



**Downtown Evanston Executive Board**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, February 8, 2024, 9:30AM**  
**Creative Coworking, 922 Davis Street**

Board Members: Mike Smylie (Chair), Andrew McDonald (Treasurer), Angela Valavanis (Vice Chair), Isabelle Libmann, Nathan Kostant (on phone), Gretchen Brauer

Absent: Jazmine Lee

Guest: Paul Zalmezak, City of Evanston

Staff: Andy Vick, Laura Brown

- I. Mike called the meeting to order at 9:35am
- II. Approval of January Minutes (Mike): Izzy motioned to approve; Angela seconded. Meeting minutes approved.
- III. Treasurer's Report: Andrew & Andy
  - a. Explanation of primary factors end of year surplus:
    - i. 2023 budget already included an expected surplus of \$44,000+
    - ii. Additional \$31,000+ in tax revenue from Cook County
    - iii. Projected \$24,000 loss of tax collections did not happen
    - iv. \$33,000+ salary and benefit savings from May–August when no ED
    - v. Other miscellaneous savings
  - b. Discussion about how to spend additional funds at future board meeting – placemaking, planters, advertising, maintenance?
  - c. Received the 2<sup>nd</sup> 2022 tax levy check from City of Evanston
  - d. Added new expense by "class" to track program revenue/expenses in 2024
- IV. Executive Director update (Andy)

- a. Annual Report: Board to share any edits to the report; plan to send out early next week
  - b. Evanston Thrives: ongoing meetings about priorities, placemaking
  - c. Sponsorship update: confirmed from Golub, Core & Rind, Trufit, UL, ECB&T, Hagerty. Meetings and asks with Rotary, Byline, Albion, ZS, Avidor, Litowitz Foundation, Gearhead, North Shore Health System
  - d. Meetings with EMAP about murals at the Metra roundabout especially with City now moving to 909 Davis Street
  - e. Andy talked to Metra about cleaning up the exit/entrance and areas around the Davis Street station; possible work to happen in spring 2024
- V. Director of Marketing update (Laura)
- a. Upcoming Events:
    - i. S'mores on the Square: Feb. 10 & March 9, 5-7pm; partnership with City of Evanston Parks & Recreation
    - ii. Love Local Chocolate Crawl: Feb. 15
  - b. Advertising: working with Amethyst to start on creative for advertising; talking with Gina at CVB about a co-op for bus ads for Summer Sounds
  - c. Business Outreach: Ten Thousand Villages, cloth + home, Alex Sound & Photos, Devil Dawgs, Ume Tea, Cora Violet Auctions
- VI. Other Business (Mike)
- a. Beer sales at *Downtown Summer Sounds*: Sketchbook and Core & Rind Hospitality
  - b. 2024 Board Members & Officers
    - i. The nominating committee is the Executive Committee so will determine new board members to invite and vote on at the April meeting.
- VII. Board Announcements (All)
- a. Angela is hosting a meeting for downtown residents on March 13, 6:30-8:30pm
  - b. Paul: City of Evanston move to 909 Davis Street; 15-year lease; create a civic presence at the plaza between Church & Davis
  - c. Gretchen: New book launch "Ride Beside Me" at Wheel & Sprocket on 2/24
- VIII. Mike adjourned the meeting at 10:35am

Next Exec Board meeting: Thursday, March 14, 9:30AM

Next FULL BOARD meeting, Thursday, April 18, 4PM, 820 Davis Street