



**Downtown Evanston Executive Board**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, September 14, 2023, 9AM**

**Creative Coworking, 922 Davis Street**

**Attendees:** Mike Smylie, Angela Valavanis, Andrew McDonald, Gretchen Brauer, Isabella Libmann

**Not Present:** Jazmine Lee (*excused*), Nathan Kostant (*excused*)

- I. Call to Order by Mike (9:05AM)
- II. Approval of August Minutes
  - a. Angela motioned to approve; Andrew seconded. Meeting minutes approved.
- III. Treasurer's Report
  - a. Andrew noted that Fall SSA collection is still expected in January 2024.
  - b. Transfer funds to Money Market account **[VOTE]**
    - i. Andy reminded the Board that we recently approved (via email) moving our Money Market account to a new product at Byline Bank with a higher interest rate yield.
    - ii. Andy proposed to move \$100K from our checking account to the new Money Market account.
    - iii. Andy proposes to transfer funds from, and close out, the Gift Card account (~\$4,000) to the new Money Market account.
    - iv. Andrew motioned to approve these changes; Mike seconded. Transfer of funds approved.
  - c. *Approval of the 90-day extension of the existing line of credit at Byline Bank is granted, as is the one-year renewal in December of 2023. The authorized signer is Andy Vick.*  
**[VOTE]**

- i. Andy noted that Downtown Evanston will keep the line of credit open even when it is paid off, just in case it's needed in the future.
  - ii. Andrew motioned to approve extension and renewal as noted above, and to confirm Andy as the authorized signer; Mike seconded. Extension and renewal approved.
- d. 2024 Draft Budget **[VOTE]**
  - i. Andrew, Andy, Laura met with Amy to review line items based on 2023 budget. Andy made some minor edits, but very similar to 2023 with same starting tax base as foundation for 2024.
  - ii. Still waiting for confirmation from Northwestern University, re: 2024 funding, but we are presuming it will be the same amount as 2023.
  - iii. Gretchen motioned to approve; Isabelle seconded. 2024 budget approved.

#### IV. Executive Director update

- a. Numerous meetings with City council members, City staff, community partners, business owners
- b. Purchased new office computers, name tags, hats, business cards
- c. Website updates: Spanish-language translation, Vibemap (mapping tool) is live
- d. Landscape: Walk-through with Brightview focused on ways to control/prevent rat/rodents; proposal to repave the grass and dirt (former spruce tree) to be funded by City; waiting for estimate for holiday tree with lights to be installed on north side of plaza
- e. Conversation with StreetPlus team
- f. Leadership Evanston: Andy participating in the program for 2023-24; paying for it out of 2024 budget
- g. Meet & Greet at Hyatt House for Board of Directors, businesses and other stakeholders - TBD
- h. Evanston Restaurant Association: Downtown Evanston taking on an administrative and communication role for this city-wide group
- i. Programs:
  - i. Downtown Music Series: conversation with Council members Nieuwsma and Kelly about new music series in Downtown; meeting with Evanston Space to discuss

- ii. Evanston Rides! bike series: adult and family bike rides starting/ending in Downtown

V. Director of Marketing update

- i. Laura updated the Board about upcoming events and marketing plans

VI. Other Business

a. Church Street mural **[VOTE]**

- i. EMAP projects on Church Street: \$8000 for the north side of the mural updates was approved by board in May 2023. EMAP requested an additional \$7800 for repairs and redo of the mural on the south side of the street.
- ii. Angela requested a timeline for monitoring and maintaining murals to plan for in budget
- iii. Andrew motioned to reallocate \$7,800 to redo the Church Street mural. Angela seconded. Mural funding approved.

b. Jonathan Perman request

- i. Jonathan asked that Downtown Evanston publicly support the mixed use/residential development on Chicago Avenue.
- ii. The Board commented that while Downtown Evanston encourages new development to have more residents downtown, the organization typically does not take an advocacy role on specific projects.

VII. Adjournment

- a. Angela motioned to adjourn; Andrew seconded. Meeting adjourned. (9:55AM)