

City of Birmingham
Birmingham Shopping District Proceeding
Thursday, February 4, 2021 - 8:30 a.m.
ZOOM Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the Birmingham Shopping District Board held Thursday, February 4, 2021, at 8:30 a.m. via ZOOM Meetings

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL OF BOARD

PRESENT: Astrein (Birmingham, MI), Eid (Birmingham, MI), Hockman (Bloomfield Hills, MI), Kay (Birmingham, MI), Lundberg (Bloomfield Hills, MI), Markus (Birmingham, MI), McKenzie (Birmingham, MI), Pohlod (Birmingham, MI), Quintal (Birmingham, MI), Roberts (Bloomfield Hills, MI), Surnow (Birmingham, MI)

ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT:

ADMINISTRATION: Brook (Royal Oak, MI), Bassett (Birmingham, MI), Comerford (White Lake, MI)

2. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

David Hoehendorf, Doug Fehan

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Motion by Pohlod, seconded by Kay to approve the minutes dated January 7, 2021.

VOTE: Yeas, 11 Nays, 0 Absent, 0

4. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

5. REPORTS

a. **FINANCE REPORT – HOCKMAN**

Hockman reported that the current cash flow is close to the forecasted amount. It is within \$6,000 of the expected. We had anticipated receiving some special assessment money in December, but the bills were not mailed until January. Therefore, we have not yet seen payments. There is a variance of approximately \$12,000 for personnel. This is because there were three payrolls in December. It will adjust back to expected amounts in January. Advertising was also more robust than it has been in the past.

The balance sheet shows that we are half way through the fiscal year and that most expenditures are about where we expect them to be. However, overall we are only at 36% of the expected expenses, which puts us in a favorable position. We do have some programs planned that will affect this moving forward.

b. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT – HOCKMAN

Hockman complimented the staff team for doing a great job and making sure that things are all covered.

c. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

SPECIAL EVENTS - ASTREIN

Astrein reported that receipts are being submitted for the Birmingham Restaurant Week Birmingham Bucks incentive. Receipts for approximately \$10,000 in Bucks have already been submitted. He expects that submissions will reach or even exceed the \$20,000 budget.

Astrein shared that the special event applications for Farmers Market, Movie Nights and Day on the Town would be considered by the city commission at their next meeting. The application includes plans for the farmers market to return to a walkable format.

Roberts added that the first week of Restaurant Week had no indoor dining and it was very cold out so it was a little slow, but he had a great weekend.

Hockman said that he thinks that restaurants are doing a great job and he hopes that the Restaurant Week promotion encourages people to support the restaurants.

MARKETING & ADVERTISING - POHLOD

Pohlod reported that work on the new website continues. The committee has looked at and approved the page layout. The site is now being developed. She expects to be able to show the board the new site at next month's meeting.

There is a spring retail promotion scheduled for April. A new video will be filmed in March.

The marketing committee is also looking into how to make Birmingham Bucks less complicated as some people have had difficulty submitting their receipts. They are also brainstorming ways to get better attendance at merchant meetings.

Astrein asked if there had been any feedback on the holiday video and wondered about the possibility of including more stores in the future. Pohlod explained that the commercial spots are very short, so it is difficult to include more stores, but they will try to get more in for the spring promotion.

The plan for the spring video is to shoot at The Daxton with products from many different retailers.

McKenzie suggested a social media campaign that highlights local business owners. He believes that that would put a face to the stores and may help to create a bond. Pohlod thanked him for the insight. She said that they are working to do that, but owners do not always want to be highlighted. Kay agreed that participation could be an issue. McKenzie suggested going over metrics and explaining that it could increase business.

MAINTENANCE/CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS - QUINTAL

Quintal shared that he felt that the holiday lighting looked good. The committee is looking for a centerpiece for Merrill Street. The decorations will be taken out of the planters. They will leave the greens as long as they look healthy.

The committee decided to wait to schedule the DPS appreciation luncheon until after the snowy season so that there can be better participation. They will work to use a Birmingham restaurant.

The RFPs for planters and hanging baskets have been posted. Proposals are due on February 11.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT - SURNOW

Surnow reported that the committee had a great meeting with Ciura. She is currently fostering seven active deals. She mentioned that Birmingham rental prices are high and those looking to rent are often looking for tenant improvement dollars, which can be a challenge. Surnow shared that he thinks Ciura's experience is helpful, as she knows what the industry norms are.

He added that the committee is working on revamping the pipeline report and how they measure progress. The committee talked about creating goals and objectives. McKenzie added that the revamped pipeline would capture more data making the output a little easier to read. The goal is to be able to assess the health of the pipeline – to see how old deals are, are we targeting the right businesses and where are deals getting stuck?

There are currently twenty-five active leads. A little over half of them are apparel. Most of those are national retailers and almost two-thirds would be new to the Michigan market. Six deals have active letters of intent signed.

Surnow said that he is excited by this. It is good to see deals continuing to move along and the committee will continue to work on revising the report.

Hockman complimented the committee on how they have worked to make things relevant. He thanked McKenzie for taking the lead on the new report.

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORT - HOCKMAN

Hockman shared that the job posting for a new executive director closed on Friday. There were forty-three applicants. Human resources was pleased with the quality of the candidates. They will sort them and narrow them down for phone interviews. From there approximately 5-7 will be invited to have Zoom interviews where the executive committee will take the lead. Two or three will move to a second round before a recommendation will be made to the full board. He expects the process to take sixty to ninety days.

d. PARKING REPORT - ASTREIN

Astrein reported that there was no meeting last month. The group will meet in March and look at the possibility of extending free parking in the structures. They hope to see who will be bringing workers back to the office and when to get an idea of how deck usage will be impacted. Fehan suggested looking at current deck usage, when it is free, to see how much income would really be lost so that we do not have distorted numbers.

Astrein added that they are also looking into contactless entry options.

e. **CHAMBER REPORT**

There was no report from the Chamber.

f. **COMMUNITY HOUSE REPORT**

There was no report from The Community House.

6. APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS

MOTION: Motion by Astrein, seconded by Kay to approve the vouchers, as submitted, dated February 4, 2021.

VOTE: Yeas, 11 Nays, 0 Absent, 0

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. Resolution to Approve Fund Transfer

Hockman explained that the funds for the 12 Days of Take-Out promotion came from the marketing budget and now need to be replaced. Since some of the special events were not able to take place this year due to the COVID-19 situation, there are funds available in that budget line item.

MOTION: Motion by Astrein, seconded by Pohlod to approve the resolution of a transfer of \$40,000 from Special Events budget to Marketing and Advertising budget

VOTE: Yeas, 11 Nays, 0 Absent, 0

9. INFORMATION

a. Retail Activity

b. Announcements

c. Letters, Board Attendance & Monthly Meeting Schedule

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Astrein thanked Surnow for the nice holiday baskets. He also asked Markus if there are COVID-19 guidelines for special events on the city website. Markus said that most issues would be addressed in the application process.

11. ADJOURNMENT – 9:17 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Jaimi Brook (back-up notes on file)