



Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

November 9, 2017
8:00 AM

Portland Downtown
549 Congress Street, Portland, Maine

Present: Kim Volk, Ken Cianchette, Suzie Rephan, Erik Urbanek, Denine Leeman, Trish McLellan, Phil Haughey, Alen Saric

Absent with notice: Penny St. Louis

Staff: Casey Gilbert, Taffy Eaton

Minute 1. Kim called the meeting to order and welcomed all present.

Minute 2. Motion to accept:

- October 12, 2017 Committee minutes: On a motion made by Phil Haughey, seconded by Denine Leeman and unanimously adopted it was

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of October 12, 2017 be and hereby are accepted to be moved to the Board for acknowledgement.

- October Treasurer's update - Erik

Erik reviewed the October 2017 summary report. On a motion made by Denine Leeman, seconded by Alen Saric and unanimously adopted following a discussion in which the following points were raised:

- We are tracking \$11,343.74 over budget
- Assessments payments should be up because some property owners noticed that their tax assessments bill has increased
- Denine thanked Erik for keeping up with the details
- Casey commented that some organizational activities such as the IDA conference register an expense at the beginning of the fiscal year. Kim suggested working with Mary to recognize the expense in the QB budget during the month that it will occur, so Erik doesn't need to explain it each month

it was

RESOLVED: That the financial reports for the month of October 2017 be and hereby are accepted as proposed to the Board.

Minute 3. Executive Directors update: Casey

- A. Board check-in feedback:** Casey organized the feedback summary in categories in order to maintain anonymity. Casey reviewed her summary:
 - Overall satisfaction with serving on the Board
 - Reemergence of Portland Downtown as a value to the community
 - There is a general desire to have deeper conversations at Board meetings
 - There is mutual admiration and respect among board members

- Board members would welcome the opportunity to be visionary, but also need to have the time to do so. The recommendation was to reduce time spent on reviewing committee minutes/recaps.
- Maintain the clean, safe and vibrant mission
- Casey thanked everyone for taking the time to spend with her in thoughtful discussion.

Discussion and comments:

- Kim has noticed that communication between the Executive Director and the Board has improved significantly since Casey was hired
- Phil asked whether Casey had any surprises. Casey responded that Board members are a cohesive group and working to a similar goal.
- Kim added that there are two ways the committee minutes can be dealt with. She would like to keep brief comments on the agenda:
 1. Vote for approval only
 2. Allowing further discussion.

B. Staff benefits - Health, Vision & Dental coverage: Casey reviewed the plan summary hand-out

- Staff is fine with switching to Aetna. There will be a \$5,000 increase in the annual cost, which may affect the budget. Casey offered to shop around next year and will welcome the Executive Committee to participate.

Discussion and comments:

- Denine asked whether employees are alright going to an HMO from a PPO? Yes.
- Denine suggested we look at a PPO with an HSA component in 2018. Casey will ask Terry Lombard for his opinion on this type of plan.

C. Advocacy issues - Casey

1. Parking & Transportation Committee: the committee is reviewing the final parking study and will discuss it at the November 22nd meeting. Casey is waiting for the 2nd draft of an RFP from Jessica Grondin for the Multi-Modal Marketing campaign.
2. Panhandling: The Advocacy Letter the committee sent to the City has had an effect. Casey has been meeting with City officials and is seeing small changes take place. The addition of 24-hour services to the Oxford Street Shelter will help to reduce the number of people spending the day on the streets.
3. Sound – will follow-up on data collection as information becomes available
4. Friends of Congress Square Park: Kim met with the Executive Director. Their Board is looking for after-hours use of the Portland Downtown conference room for their committee/board meetings, in exchange for sponsorship of their annual events-series. They are aware of the history between Portland Downtown and their organization and are trying to put together a beautification project the organizations can pursue together. They would like a Portland Downtown board member to sit on their board for fundraising purposes.

Discussion and comments:

- Portland Downtown will need a written agreement with indemnification and liability insurance
- Is their meeting just a Board meeting? It would be important to know if the public is invited.
- We will want to be sure they are only having a business meeting with no political agendas
- Kim wanted to wait until after the election passed to have this discussion
- Erik mentioned that perhaps we don't want the sponsorship recognition
- Portland Downtown staff would feel more comfortable if meeting times were arranged during normal hours of operation
- Casey's shared that Amy is on their Operations committee and Casey wants to keep the relationship between Portland Downtown and FoCSP a good one. We have made a donation to them.
- Kim concluded that the Executive Committee will table the discussion for now and invite the FoCSP Executive Director in to talk to us. The Board will vote next week.

D. Memorandum of Understanding with Amistad, regarding the CDBG grant application for a POW– Kim would like Legal Affairs to read it first.

Minute 4. Committee reports: Meeting minutes were not included in the packets. Committee chairs present were asked for a recap of their October meetings:

- Merchant Meeting: Suzie recapped the November 2nd meeting – holiday event updates, several new businesses attended and were allowed time to speak about their businesses. The December meeting will be moved to Tuesday December 5th. A liquor distributor will offer safe service guidelines at the December meeting.
- Marketing & Events Committee: Merry Madness ticket sales were offered at \$15 until October 31st. Over 500 were sold. Additional sales at \$20 are going well. We will still cap the event at 1,200 because wine and snack logistics is workable at this number. The committee is hoping for food donations from local companies, but we will have to purchase snacks if we don't get enough. We are encouraging snack vendors to attend so they will see the value and might want to get involved in 2018.
- Old Port Festival Ad hoc: Kim asked everyone present to complete the survey
- Street Vendor Ad hoc: Suzie said the committee met with Chuck Fagone, Code Enforcement Officer. She is trying to get a meeting with Corporation Counsel because Chuck's hands are tied by the current ordinance. Committee member Vanessa Pike knows the woman who organizes the art vendors. She will invite her to a meeting. The committee will create an action plan. They are looking at Code Enforcement and making sure the state is collecting taxes from the vendors. Chuck is hopeful that the City will declare both sides of Commercial Street a festival zone. Could the City possibly use the Maine State pier as a new Marketplace location? The committee will break until mid-January after their next meeting.
- Clean and Safe: Ken said the committee is working on their goals. They are hoping to name the top 5-7 items that the Public Works department is not currently addressing or that need to be addressed further. Dawn Stiles (Director Health & Human Services, City of Portland) presented plans for the new shelter at the October meeting.
- Night Life Oversight Committee: Alen said the committee is currently working on the 3rd goal of recruiting more members. The Ten Exchange Street Club was discussed, and Jessica described how the measuring between entertainment license holding businesses took place, allowing the club to get an entertainment license. They talked about how to prevent future license approvals without an NLOC discussion. We will work with the Business Licensing office and might have to change the NLOC meeting date to allow committee discussion of license applications.
- Public Works Meeting: Will review at the Board meeting
- Legal Affairs Committee: Will review at the Board meeting
- Parking & Transportation Committee: Phil listed the 3 committee goals. The parking study will be the focus of the next meeting. Kim suggested sending sections K & L of the parking study to the Board for review and discussion. Denise Beck talked about the METRO system expansion at the October meeting. METRO needs to do more marketing due to their increased service.
- Growth Committee: Kim listed the committee goals: #1 - discussing properties that Amy Geren has identified within the district that have not been paying assessment tax since 2014, due to an oversight by the City. The committee will work to bring them into compliance. #2 – the committee will walk the district at the November 15th meeting to see first-hand what properties are included and to identify possible areas for expansion. David Packard is reading the legal description of the district and will scribe a rough draft of language for a potential expansion area. #3 - analysis of the current mil rate: it has been \$0.92 for 9 years and there have been many cost increases during that time. Assessments have increased but the mil rate has remained flat. Portland Downtown has become dependent upon event, sponsorship and grant revenue to support the operating budget which is unacceptable. The assessment tax should be funding operations. The organization needs 6 months of reserve. The committee will ask City Council to approve the request by PD to restore the funding to pre-recession levels. Research will be conducted to determine why the mil rate change in 2006 went from \$1.11 to \$0.92.

Minute 5. Board agenda – let Kim know if anyone has an item to add to the agenda

- Acknowledge Committee Minutes
- Other additions

Kim adjourned the regular meeting at 9:20am.

Respectfully submitted,
Taffy Eaton, Recorder.