

Urban Neighbors Board Meeting

Tuesday, August 5, 2008

Conference Room, 7th Floor, 100 Park Avenue, Oklahoma City, OK 73102

Present: Brian Hammond, Mark Gibbs, Paige Gregory, Steven Newlon, Holly Shelton

Absent: Jeff Bezdek, Brett Price, David Remy

Guest: Alison Oshel

UN Members: Bose' Akadiri, Deemah Ramadan, Dick Rodine

Minutes

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM by Paige Gregory, UN Vice-President.

II. Guest Presentation

Alison Oshel of the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce invited Urban Neighbors to assist with a survey about what types of retailers that residents and workers would like to see Downtown in return for a stipend on the order of \$1,000. As with what was done in Denver, this information could be used to attract new retailers. The project would need significant proactive effort and support to be effective. Paige Gregory indicated that the survey would be web-based rather than paper. Alison Oshel said that the City of OKC Planning Department was about to update its 2005 Downtown Housing Study and suggested that Urban Neighbors be involved with this; Paige Gregory said she would contact Autumn Radle at the City. The current situation regarding support and associations for downtown retailers was also discussed. The next steps will be for the UN to formulate the needs to be covered in the survey and develop potential questions.

III. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the August 5, 2008 UN Board Meeting were unanimously approved.

IV. Financial Report

Mark Gibbs distributed monthly financial reports for May, June & July 2008. At the end of July the bank balance was \$12,300.27 and there was \$967.36 in the Paypal account. However, \$10,500 of this is specifically allocated the *Rack Up Downtown!* project. Motions were unanimously approved to:

- ***Rescind the motion from April 2008 Board meeting to open second bank account for the bike rack project and approve passing the City grant through the main UN account, subject to maintaining detailed records;***
- ***Approve the expenditure of bike rack funds as recommended by the project committee; and***
- ***Approve booking a table at the Neighborhood Alliance Good Neighborhood Awards Banquet on October 23, 2008 and subsidizing 50% of tickets for 8 UN members (total \$160).***

Paige Gregory will look into whether the \$300 annual membership renewal for the OKC Chamber can be waived.

V. Election of new Treasurer

Mark Gibbs noted that the UN By-Laws required a new Treasurer be elected since Robert Robles had now officially resigned from the position and from the Board. He emphasized

that he was unable to continue carrying out some of the Treasurer's duties as he has been doing for the last few months, that it is not a good idea to combine the Secretary and Treasurer position, and that the focused, dedicated attention of a Treasurer was needed on a number of issues. A discussion ensued about the need for and how to pay for a bookkeeper. Paige Gregory said she would obtain information about such people from Georgie Rasco at Neighborhood Alliance. With no other Board members indicating interest in the situation, Brian Hammond said he would be prepared to be Treasurer until the UN AGM next February. He was then nominated to the position unopposed.

VI. Membership Committee Report

Mark Gibbs reported current membership numbers of 65 Resident, 34 Associate and 23 Business members. The general email list stands at around 700. Bose' Akadiri reported that she has been working with Paige Gregory and Jason Blankenship (a graphic designer and new UN member) on a UN brochure that can be used for general publicity and recruitment. The cost is estimated to be 75 cents each, a starting order of 1,000 will be needed and the content will need to be approved by the Board. Steven Newlon asked whether a printer will be used who will defray some or all of the productions costs.

VII. Social Committee Report

Holly Shelton reviewed arrangements for the upcoming Social at the new Iguana Lounge on August 14. The September Social will be at Gaijin Sushi and the October at The Melting Pot. A wine dinner at Mickey Mantle's is currently being planned for sometime in September. Brian Hammond mentioned that he would be holding an informal draft at the August Social for the UN fantasy football league.

VIII. Marketing & Publicity Committee Report

Paige Gregory distributed a report covering the recent additions to the UN website and site activity such as visits, views and referring pages. Mark Gibbs reported that the Urban Neighbors Oklahoma trademark certificate had been received and Paige Gregory said she would look at how the trademark could now be used. The issue of intrinsic benefits for Business Members, such as the "Spotlight On" business members that had been posted in the UN newsletter and on the website, versus the need to charge businesses for advertising was revisited again. Paige Gregory said the Marketing Committee would continue to review the issue.

IX. Focus Group Reports

Brian Hammond had distributed a report on the activities and progress of the various Focus Groups and Subcommittees prior to the meeting. He highlighted a few issues: this evening's UN National Night Out event at Gaijin Sushi immediately after this meeting; the upcoming Downtown Personal Safety Class on Monday, August 11, sponsored by the UN, the Downtown College Consortium and the Downtown Library, which could be expected to be a good membership recruitment opportunity; exciting progress on a number of fronts regarding reducing train noise; and the planned submission of a report on the Downtown trolley system to the City Council at their Tuesday, August 12 meeting, in advance of a Metro Transit workshop for the City Council on August 19. Regarding the latter, Brian Hammond outlined the sequence of reviews and approvals that would be needed from the Transportation Subcommittee (meeting on Friday, August 8) and the Board over the coming weekend.

X. *Rack Up Downtown!* & Downtown Strategic Initiative Reports

Mark Gibbs reported that Stan Carroll's art rack design would be reviewed for a Certificate of Approval by the Bricktown Urban Design Committee on Wednesday, August 13. The project

launch event was now scheduled for 9:30 AM on September 10, the reception for volunteers and donors from 5-7 PM on September 17 and a participatory ride for Saturday morning, October 4. Mark Gibbs reported that he and Jeff Bezdek had been nominated to the “Movin’ Around” committee of the Downtown Strategic Initiative (DSI) which was being organized by the City of OKC Planning Department. He stressed that Urban Neighbors should be represented on other DSI committees that would be meeting next year.

XI. Replacement of recently resigned Board Members

Mark Gibbs advised that the UN By-Laws require that Board elections be held when Board membership falls below seven. With the resignations and moves out of the UN area by Andy Burnett, Brian Engel and Robert Robles, Board membership is currently at eight, so elections may – but do not need to – be held at this stage. After discussions regarding the need for fresh blood in the organization leadership and the terms that new Board members would be elected for, a motion to hold elections for new Board members was not approved.

XII. New Business

Paige Gregory reported that she had spoken with Georgie Rasco about holding a strategic planning session/retreat who had recommended that this be held after the summer, likely in October.

XIII. Announcements

None.

XIV. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Paige Gregory at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Mark Gibbs, Secretary