

**DOWNTOWN OAK PARK BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING MINUTES**  
**August 13, 2024 VIA ZOOM**

**Present:** Susie Goldschmidt, Frank Heitzman, Mike Fox, Paul Beckwith, Tina Salerno, Michelle Vanderlaan, Jonathan Kaufman, Ray Ward. Emily Egan

**Staff:** Shanon Williams, Amelia Dellos, Jeff Eng, Jayne Furlong

The Downtown Oak Park Board of Directors' meeting was called to order by Board President, Susie Goldschmidt, at 8:32am via Zoom.

**Motion to Approve June 2024 Minutes:**

Approved: Mike Fox

Seconded: Ray Ward

All in favor

- Motion Carried –

**Finance Report – Jeff Eng**

1. **SSA** - The 3rd Quarter SSA was received from the Village.
2. **Spring/Summer Plantings** - The summer planting cost \$36,830 and was within the \$40,000 budget.
3. **Thursday Night Out** - TNO has been busier this year compared to last year, even though the numbers by the end of July might suggest otherwise. As of the end of July, 5,196 books were sold this year vs. 5,808 last year. However, there were only 7 Thursdays in June and July this year vs. 9 Thursdays last year, due to how the Thursdays fell. Also, there was no TNO on the 4th of July this year. On a per Thursday night basis, on average 742 books were sold this year vs. 645 books last year. In addition, TNO expenses are so far within budget. As far as redemptions, \$79,749 has been redeemed to Merchants this year vs. \$87,739 last year. However, the percentage redeemed is the same, 63% redeemed this year vs. 62% last year. Next month's August report will have the final number of total books sold, although redemptions and expenses will go into September.
4. **Extra Reserves and Snow Reserves Accounts** - The Extra Reserve Account totals \$237,360 and the Snow Reserve Account \$71,447. Finishing audit - should have a number from Sasetti. McAdams will give a snow removal estimate as well. At the next meeting will update what these should be.
  - a. Board Feedback - Susie - credit card charges. Passing fee to purchaser?
    - i. Jeff - to date have not passed it on. Bulk is TNO and second is gift certificates. Recoup a bit for online orders but not much.
    - ii. Mike F - makes sense to do it - dollar for dollar?

- iii. Tina - just implemented in salon, have had some pushback but people are more used to it
- iv. Jeff - debit and credit both have fees
- v. Shanon - Not sure if we should pass that fee on to the public, possibly examine increasing sponsorships
  - 1. Jayne - We do already hear from the public that \$25 for 4 tickets seems high
  - 2. Michelle - lots of eyes at TNO, great opportunity for sponsorships
  - 3. Amelia - have a lot of interest in healthcare entities, Rush, Advent
  - 4. Jeff - Currently \$8k budgeted from 3 sponsors

**Motion to Approve July 2024 Financial Statements:**

Approved: Frank H

Seconded: Mike

All in favor

-Motion carried –

**Village Updates - Emily Egan**

- 1. Transportation Commission reviewed Vision Zero plan draft. Vision Zero focuses on preventing accidents for pedestrians and cyclists resulting in injury and death. Focuses on safety in traffic-heavy areas as well as residential streets. Will have infrastructure and policy changes involved. Will send the link.
- 2. Village Board approved the 6th amendment for Pete's on Madison. Should see activity on site now.
- 3. Board Feedback
  - a. Susie - Lot 10 is beautiful!
  - b. Paul - Owner of Cozy Corner - any movement in filling that space?
    - i. Emily - Have spoken with the property owner, did a site visit to see what upgrades would be needed. Continuing communication to ensure the work is done so a tenant can come in quickly afterward. Also spoke to Cozy Corner business owner to try and keep that business in the Village.
    - ii. Susie - Are repairs specific to keeping the space a restaurant?
      - 1. Emily - Almost any new business would require some of the work to be done.
  - c. Tina - Any movement at Lou's Peking? Has been vacant for a long time.
    - i. Mike - knows and will reach out to owner
    - ii. Tina - a property management company handles building for the owner
    - iii. Emily - will pass along contact for support
  - d. Tina - Korean BBQ timeline?
    - i. Emily - Another 4 months at least for remodel

**Marketing - Amelia**

- 1. Branding
  - a. Logo rollout - Street banners are up

2. Drone Footage
  - a. Shot last month. Editing currently. Will be adding this to the website homepage for first impression.
    - i. Frank - Who did we work with?
      1. Amelia - Team from Rockfort
    - ii. Shanon - This is bringing us in line with many other downtown districts and really brings it to life online.
    - iii. Also working with Mike Duddles to overhaul the website
    - iv. Issues with Downtown Oak Park sign - rats ruining plantings, need to reshoot that area
3. Sculpture Walk - got a lot of engagement online
  - a. Susie - really appreciate having the information when seeing sculptures but this shouldn't be our responsibility to put together. In the future, the Arts Council should handle the information.
  - b. Frank - Do we have any say in the selection of sculptures?
    - i. Shannon - There is not a huge pool to pick from, maybe 15 total, but we do weigh in

### **Events - Jayne Furlong**

1. Thursday Night Out
  - a. So far, 121 books ahead of last year by this time and crowds have been strong.
  - b. New layout and increased tables/chairs have been well-received
    - i. Tina - The music has been great this season
      1. Susie - do we get solicitations from bands?
        - a. Jayne - Yes, bands frequently reach out to be considered
2. Oaktoberfest
  - a. New Additions - New layout to increase footprint, Train in Lot 3, Waste Stations for Compost and Recycling
    - i. Susie - Money drop is set up, will collaborate with Jeff
    - ii. Susie - Sponsorships?
      1. Shanon - Budgeted \$7k, have received \$5.5k
    - iii. Susie - Do we need more volunteers?
      1. Jayne - Staff will reach out with opportunities to volunteer

### **Cicada mite bite**

#### **Old Business - Shannon Williams**

1. Lot 10
  - a. Event Box - in contact with Village, there is enough electricity but now is a matter of cost, hope to have available next year
    - i. Emily - Board approved extra money to ensure the box will be available, organizations will pay fee for use

2. Gift Certificate Program - part of branding involved revamping the look of the gift certificate program, have been redoing the program and will be rolling out an advertising campaign to increase sales
3. Website Updates - working with Mike Duddles to update the website

### **New Business**

1. Village Budget Meeting - Susie and Shanon will meet with Village for budget review next week, in Sept will meet with Kevin Jackson
2. Business Closings (Cozy Corner/Book Table) - no closing date for Book Table
  - a. Mike - has been an ongoing conversation, likely closing by the end of the year
  - b. Will market as one or two spaces, since it was designed as two storefronts
3. Democratic National Convention - An update went out to merchants
  - a. Emily - trying to promote Oak Park
4. Tina - Outdoor Dining - lock up at night? Chairs being dragged to the front of salon overnight - QBBQ
  - a. Paul - could be Munch based on being down there, unhoused also sleeping on outdoor furniture

### **Consent Reports**

- a) Executive Director – Shanon Williams
  1. Electronic Kiosk - researching options with 3 companies, Village said there is already electricity at the Kiosk site on Marion
    - a. Emily - be mindful of codes for signage
    - b. Frank - previous plans may have included money for a kiosk, Shannon will investigate
  2. Triton Merchant Enrichment Seminars - Marketing Boot Camp
- b) Marketing – Amelia Dellos
- c) Events/Communication- Jayne Furlong

**Motion to adjourn:** Downtown Oak Park Board of Directors' Meeting at 9:41 am by Susie Goldschmidt, Board President.

Approved: Mike

Seconded: Tina

All in favor

-Motion Carried –