
**WEST READING COMMUNITY
REVITALIZATION FOUNDATION**

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**WEST READING COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION FOUNDATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**MINUTES
AUGUST 6, 2012**

Foundation Board of Director Members Present

Robin Horman (LiliBea's), *Secretary*; Margaret Bligh (The Reading Hospital and Medical Center), *Treasurer*; Richard Sichler (Borough Manager), *Member*; Phil Wert (West Reading Borough Council), *Member*; Rebecca J. Doubek, (Firefly on Penn), *Member*; Deborah Hutcheson (Charles Hutcheson Fine Jewelry), *Member*; and John Woodward (Third & Spruce Café), *Member*. A quorum was present.

Foundation Board of Directors Members Absent

Dr. Mark G. Dougherty (Penn Avenue Dental), *Vice President*; and Shane J. Keller (Mayor of West Reading), *President*.

Guests Present

Steve Delucas, Reading Eagle; Argetime Evans, Sovereign Bank; Rick & Mary Wilkes, 423 Chestnut Street; Mr. & Mrs. Henry Wanner, 427 Chestnut Street, Pat Ritz, 435 Chestnut; Sandra Braley, 441 Chestnut; Bryce Matthews, NAC Chair; Carl Garman, NAC member; and Elizabeth Heckler, W.R. Borough Council.

Staff Present

Dean L. Rohrbach, *Elm Street Manager*; Melanie B. Weidner, *Administrative Assistant*; and Joan London, (Kozloff Stoudt), *Solicitor*.

Call to Order

Margaret Bligh called the meeting to order at 6:05PM.

Public Comments

Elizabeth Heckler requested public comments be reserved for later since guests had no agenda to form comments from.

Next Meeting: Monday, September 10, 2012 at 6PM at Reading Hospital Conference Room

The Say Cheese special PLCB permit was tabled because no one was present to represent them. Say Cheese attorney was requesting the CRF grant his client an Economic Development Liquor License to save him money on the cost of a regular liquor license. Mr. Woodward stated borough council didn't help him when he sought a liquor license. Mr. Wert stated borough council is looking to the CRF for a recommendation on liquor permits for economic development purposes since they must approve inter-county liquor license transfers. Also, he asked the solicitor if there is a ceiling on the number of special permits a borough can issue based on population size. Finally, it was noted that it's restaurants which provide Penn Avenue with any type of nightlife.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION to approve the Community Revitalization Foundations (CRF) board minutes for July 2012 was made by Deborah Hutcheson and seconded by John Woodward. (7-0)

Treasurer's Report

CRF Treasurer Ms. Bligh referred to July financial reports included in member's packets. There were no questions.

MOTION to approve the July Community Revitalization Foundation financial report and accounts payable report was made by Robin Horman and seconded by Rebecca J. Doubek. (7-0)

Promotion and Marketing Team

Ms. Hutcheson reported the last *First Thursday Free Concert* will be next month. The *Love West Reading Fashion Show* is moving along and special event insurance and a raffle permit have been ordered. Special event insurance has also been ordered for the *Fall Festival on the Avenue* event. Mr. Woodward asked what percentage of insurance is because we will serve alcohol. Ms. Weidner said it was less than half. Ms. Hutcheson stated beer sales covered all event expenses with over \$8,000 collected from beer sales. Adding speakers to street lights during *Holiday Glow Celebration* was briefly discussed.

Mr. Sichler stated he has been contacted by an individual who organizes marathon races (26 miles) and would like to conduct a Reading marathon for Fall 2013 from the pagoda to West Reading and through to Wyomissing Creek parkland. Right now the proposed route would take runners on Reading Avenue. Mr. Sichler stated he would rather the runners' use Penn Avenue to show off Main Street instead of using the back route. Mr. Sichler encouraged Promotion and Marketing Team members to get involved and plan something special for the day of the event.

Business Association

There was no Business Association report.

Elm Street Report

Dean L. Rohrbach, Elm Street Manager, addressed the board and handed out copies of the Center Point Plan and Five-Year Revitalization Strategy explaining that now that the

Elm Street program is under the auspices of the CRF board he was prepared to educate board members about Elm Street: who we are, where we're going, and how we intend to get there.

A copy of the Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC) July Design Committee minutes was included in board member's packets. Additionally, Mr. Rohrbach said he brought copies of all the *Façade Improvement Grant* files should there be any questions. The NAC Design Committee recommended approval of ten Façade Grant applications.

MOTION to approve the NAC Design Committee recommendations of the ten Façade Grant applications was made by Mr. Woodward and seconded by Mr. Sichler. (7-0)

A copy of the guidelines for the new *Home Security Grant* program was included in member's packets. Mr. Rohrbach explained this is a partnership between the West Reading Watchers crime watch group, West Reading Police Department, and West Reading Elm Street. There are no income restrictions in the guidelines.

MOTION to approve the Home Security Grant program guidelines was made by Ms. Horman and seconded by Ms. Hutcheson. (7-0)

Mr. Rohrbach presented three written bids to hire a painting contractor to prepare the nine properties in the 400 block of Chestnut Street for our *Let's Paint the Town* event. The lowest bid was A.G. Artisan Finishes at \$16,500.00.

MOTION to approve A.G. Artisan Finishes for the *Let's Paint the Town* painting contract at a price of \$16,500.00 was made by Ms. Doubek and seconded by Mr. Wert. (7-0)

Mr. Rohrbach stated we currently have three contracts open with DCED. One is complete except the audit. He presented an engagement letter from our auditors Reinsel Kuntz, Leshner to conduct a program audit for DCED Contract #C000045197. The contract is addressed to West Reading Borough Council since they are the ones who execute all our DCED contracts.

MOTION to recommend Borough Council execute the engagement letter from Reinsel Kuntz Leshner to conduct a program audit and close DCED Contract #C000045197 was made by Mr. Woodward seconded by Ms. Doubek. (7-0)

Mr. Rohrbach presented a document from VIST Bank which would allow for automatic transfers from our money market account to cover draw downs on our line of credit to avoid paying any draconian penalties should we miss a payment.

MOTION to approve executing the VIST Bank document to allow for automatic transfers from our money market account to cover draw downs on our line of credit subject review and approval by our solicitor was made by Ms. Hutcheson and seconded by Ms. Doubek. (7-0)

Mr. Rohrbach explained the bidding process we went through to hire a contractor for 23 S. 7th Avenue (PARR Project #1). Mr. Nicholas Gardecki of Berks Custom Remodeling and Restoration was the lowest bidder at \$93,000. Of the five bids submitted, even the lowest was higher than our target rehab cost of \$75,000. Mr. Gardecki has extensive experience working for Al Boscov on his Our Town Reading housing rehab projects. Mr. Woodward and Mr. Rohrbach both visited homes Mr. Gardecki did under the Our Town Reading and were impressed with the quality of workmanship. Additionally, Mr. Woodward and Mr. Rohrbach met with Mr. Gardecki to revise the scope of work. Mr. Rohrbach distributed copies of the revised work write up with a total cost of \$83,265.00. This is still about \$8,000 higher than we want to be.

Mr. Rohrbach said he will write grants to try and fill the gap. Mr. Rohrbach also said he spoke with Timothy Daley, Executive Director of Reading-Berks Habitat for Humanity (HFH) about helping us shave about \$10,000 from the total rehab cost and they are very interested in assisting us. Specifically, we would like HFH volunteers to paint or polyurethane all surfaces (walls, ceilings, woodwork, doors, etc.) after the general contractor finishes his work. This would include patching plaster, priming all surfaces with acrylic primer, painting ceilings a flat white, painting walls a matte antique white, and painting the trim a semi-gloss white. This would save us about \$6,000. Additionally, we would like HFH volunteers to help parge basement walls by removing loose material, pressure washing the surface, re-pointing areas of deteriorated mortar and filling holes, applying a parging mix and a commercial water sealer to a thickness of ½ inch. This would save us an additional \$3000. Finally, we could use HFH volunteers to help us in removing the existing wild and overgrown landscaping and replacing it with something more appropriate. This would save us about \$1,500.

We hope to have settlement on 10/1. The contractor's work should take about 2 ½ months so we would need HFH help around mid-December to early January. A cooperation agreement would need to be prepared before then.

We still need to have "as is" and "after rehab" appraisals done which will require a finalized rehabilitation work write up and contract with a general contractor before the October 1st settlement date.

A copy of the Rehabilitation Agreement to be executed between the contractor and CRF board was distributed to all members. Joan London reviewed the document with board members which is a two party agreement which will accept the contractor's proposal and establish a schedule of payments.

MOTION to accept the contractor's proposal subject to negotiation and approve executing the Rehabilitation Agreement to be executed between the contractor and CRF subject review and approval by our solicitor was made by Mr. Woodward and seconded by Ms. Doubek. (7-0)

Old & New Business

CRF Governance Guidelines Tabled. General consensus is a special meeting should convene to deal exclusively with matters pertaining to the Governance Guidelines.

Economic Development Liquor License: Tabled.

Public Comment Policy: Tabled.

Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn was made at 7:13PM by Ms. Hutcheson and seconded by Ms. Doubek. (7-0)

REMEMBER
NEXT MONTH'S MEETING IS ON MONDAY,
SEPTEMBER 10TH AT 6PM AT READING
HOSPITAL.