

Minutes of the Whittier Uptown Association Board Meeting

Meeting of Wednesday, April 28, 2014

Location: WUA Conference Room

Call to Order: 6:09 pm

Board Members in attendance Rick Gonzales, John Parker, Marilyn Brinegar, Tony Williams, Chuck Marsden, Chief Garry Couso-Vasquez, Remoun Said

Board Members not in attendance: Eduardo Tarin, Hector Alvarado

Non Board Members in attendance: Liz Apodaca, Angelica Frausto, Officer Ryan Todd, Karina Andrade, Charley Schieda, Alex Alaniz, Joel Gutierrez, Frances Romo, Jack (Whittier College student), Neo Jimenez, Daniel Ramos, Sandra Hahn, Steve Caringella

GUESTS: Guests spoke regarding the following topics: Mr. Scheida commented on the panhandlers, the police response to a call about panhandlers, and a request to fix the historic clock at the old Bank of America building.

CITY REPORT: Angelica Frausto reported on the following: the City Manager will start hosting quarterly meetings; the Antique Faire post event meeting will be scheduled; there was an incident at the Antique Faire that was an accident; the City is recruiting for a Community Development Director, an interim director is currently in place; the Taps & Tapas event is allowed to be conducted outside the Uptown boundaries so long as the funds raised benefit the businesses in Uptown and are spent within Uptown.

Officer Ryan Todd reported on the car accident that occurred at the Antique Faire; he also addressed Mr. Scheida's questions regarding panhandlers. Officer Todd will be added to the NextDoor social media site.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Karina Andrade commented that she had not mentioned the FBI at the prior meeting. Tony Williams moved to approve the Minutes of the Board Meeting of March 31, 2014 as corrected. John Parker seconded. Motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT: John Parker reported on the status of bank balances and outstanding invoices. The City does not have the April assessment check ready yet.

NEW BUSINESS

Presentation by Poet Community Partners: Whittier College representative Joel Gutierrez commented on their willingness to create a partnership with the WUA. Francis Romo also commented on the history of the program and the goal of creating a college town atmosphere. Karina Andrade commented on the goodie bags distributed at the last orientation day event. Rick Gonzales moved to establish a committee to collaborate with Whittier College. Marilyn Brinegar seconded. Motion passed.

Angelica Frausto commented that the college has been great in creating events to bring students to Uptown. If an event is co-hosted with the college, the City would work through the Association to process the event permit. Mr. Gutierrez commented on the ability of the college to communicate with students through listserv email. Jack shared

his experience with his first impressions of Uptown and his love of the area. He is a Boston native and compared Uptown to the small towns on the east coast.

New Board Member Application: Alex Alaniz commented on his career in real estate, his radio show, and his interest in joining the Board. Rick Gonzales move to appoint Alex Alaniz for the Board for a term of three years. Tony Williams seconded. Motion passed.

Armando Novello will be invited to attend a board meeting to introduce himself.

Rick Gonzales announced that Stuie Eisen has resigned from the Board.

Reevaluate Annual Events/New Events: Rick Gonzales commented on moving toward hiring a producer to oversee our events. Tony Williams distributed a proposal from NRD Productions to revive the Wednesday Night event. Mr. Williams responded to questions from the Board, stating that merchants would have priority to participate. Ms. Brinegar and Mr. Parker commented that they would prefer a monthly event. Neo Jimenez responded to comments and assured the Board that priority will be given to keeping the Uptown Merchants involved and satisfied. Tony Williams commented that we need to develop an incentive program to encourage people to park in the structure. Angelica Frausto commented that there may not be a consensus that “everybody” wants the event. Rick Gonzales stated his preference for having a Sunday event. Sandra Hahn commented that she feels the event is good for the area. Tony Williams moved to form a subcommittee to create a proposal for the weekly event. Remoun Said seconded. Motion passed.

Alex Alaniz commented on his ideas for a Chili Cook Off event. Rick Gonzales posed the question to Angelica Frausto as to whether the permit for the Antique Faire could be used for the new event. Ms. Frausto commented that the chili cook off could be incorporated into the Antique Faire and that the area could be expanded into side streets and metered parking lot. John Parker moved to incorporate the Chili Cook Off into the Fall Antique Faire, with Alex Alaniz as the chair. Tony Williams seconded. Motion passed.

The motion to schedule a “Meet the New Manager” event was tabled.

Hiring Committee: President Rick Gonzales moved this agenda item to New Business. Tony Williams reported that the email motion to hire Olivia Rios as Operations Manager received 5 votes. The Board discussed the pay and qualifications. Tony Williams moved to approve to hire Olivia Rios as Operations Manager with a start date of May 15. John Parker seconded. Motion passed.

Temporary Bi-Monthly Meeting Schedule: A meeting is scheduled for May 12, 2014. Olivia Rios will be invited. John Parker moved to continue with bi-monthly Board meetings for the next 2 months. Tony Williams seconded. Motion passed. Meeting dates will be May 12, June 2, June 16 and June 30.

Shop Local Flags: Liz Apodaca displayed a photo of the Shop Local flag proposed by the Flag Shop. The flags cannot be displayed on the sidewalk without a special permit. The Flag Shop requested that we submit a letter to the City asking for the permit in Uptown. The Board discussed the program and decided not to support the idea at this time. The Board would prefer to support a custom-designed flag or banner.

Public Service Announcements (Rant Radio): Alex Alaniz explained his offer to promote Uptown on his radio show. The station would not allow commercials for individual businesses, however Uptown events could be promoted if the Rant Radio logo is put on our flyers. The Board discussed the benefits of video promotion.

OLD BUSINESS

Nominations/Motion to Appoint a Treasurer: Tony Williams commented that he is willing to take the position but not right away. John Parker volunteered to continue as temporary treasurer for another month. The decision is tabled until the first meeting in June.

Delinquent Member Project: John Parker reported that a letter to delinquent merchants is ready to be sent. The letter will be sent via certified mail.

Friday Farmer's Market: Tony Williams commented that the market continues to improve. Mr. Williams asked NRD Productions to report on an incident at the market on April 25, 2014. Daniel Ramos and Neo Jimenez reported the following: Rick Elias came to the market and harassed merchants and customers; he brought two men with him; one of the men had knives; several customers complained to NRD and stated they would not come back to the market, and all the customers in the food court area left; Mr. Elias instigated the incident. Mr. Williams will investigate the possibility of additional security. NRD will stay in contact with the police. Chief Garry Couso-Vazquez will provide a price quote for private security.

Tony Williams commented that several merchants have asked that the market stay open later so they could visit it on their lunch break. Rick Gonzales commented that the restaurants on Philadelphia would object. NRD will work to establish a discount for restaurants. Sandra Hahn commented that bringing people in to the farmers' market is good for the businesses and good for the community.

Tony Williams moved to present a request to the City to extend the market by one hour, to 2pm, with vendors to be gone by 3pm. John Parker seconded. Motion passed.

Spring Antique Faire: Tony Williams reported that the rain caused some delay because the chalk markings washed away, but the vendor locations were sorted out. Mr. Williams commented that a merchant complained that some of the vendors sold merchandise that competes with local merchants. Photos were distributed showing some items that may have caused the complaint. Mr. Williams explained that arts and crafts were added to the event to take away the "garage sale" feel. Efforts are made to avoid vendors that sell the same merchandise as merchants, but cannot be guaranteed because we do not have information about all the items sold in the stores. Live local musicians performed. The majority of the vendors commented that this was the best show. One vendor complained but was selling \$50 pillows. One individual was warned about parking in the alley but did not move his car and received a parking ticket. Mr. Williams feels that it is a good event for the community but we need to make the event more profitable. Photos of the event will be posted on the website. Mr. Williams briefly described the car accident that occurred at the end of the event. Ms. Andrade asked why the vendor issue that she complained about was not addressed.

Taps & Tapas: Rick Gonzales reported on ticket sales. Board volunteers will be needed to work at the WUA booth at the event. 18 Uptown restaurants will participate. Sweet Dreams Dessert Lounge may participate, and has requested that we attend the next City Council meeting to support their beer and wine application.

Car Show: John Parker presented the flyer and reported that banners have been made and were used at the Antique Faire. Early registrations have already been received. Bands will play during the day. Mr. Parker and Ms. Brinegar provided details on the Calendar Girl contest: a 6 month calendar will be created using Miss Uptown, and the winners of the Calendar Girl and best cars will be included in a 2015 calendar, along with sponsors and cross-promotion of our other events.

Marketing Committee/Newspaper Ad: Marilyn Brinegar presented the print ad being promoted by the Whittier Daily News. The newspaper is offering ad space for \$150 and will dedicate a full page to Uptown businesses. We need to send an email blast to the merchants and post the offer on the website.

Webmaster Issues: Tony Williams reported that he will have time to update the directory database. He will try to get it done within the next few weeks. Other pages and information have been added. Olivia Rios and Eileen Alvarez will be trained to update the website.

Lighting Project: Marilyn Brinegar reported that she will have an updated proposal from JK Properties soon. She will design an application to try to get businesses to sign up. Ideas discussed included: presenting the project at our Meet the New Manager Event; creating mock-ups of welcome points; survey the merchants to see if they would be willing to pay for lights. The program is a 3 year program and the cost is approximately \$200 per building (at \$3.50 per linear foot) with a nominal monthly fee for a maintenance program during the second year. JK would get the permits from the City.

Uptown Connections Spring Mixer: Rick Gonzales reported that the Uptown Connections will be at Gu Thai on Wednesday. All Board members are encouraged to attend.

Filming Update: Tony Williams presented a request for filming on Philadelphia. The WUA permit fee would be \$1,500. The producer would need to get a sign off from each merchant in the area.

Dates to Remember:

Uptown Connection Spring Mixer: Wednesday, April 30, 2014 6-9pm at Gu Thai

Next Board Meeting: Monday, May 12, 2014, 6pm at the WUA.

Friends of Uptown Meeting: May 20, 2014, 6pm at WUA.

Budget Study Session: May 6, location TBA

Adjourned at 9:14.