



Special Business District Tax Advisory Commission Minutes

Wednesday, March 25, 2020 at 4:00 PM

Meeting Held Via: Zoom

1. Roll Call: Nikki, Bisel, Gautam Gatla, Chris Peoples, John Sauter, David Schlafly, Sheila Suderwalla.
2. Approval of the Minutes from February 26, 2020: The minutes were reviewed, and a motion was made to approve the minutes by David Schlafly and Gautam Gatla. All were in favor and the motion was passed.
3. Account Information: The accounts were discussed but no motions were made.
4. Marketing Strategy for Business District discussion:
 - a. Continued discussion on who and what we want to be
 - b. Organic feel
 - c. Who are we working for?
 - i. Tax dollars from business owners
 - ii. Shamelessly promote
 - iii. Populate streets
 - iv. Stay focused with our creative energy
 - d. Do not pigeon hole ourselves
 - e. District of makers
 - i. We make ...
 1. Art
 2. Candles
 3. Donuts
 - f. We make Community
 - i. Donuts
 - ii. Coffee
 - iii. artists

- g. Seem to be hitting on the same theme

Sheila Suderwalla referenced a Forbes article about diversity and economy and offered to send to the Commission.

5. Discussion about Upcoming Events: Staff reported that Stringfest was postponed and no new date had been set. Important for Taste of Maplewood, Art Outside, Let Them Eat Art, and Restaurant Week to take place this year versus the smaller events.

A motion was made to approve a \$1500 sponsorship for Taste of Maplewood by David Schlafly and Nikki Bisel. All were in favor and the motion was passed. Chris Peoples abstained from voting on the motion.

6. Commercial Vacancy Update: Currently no changes to vacancies.
7. FY 2020/2021 Budget: Staff informed the Commission that the City Council approved moving the due date for business license renewals from June 30 to September 1. Commission asked if this fiscal year's budget would be fully funded? Staff replied yes.

Staff budget report:

- Started FY 2019/2020 with a fund balance of \$160,850
- Removed \$500 of funds from events and placed in marketing to support a new event – Maplewood Restaurant Week.
- Reduced LTEA marketing expenses by \$4000 and spring/fall marketing by \$2000 to fund marketing efforts for Maplewood Restaurant Week. Restaurant Week will have a \$6000 marketing budget.

Commission suggested revisiting the budget at a later date based on the current situation and adjusting if necessary.

A motion to approve the budget as submitted was made by Nikki Bisel and seconded by David Schlafly. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

8. Staff Report

- City of Maplewood website has a page dedicated to resources for our businesses i.e. grants, loans, etc.
- Reenergized the Maplewood Business Watch Group on Facebook
- Sending a letter to all businesses in Maplewood
- Activate a business directory on the City's website page

9. Other Business: A motion to nominate David Schlafly as SBD Commission Chair was made by Sheila Suderwalla and seconded by Nikki Bisel. All were in favor and the motion was approved.
10. Meeting adjourned at 5:10 PM.