



**Downtown Evanston Executive Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, November 12, 2023, 9AM  
Creative Coworking, 922 Davis Street**

Board Members: Mike Smylie (Chair), Angela Valavanis (Vice Chair), Andrew McDonald (Treasurer), Isabelle Libmann

Absent: Gretchen Brauer, Jazmine Lee, Nathan Kostant

Guest: Paul Zalmezak, City of Evanston

Staff: Andy Vick, Laura Brown

- I. Mike Smylie called meeting to order at 9:07am
- II. Approval of November Minutes
  - a. Angela motioned to approve; Andrew seconded; minutes approved unanimously.
- III. Treasurer's Report: Andrew
  - a. December Financials
    - i. Tax levy payment due at the end of January; Paul noted it might be sooner
    - ii. Currently have 2.5 months of reserves left, so if the distribution is any further delayed, we will have to tap into our existing line of credit
  - b. Andy's additional updates
    - i. Adding "classes" to 2024 Chart of Accounts so that we can track revenues and expenses by individual programs
    - ii. Continuing to collect accounts receivables from outstanding invoices
    - iii. Moved \$50k from Byline money market account to checking account to cover anticipated 2023 expenses
    - iv. 2022 audit is complete and uploaded to website
- IV. Executive Director update: Andy
  - a. Continuing to make internal updates on OneDrive file management, contact organization, etc.
  - b. Website updates are ongoing, including meetings with VibeMap to work out glitches

c. Events:

- i. Holiday Light Celebration: successful and light-hearted event all around; DTE split costs of tree and lighting with the City of Evanston
  - ii. Grand Menorah Lighting: provided support for the event
  - iii. Downtown Summer Sounds: focusing on sponsorships for the 12-concert series. Secured a \$10K sponsorship from UL, and working several other possibilities.
- d. Holiday Lights: added lights on Church Street near Church Street Plaza and split costs with GW Properties; adds a warmth and glow to downtown
- e. In process of renewing 2024 landscaping contract with BrightView Landscaping
- f. Andy joined Margarita Good Neighbor Committee (quarterly meetings) and City's Economic Development Committee as an ex-officio member (monthly meetings)
- g. Andy will be participating in League of Women Voters panel on Downtown Evanston economic development efforts on 1/27
- h. Exploring ways to support and collaborate with new Evanston Folk Festival on Sept 7 & 8

V. Director of Marketing update (Laura)

- a. Holiday Events: Small Business Saturday, Warm Bevy Walk successful
- b. 2024 Events: S'mores at the Square, Earth Day Clean Up, Sip 'n Stroll, Downtown Summer Sounds, Thursday Night Markets, Big Bite Night and holiday events; not going to have Hygge Fest this year
- c. Advertising: New digital team for holidays, and reviewing 2024 advertising proposal for digital and social

VI. Paul Zalmezak

- a. Moving forward with Evanston Thrives Placemaking Kits, Enjoy Evanston marketing campaign; will look to business districts for input on these programs
- b. Will be dedicating the new AMC Movie Theatre outdoor sign this evening at 4:30PM

VII. Board Announcements (All)

- a. Next meeting: January 11, 2024 at 9am at Creative Coworking

VIII. Adjournment (Mike)

- a. Andrew motioned to adjourn; Angela seconded; meeting adjourned at 10:00am