shared examples from Downtown Evanston and MDM. He shared why Downtown Evanston has been so successful all these years, and some of the challenges MDM faces when too many board members are involved in the day to day. He highly recommended CSE start to work in the direction of the Downtown model where Annie presents an overarching plan based on her board's vision with options for the board to vote on.. Mari agreed that this is how she'd like the CSE SSA to operate. Paula said this is also how EAC operates.
 - b. Paul said he'd like to see Evanston business districts come together more often with shared opportunities.
 - c. Paul suggested that the CSE Board meet quarterly and not every month.
 - d. Paul would also like to see us do more programming in Independence Park. He suggested we look at the [Detroit Cadillac Market](#) for ideas.
 - e. Paul wants to see Central Street really start to think about cleaning up our district. Get rid of garbage and flyers on poles. He would like to see us have a clean and safe district.
7. New Business/Updates: Angela Shaffer
 - a. Prairie Avenue Gallery Artsy Card Shop, Prairie Joe's West, De Salvo's Pizza, Blended smoothies coming in the spring. Eric Young from La Principal will be taking over the Prairie Joe's space.
 - b. Paul shared that the space at 1803 Central has been purchased and is in the process of being completely converted and renovated. Jiu Jitsu and restaurant with offices above.
 - c. Simone mentioned that Page 1 Books has a new owner, but that it's still being run by the same staff.
8. Meeting adjourned at 9:50am