



**Downtown Evanston Board Meeting**  
**May 21, 2020, 9:00am**  
**Zoom Meeting**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees**

Andrew McDonald, *Board Chair*, Rotary International  
Marilyn Ruiz Faklis, *Secretary*, downtown Evanston resident  
Eric Krzystofiak, Wheel & Sprocket  
Mike Smylie, *Executive Committee*, Smylie Brothers Brewing Co.  
Stefanie Olencheck, *Executive Committee*, Hyatt House  
Marty Cless, Core & Rind Hospitality (1026 Davis St.)  
Carol Bass, downtown resident  
Renee Berliant, Colliers (500 Davis St.)  
Gregory Stewart, resident  
Renata Gherghiceanu, Golub & Co. (1603 Orrington Plaza)  
Paul Zalmeszak, City of Evanston  
Shannon Townsend, Hilton Garden Inn  
Dave Davis, Northwestern University  
Roger Sosa, Evanston Chamber of Commerce  
Paul Zalmeszak, City of Evanston  
Angela Valavanis, Creative Coworking  
Farhan Ali, Highlands REIT (Sherman Plaza)

**Guests**

Gina Speckman, Chicago's North Shore CVB

**Staff**

Annie Coakley  
Laura Brown

Andrew McDonald called the meeting to order at 9:00am. Andrew welcomed attendees and asked for introductions.

**Approval of Meeting Notes**

Andrew called for approval of December 12, 2019 meeting minutes. Gregory Stewart motioned to approve and Mike Smylie seconded. Board unanimously approved meeting minutes.

**Treasurers Report: Annie Coakley**

Annie proposed hosting another Board Meeting in July (TBD) to approve reallocation of some budget categories (Events, Business Retention) due to Covid-19.

- Reviewed approved budget to discuss some of the changes:
- \$592,666 for total levy will come in the fall 2020; line of credit for beginning of the year to cover costs until we receive the full levy in fall 2020
- SSA income for 2021 might be less due to loss of sponsorship from events but there are cost savings due to event cancellations.
- Renee asked about the sponsorship for Oktoberfest and overall budget for Oktoberfest. Annie will share the sponsorship documents.

**Board of Directors Nominations & Vote: Andrew McDonald**

Andrew reviewed the Board of Directors class structure and presented the list of Board nominations for 2020-2021 as approved by the Executive Committee.

Andrew Mike Smylie motioned; Angela seconded. Board approved unanimously to approve the Board of Directors

Renata Gherghiceanu was nominated as Executive Committee member and Stefanie Olencheck nominated as the Treasurer of the Board. Ranee ; Gregory Stewart seconded approval of Executive Committee members

**Class 4 Changes:**

- Renata Gherghiceanu, Golub & Co. (1603 Orrington Avenue), nominated for Board of Directors and Executive Committee
- Stefanie Olencheck, Hyatt House nominated for Secretary on Executive Committee

Board unanimously approved the changes to the Board and Executive Committee.

**City of Evanston Update: Erica Storlie**

- Updates about summer events, camps, recreational activities
- Support Outdoor Dining accommodations
- Community engagement will be online for foreseeable future; regularly scheduled committee meetings are back on schedule
- City Budget: hopeful federal government will step in for municipalities. Proposed bill introduced by the House would be a windfall but not sure it will pass in Senate; responsibility of the federal government to help mitigate the impacts of Covid-19
- Implemented 2 weeks of furlough for all City staff; working with the 4 unions on agreements
- Parking enforcement will come online in June
- City services update at Council Meeting on Tuesday, May 26

**Dave Davis, Northwestern University**

- Operating on the assumption that students will return in fall (late September) but have not released a statement publicly
- Housing is one issue because they have to establish partnerships with buildings/facilities to be able to house all of the students (single room living)
- Athletics: reduced capacity at all athletic events/competitions
- Safety protocols for staff, students, all facilities
- NU on a State of Illinois of Higher Education Covid-19 Response Committee

**Downtown Evanston Presentation: Annie Coakley**

- **SSA reconstitution:** SSA ordinance approved at December 9 City Council meeting. New SSA# is #9; increased tax rate cap but it is significantly lower than other communities because we are fortunate that our EAV for the district is strong; tax rate cap is the ceiling, doesn't mean we will increase to that level
- **Strategic Plan Goals: Reviewed the goals for 2016-2020. Down**
- **Special events:** Holiday Window Contest, Tree Lighting, Warm Bevy Walk, Hygge Fest – hosted 19 events at businesses throughout the month; summer events mostly cancelled but trying to host social distant evnets

- **Advertising:** Shifting some of the advertising expenses to focus on digital, i.e. no longer purchasing CTA ads
- **Covid-19 Business Recovery Task Force:**
  - Focused on Communication, Advocacy, Recovery
  - Created a robust resource list for financial assistance that was distributed to all businesses
  - Recovery Playbook: document outlining a list of recommendations for businesses reopening in Phase 3 with the IDPH health requirements (released tomorrow 5/22). What are best practices for businesses by type; what will make your customers feel comfortable re-entering your business; what are additional resources for specific industries?)
  - Created and distributed signage for businesses that focused on WithoutAid, Reopening Guidelines, Keep Calm & Carry Out (City of Evanston campaign)
  - Shifting to industry-focused assistance to help get back to business in safest way; helping to identify priorities for types of businesses
- **Events**
  - Evanston Art Connects (Memorial Day): passive event featuring artists in local businesses; window shopping and meals-to-go; hosted musician in the Gap for music to carry on to the street
  - Summer events (TNL, Sip & Stroll, Fitness events) cancelled but working on Get Fit Friday fitness events and scavenger hunts
  - Fall events in development – how to host events with safety a top priority

**Andrew adjourned the meeting at 10:00am**