



DOWNTOWN OAK PARK BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING MINUTES
February 18, 2025 - ZOOM

Present: Frank Heitzman, Susie Goldschmidt, Mike Fox, Mike Carney, Cameron Davis, Tina Salerno, Michelle Vanderlaan, Jonathan Kaufman, Jonathan Burch, Becky Grajeda
Staff: Shanon Williams, Amelia Dellos, Jeff Eng

The Downtown Oak Park Board of Directors' meeting was called to order by Board President Susie Goldschmidt at 8:32 AM.

Motion to Approve January 2025 Minutes:

Approved: Paul Beckwith

Seconded: Mike Carney

All in favor

- Motion Carried -

Introduction of Becky Grajeda, acting Managing Director for the Nineteenth Century Charitable Association (Ray Ward Resigned)

Finance Report – Mike Carney

Motion to Approve January 2025 Financial Statements:

Approved: Mike Fox

Seconded: Tina Salerno

All in favor

- Motion Carried -

1. SSA was not received from the Village of Oak Park in January. It was and was received

- on February 3, and \$241,630 was replenished to reserves
2. 2025 Budget was presented to the finance committee and will be presented to the board once the committee approves it
 3. HOLIDAY SHOPPING IN DTOP
 - 33K down 16% - shopper's rewards – people are only getting one book vs last year, people would get two to three
 - Gift certificate sales down - DTOP budgeted \$70k and estimating \$45k this year
 - Two weekends less than in the past
 - Michelle Vanderline from 16 Suitcases - reported that fewer people came to shop, but transactions per customer were high, and her online sales were tripled.
 - Discussion about the shopping season - Start shopping season sooner because of fewer days to shop - how many shopping days did we lose? And do we need to extend the shopping days?
 - Shanon and Jeff will present numbers on shopping days and ideas to increase shopping season and sales. We will reach out to MAC for suggestions. We will look at online shopping trends. We can remind people to use their online shopping receipts.

Motion to Approve January 20205 Financial Statements:

Approved: Mike Fox

Seconded: Paul Beckwith

All in favor

-Motion carried -

Village updates- Cam Davis

1. Emily Egan is leaving her position - her last day will be Friday, 2/2. She is going to Wilmette.
2. Business updates:
 - LOI for Lou's Pekin House - Chicago-based restaurant chain Asian category - permitting by the end of March
 - Paid out CFB to Fitzgerald's Fine Stationery and Kribi location at Sugar Fixe
 - Parking in garages reduction in parking in 2024 over 2023; however, in Holley Court, Nov/Dec parking was up
 - Massage Envy Lake and Forest will go in slowly moving forward and needs significant remodeling
 - New business listed on Pick Oak Park
 - The hotel on Lake is about 60% complete. There will be walking tours in the near

future.

- Pick Oak Park sign up for Enews report - office vacancy on Lake Street - has one of the lowest vacancy rate below 9% in the Chicago area.
- Breakfast House opening - their architect took a month off and left the country, did some minor demos, and some minor renovations
- A new restaurant, FARE is set to open by May 2025 across from the entryway of 1010 Lake Albion's private walkway

Marketing- Amelia

- Jazz Thaw - created a detailed event page with information on all the performers, will do a "Takeover" of the new VIBE section of the Wednesday Journal, and has an extensive social media plan to execute.
- Black History Month - created three pages of content featuring our Black-owned business owners: video interviews, a shopping guide, and a history feature on the Mt. Carmel church.

New/Old Business:

- Communication & Event Manager - We are going to an offer out to a candidate start date March 3
- Meeting with Kevin Jackson - special events fees and equity between all organizations and support our events they supported refuse in DTOP.
- Nominating Committee (board terms attached) - There are elections for three more terms for the following members: Frank, Mike, and Becky. Jenny Shepard's seat is open - please refer candidates to Shanon.
- Oak Park Avenue remodel will be delayed - the Village had \$18M budgeted, and a project bid came in \$4M higher; public works recommended moving to 2026. The grant programs will remain in place for both years.
- Ten new businesses are opening in the Hemmingway District.
- The DTOP team is meeting with the Village on Deb. 24 to discuss how we will handle the unhoused, panhandling, and migrants in Downtown Oak Park. Once we have feedback on how to handle this community, we will communicate it to the members. Call 911 if there is a safety issue.

· Consent Reports:

- a) Executive Director – Shanon Williams

b) Marketing – Amelia Dellos
Meeting adjourned Susie Cameron seconded the motion 9:20 AM

**Indicates item for Board Approval*