



**Downtown Westfield Corporation**  
**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
September 22, 2021

**Present:**

Patricia Hanigan, Chair	Michael La Place
Dawn Mackey, Council Liaison	David Casiere
Jim Donofrio	Lew Kimble
Jerry Eicke	Roberta Loew
Lillian Pien	Anthony DiTomasso

**Absent:**

Michael LaPlace	Erin Ben-Hayon, Promotions Chair
Bob Conway	Steven Rinn, Economic Vitality Chair
Mayor Shelley Brindle	Gene Janotti - GWACC

**Also Present:**

Craig Gibson, DPW, ex officio	Peg Lockwood, Design Committee
Beth Brenner – DWC	
Bob Zuckerman – DWC	

**Public:**

Jesse Winter – The Leader  
Jackie Lieberman – The Patch

**Chair's Report**

- Roll call

**Secretary's Report:** N/A

- Approval of minutes from August 18, 2021 meeting approved by board

**Financial Report**

- August 2021 Report
  - Budget wise looks good and expenses are consistent
  - Uneventful spend across August
    - Beyond Main final payments (approx. \$3K)
    - Sweet Sounds
  - Motion passes to approve financials

**Executive Director's Report** – Bob Zuckerman

- 501c3 discussion
  - Won't pay sales tax
  - Better position to apply for more grants
  - Benefits entire community
  - Makes more sense
  - Attorney assisting with investigation of potential transition

- Social Status Co.
  - Agreement for six months approved
  - Meetings have begun with two leads plus firm's CEO.
  - Getting up to speed and learning about downtown
  - Will plan to join future board meeting
- Yiftee gift cards update
  - Agreement to partner with Yiftee
  - Close loop digital gift card
- Merchant Town Hall meeting
  - Planning for beginning of October
  - Yiftee to join and present gift card program
  - Brainstorm for holiday season needs and ideas
- Office update
  - Moved in and currently unpacking
- New businesses and vacancies
  - Salty Paws – dog bakery in talks for downtown store
  - Blissful Beauty – moving into former Allure space (cosmetics and perfumes)
  - Mimi & Hill – opening pop up store in former Po space (across Addams Tavern)
  - Lease signed for Central & Quimby store (food & beverage)
  - Surreal Creamery – moving into former Midtown Authentic space (ice cream)
  - CLOSED: Westfield Creamery
  - New Building Owner for 131 E Broad Street (included former Omaha Steak)
  - Farmhouse sold to new owner

**Design Committee Report – Peg Lockwood**

- G Aesthetics - in process of refacing building
- Blissful Beauty – collaborating on signage and paint colors
- Victoria Cakes – grant approved for new awning

**Economic Vitality Committee Report – Steven Rinn**

- Steve not in attendance – Lew delivered report
- MJB Consultant:
  - Phase 1 report completed and will be presenting in September DWC meeting which include positioning strategy for downtown
  - Phase 2 in process

**Promotions & Events –Erin Ben-Hayon**

- Hyper focused on Girls Night Out
- Beginning discussions on the holidays including subcommittees
  - Goal is to continue with the programs which were a success last year
- Alternative Energy event being planned on 10/2 at South Avenue train station parking lot
  - DWC co-presenting with Green Team
  - Electric cars and bikes

**Mayor Report – N/A**

- Not in attendance

**Liaison Reports**

- Councilwoman Dawn Mackey
  - AddamsFest on the horizon which is important to local businesses
    - Wicked Window assignments (over 50 retailers participating)
  - Full active list of events being planned

- DPW Supervisor Craig Gibson
  - Bike Stroll being planned which is taking resources
  - Will start installation of holiday decorations
  - Been busy with storm cleanups
  - Mural project moving along
- GWACC Director Gene Janotti
  - N/A

### **Retail Report, Phase 1 Presentation from MJB Consulting**

- Phase 1 – positioning and tenanting strategy
  - Guidance for developers, landlords and brokers
  - Set priorities and resources for DWC
  - Findings:
    - Downtown has to be a wider destination
    - Ability to pull from 221K people
    - Core Customers: empty-nester couples
    - New Customers:
      - Neo-hipster home-starters
        - Accelerated amidst COVID-19
        - Current/future homebuyers
        - Work-from-homers
      - Gen Z teenagers
        - Fast fashion as well as resale
        - Different ecosystems (social media driven)
    - Focus on these new and expanding retailers
      - eCommerce
      - Treasure hunt concepts
      - Food and Beverage (less than 10% closed since 3/20)
      - Microbreweries and distilleries
      - Pandemic has created demand:
        - Puppy and kitten adoptions
        - Beauty and pampering
    - Where to look:
      - Chain-lets from other metros
      - Expanded minded franchises
      - Food truck expansion
      - Local/homegrown celebrities and influencers
    - What it Might Look Like:
      - Shorter term lease
      - Incentive based
- Phase 2 – implementation plan
- Phase 3 – buy in on implementation plan

### **Public Comments**

- Shawn Mullen @ 760 Carlton Road in attendance – no comments

Patricia Hanigan made motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm

Next meeting – October 20, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Donofrio  
Secretary