

DOWNTOWN OAK PARK BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
January 18th, 2022
VIA ZOOM

PRESENT: Eric Wagner, Mike Fox, Jeff Long, Tammie Grossman, Jimmy Chen, Mary Ludgin, John Linton, Eric Mazelis and David Schrodt (DTOP Attorney).

Staff: Shanon Williams, Anna Kosowski, Naomi Soto, Jeff Eng

Absent: Susie Goldschmidt, Judith Lalor

The Downtown Oak Park Board of Directors meeting was called to order by Downtown Oak Park Board President, Eric Wagner, at 8:34 AM via ZOOM.

Motion to Approve December 2021 Minutes:

Approved: Paul Beckwith

Second: Mike Fox

All in favor

— Motion Carried —

Finance Report – Jeff Long

Attached is the 2021 Year End DTOP Financial Summary Report for the Board. As outlined below, Total Revenue came in on budget and Total Expenses were slightly over budget. Although Total Expenses were over budget, we were still able to put an extra \$50,000 into the Extra Reserve Account (see below) due to the amount of money that was saved over the past two years. Here are all of the highlights of the Finance Report:

TOTAL REVENUE - Total Revenue of \$734,273 was very close to the budgeted amount of \$734,580.

TOTAL EXPENSES - For most categories, Expenses were at or near budget. However, Total Expenses of \$723,514 were over the budgeted amount of \$693,485. This was mainly due to \$6,100 paid out to Merchants for the remaining Better Lake Street Rewards Program and because Events in total came in about \$17,000 over budget, due to overall inflationary increases of Expenses needed to put on the Events.

NET OPERATING REVENUE - As a result of the higher Expenses, Net Operating Revenue came in at \$10,760 rather than the budgeted amount of \$41,095.

EXTRA RESERVE - As budgeted, a total of \$25,000 was put into the Extra Reserve Account. In addition to the budgeted \$25,000, an additional \$50,000 was put into the Extra Reserve Account due to the excess of cash resulting in the past 2 COVID years. At year end, the Extra Reserve Account totaled \$201,318, only \$21,000 off the Final Goal of \$222,000.

SNOW RESERVE - As budgeted, a total of \$15,000 was put into the Snow Reserve Account, bringing the total to \$60,055, only \$10,000 off the Final Goal of \$70,000.

HOLDING ACCOUNT - There is \$25,000 in the Holding Account for January 2022 cash flow purposes until the 1st Quarter SSA check is received from the Village.

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE - As of December 31st, DTOP is owed approximately \$14,000 for the following:

- a. Oak Park Residences (Gift Certificates) - \$5,100
- b. Membership Dues - \$3,150
- c. Village of Oak Park (Lighting Grant) - \$5,000
- d. Winterfest Participation Fees (6 Merchants) - \$750

SHOPPER'S REWARD - As of December 31st 2021, 195 books have been awarded vs. 164 last year and 319 the year before.

GIFT CERTIFICATES - In 2021, \$56,960 worth of Gift Certificates were Purchased and \$45,555 Redeemed. The amounts Purchased and Redeemed over the past 2 years are included for comparison purposes. Also of note, \$4,600 worth of Holiday Bonus Gift Certificates were given away between Thanksgiving and Christmas, compared to \$5,475 last year. In addition, the Summer Freebies Gift Certificate results are listed for information purposes.

WINTERFEST - Winterfest Revenues totaled \$14,600 from Cookie Tin Sales, Merchant Participation Fees, and the Byline Sponsorship. Winterfest Expenses totaled \$25,599.

Motion to Approve December 2021 Financial Statements:

Approved: Mike Fox

Second: Mary Ludgin

All in favor

— Motion carried —

Motion to Approve 2022 Downtown Oak Park Budget:

Approved: Mary Ludgin

Second: Mike Fox

All in favor

— Motion carried —

2022 Budget note: This is a conservative budget, with room for pivots as necessary.

OPEDC updates – Eric Mazelis

- Holiday Inn has been approved and is moving forward.
 - Traffic congestion is a main concern for residents living in the area.
- Nina with Polished is looking at the Prairie Bread location.
 - Eric will touch base with David King. No updates from Delia's Kitchen but OPEDC is in contact with Veronica.
- Oak Park Festival Theatre is seeking an office space within DTOP and near Austin Gardens.

Village of Oak Park updates- Tammy Grossman

- Vaccination Proof mandate in dining, fitness & entertainment facilities.
- Village Hall is currently closed to the public.
- Marion Street & Pleasant development started some utility relocation. They are taking on street parking as part of the development construction project.
- VOP approved Holiday Inn and is working on the traffic congestion issue.
 - Timeline: They have a year from January 10th, 2022 to submit a building permit application. They have already submitted a demolition permit and plan to be done within 1.5 years since they're only planning to add one additional floor instead of two like they had planned.
- 835 Lake St project is moving quickly - they are above ground.
- The VOP is in the search process for a Village Manager - you can find more information on the village website

Visit Oak Park updates – Eric Wagner

- Visit Oak Park is moving out of Flourish.
 - Halverson's Co-work space is closing
 - Visit Oak Park is moving to Cross Function on South Blvd at Marion St in the Pleasant District.
- Marketing results are in!
 - Interesting insights to travel behavior and conversions.
 - Visit Oak Park will share relevant insights with DTOP.

Marketing Campaign “Who is DTOP?” – Anna Kosowski

Campaign creation follows the direction of the Strategic Task Force Committee to explain Who/What is DTOP to different audiences.

- We began developing an educational, public relations campaign to increase community engagement.

We met with Prescott Group to potentially be a consultant for this public relations/marketing project - proposal coming later this week

- Purpose of campaign: Educate Who/What is DTOP to different audiences with focused key messages.

General Ideas:

- Audience #1: DTOP Membership (Merchants & Property Owners) / MEMBERSHIP DRIVE
 - GOALS: New memberships, Educate (Who is DTOP, Perks of being a member), Connect with Property Owners
 - PLAN: Email blasts, in-person events, webpage
- Audience #2: Oak Park Community (Office workers, high-rise residents, residents, community organizations, NPOs, out-of-district businesses, potential sponsors) Define & Prioritize audiences
 - GOALS: Collect new email addresses, Sponsorships, Educate (i.e. FAQ on website; where does money go from event ticket sales, DTOP boundaries etc.)

- PLAN: webpage, email communications, direct mail, ad & social media
 - Plan will be different for each group within Audience #2

Next steps:

- Fine tune key messages, Narrow audiences, Organize campaign, Campaign name,
- Clear calls to action & goal structure, Storytelling/Content writing

Feedback: Eric Wagner suggests that Prescott Group come up with a branding exercise to show audiences that DTOPT is an organization and not just a geographic location.

Winterfest + Cookie Walk recap — Naomi Soto

- Winterfest was on December 4th from 3-6PM
- 500 cookie tins sold out online on November 21st.
- Cookie tin pick up was from 2-5PM
 - Sold approx. 10 left over tins around 4:50pm
- Staffed by Anna, Naomi & 3 hired helpers.
- Smooth and successful event.

New Business — Shanon Williams

- HR consultant hired
 - Eric Wagner invites other board members to give input.
 - Mary Ludgin is happy to help in any way that she can.
- Landscape/Maintenance Committee
 - Committee members needed - members don't have to be a board member to join.
 - DTOPT added an extra day to Randy's (McAdams) schedule due to an increase in debris and garbage in the district.

Old Business

- 5 year renewal - results
 - DTOPT is renewed

Shanon is planning to work with Tammie Grossman to renew the DTOPT/VOP contract.

New DTOPT map:

- DTOPT plans to update the new map every 6 months with new and closed businesses.

Consent Reports:

- Executive Director – Shanon Williams
- Marketing Director – Anna Kosowski
- Digital Communication Report – Naomi Soto

Motion to adjourn Downtown Oak Park Board of Directors Meeting at 9:40 AM by
Board President, Eric Wagner.

Approved: Mary Ludgin

Second: Jeff Long

All in favor

— Motion Carried —