

Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee

Wheaton Rescue Squad Building, 2400 Arcola Ave 2nd Floor, Wheaton MD 20902

Meeting Minutes, Tuesday January 09, 2018

Members Present: Leah Haygood, Chair; Ali Oliver-Krueger, Vice Chair; Omar Lazo, Megan Remo, Dan Thompson, William Moore, William Jelen, Chelsea Johnson, Mirza Donegan, Ron Franks

Staff Present: Luisa Montero-Diaz, Director, Mid-County Regional Center; Sidney Cooper, Marketing Manager, Wheaton Urban District

Guests: Pete McGinnity, SBAP; Elizabeth Gallauresi, Arts Coordinator, Silver Spring A&E District

Call to Order: 6:35pm by Chair Haygood. She introduced new member Chelsea Johnson who will be representing residents. Chelsea then gave a brief background on herself.

Review October/December 2017 Minutes: After a brief discussion, motions were made and passed to approve both sets of meeting minutes with minor changes

Community Concerns: Ali Oliver-Krueger, on behalf of Interact Story Theatre, announced that they moved into new offices in the Wheaton A&E District on January 3rd

Wheaton Small Business Assistance Program Update: Peter McGinnity, SBAP, presented a slide show accompanied by a handout detailing the process and procedures of the Small Business Assistance program, including information on the number of businesses that have applied and where they stand in the process. Member discussion followed.

A&E Strategic Plan Update: Luisa Montero-Diaz, Sidney Cooper and Elizabeth Gallauresi led a discussion on the A&E annual report. Focus was centered on the Goals presented in a Handout to members titled "A Strategic Plan for the Wheaton Arts and Entertainment District, 2016-2021". Luisa stated that we needed to get out of the gate and focus on the feasibility study and the idea of an anchor arts center. We have funding through the Council and DGS. WUDAC needs to take the lead to guide this discussion and determine our role. Luisa showed a copy of the A&E report and noted its extensive reporting requirements. She mentioned the tax credits associated with an A&E District and the need to demonstrate that we are taking advantage of that. We have zero and we need to change that. The AMC movie theater did take advantage of a tax credit.

Elizabeth Gallauresi noted that the A&E designation is an economic tool to generate tourism and economic development and she will have a presentation on the tax credits at a future meeting. She also noted that we received an honor of Outstanding A&E based on our report. Dan Thompson questioned some aspects of the report and also stated the need to separate the A&E District management from the Wheaton Urban District management. He asked about the possibility of forming a volunteer committee to guide the A&E District with oversight by WUD. Luisa stated that in three years when the Rec Dept and Park and Planning are here in Wheaton they could step up with resources.

Director's Report: Luisa Montero-Diaz reported that Reddie Drive did not close and the crane was not erected this past weekend because of the cold and high winds and they will do it this coming weekend.

WUD reps met with the revitalization design team and expressed concerns with the roof for the stage. They want them to come present to WUDAC in February or March. Luisa will have Joe Callaway attend the February WUDAC meeting to review the Clean and Safe team budget, which looks bad with the coming budget cuts.

We have a third Gateway Sign available for installation and are looking for feedback on a possible location.

A sixth Bike station opened at Avalon Bay.

The Maryland General Assembly begins tomorrow at noon.

There will be a Budget Forum hosted by the County Executive on January 24th at the Mid-County Community Recreation Center on Queensguard Road from 7:00-8:30pm. The Wheaton and Kensington Chamber of Commerce Business Expo is the same night. Dan Thompson asked if it was too late to question the 4% budget cut. He feels that Wheaton is hit harder than other areas due to the way the cuts are proportioned.

Business & Action Item Updates: A review was held on a draft of a proposed letter to County Executive Leggett concerning management of the A&E District. Member discussion followed about the possibility of outreach to other A&E districts and the process involved in forming an advisory board and whether that would be a plus or a minus. A motion was made and passed to send the letter with edits.

Discussion then turned to a Wheaton Tour. Dan Thompson and Bill Jelen had offered at our last meeting to spearhead creation of a forum for residents and County officials. Turnout should be good due to upcoming Primaries. Chair Haygood stated that we need to move quickly because the Primaries are in June and so is Taste of Wheaton. She suggested we look at the first or second week in May. Omar Lazo volunteered to help. The agenda should be ready next month. Dan stated that finding a suitable location is a big concern.

New Business: Omar Lazo asked about the status of all the dockless bikes he has seen around the area.

BikeShare will be on the February agenda. It was discussed about whether WUDAC should sponsor a Bike to Work pit stop.

Adjourn: 8:40pm