

Joliet City Center Partnership

**Board of Directors
November 10, 2022
8:00 a.m. – In-person**

Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order at 8:03 a.m.

1. Approval of October Minutes

- Ron Romero motioned to approve.
- Monica Cicimov seconded.
- All Aye – Motion approved.

2. Approval of October Financials

- Priscilla stated that the only large expense in October that was outside of the budget was a down payment for the North Pole Park. We have already received the \$7,500 city sponsorship to cover this Light Up the Holidays' expense. There are some outstanding payables and receivables from a few events which will be noted in the November financials.
- Megan Millen made a motion to approve.
- Wade Welsh seconded.
- All Aye – Motion approved.

3. Committee Chair Reports

• Marketing Committee:

- Monica provided a recap of our November 9, 2022 meeting. Light up the Holidays is moving forward well. Sponsorships are sold out. We have 51 parade participants and 60 signed up for the Santa raffle.
- Executive committee and Marketing Committee discussed 2022 events and whether they were successful and/or beneficial to the downtown. An overview of the following events was provided:
 - Paws on 66 – the event was not well attended and the event will not be happening in 2023. Other formats for the event are being discussed.
 - Kidzfest – was well attended and the focus for 2023 will be on increasing sponsorships.
 - Tunes & Brews – will also not continue in 2022. Was poorly attended and challenging to plan.
 - Stone & Steel Spooky 5k – will continue in 2023 as it was well attended.
 - Panic at the Plaza – was well attended and will continue.

Rod also added that there are so many more events downtown now than when CCP started and we need to consider that. Priscilla stated that we are looking at events that provide a direct economic impact to the businesses downtown.

Name	Present	Absent
Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant		X
Susan Bornhofen		X
Mike Brick		X
Monica Cicimov	X	
David DiLorenzo		X
Amber Duffy	X	
Diane Harris	X	
Jen Howard		X
Bryan Kopman		X
Cornell Lurry	X	
Megan Millen	X	
Sue Moore		X
Mayor Bob O'Dekirk	X	
Doug Pryor		X
Ron Romero	X	
Jim Roolf	X	
Rod Tonelli (Chair)	X	
Diana Viveros	X	
Wade Welsh	X	
Denise Winfrey	X	
Garland Mays (on behalf of JBT)		X
Priscilla Cordero (Director)	X	
Vicki Sanchez (E&M Manager)	X	
Cesar Suarez (ED Director, City of Joliet)	X	

- **Owners & Managers Association Meeting**

- Rod stated our final meeting is happening December 1st and thanked Wade Welsh from the Rialto for hosting us.

- **Economic Development Committee**

Jim Roolf presented an overview of Fusion Natural Hair & Braid Academy's grant request which was previously reviewed and recommended for approval by the ED Committee on November 1st. LeAnn Drake is in the process of signing a lease for a space at 16-18 Ohio Street. She will be launching the Fusion Natural Hair & Braid Academy, a specialized cosmetology school. The proposed space is 2,750 square feet. The construction budget is approximately \$40,700 and includes flooring, upgraded electrical, two bathroom remodels, partitioning of walls and a new sign. Equipment costs are \$13,500. She currently has \$25,600 in equity in the form of savings and has already purchased most of her equipment. They are already approved for a \$10,000 microloan with a CDFI and are working on an additional bank microloan. Based on their current budget and our grant sliding scale*, they qualify for up to \$16,640. Priscilla stated that the shopping center was vacant except for Niko's occupancy about a year ago. Now Tamales Korrina, Ohio St. Banquets and this business will occupy the center creating some vibrancy on Ohio Street. Diane Harris asked what other businesses occupied the center prior to the vacancies. Amber Duffy stated there was a grocery store and T-Mobile and all of them ceased operating during COVID. Jim Roolf made a motion to approve a \$16,640 request - \$15,140 for a Building Improvement Grant and \$1,500 for a Small Business Assistance Grant. Diane Harris seconded. All aye, motion approved.

Jim Roolf presented an overview of Loko JC Juicy Bar which was previously reviewed and recommended for approval by the ED Committee on November 1st. Loko JC Juicy Bar is a smoothie and healthy fast-food shop that has been opened for two months at 3 Ohio Street in the former Kafe de Kasa space. The business is owned jointly by Saray and Juan Serna Callegos. Saray primarily runs the business day to day. She also offers catering services. Her hours are 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, Saturday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Her menu includes light items like sandwiches, tortas, salads, wraps, and fresh fruit smoothies. Customers are asking for items she cannot currently make because she does not have a hood. In the short time they have been opened, they have already been able to break even and take home a small amount. Previously, Saray owned a small restaurant in Mexico for 9 years before coming to the US and starting this business. Although the previous tenant was not successful in this location, this space is built out to be a food business and the addition of a hood would be a big update to the building which would be a semi-permanent improvement. The business seems to have better foot traffic than the previous tenant did as they are targeting the needs of the area with the menu options as well as pricing. The space currently has a kitchen which does not include a hood and limits what they can do in the space. The grant request is for the addition of a hood.

Megan Millen asked whether the hood will stay in the space. Both Jim and Rod stated that yes, the hood will be a permanent improvement and stay with

the building. Jim made a motion to approve a \$12,586 grant with a contingency to increase up to \$3,000 that would allow for an administrative approval internally if the cost of the hood increases. The breakdown of the grant is \$11,086 for a Building Improvement Grant and \$1,500 for a Small Business Assistance Grant. Denise Winfrey seconded the motion. All aye – motion approved.

Jim also stated that we are looking at making changes to the Small Business Assistance Grant.

- **Beautification Committee**

- Megan stated that the holidays planters are in progress and will be completed before the Light up the Holidays Festival & Parade.
- The holiday decorating contest is moving forward again, and the winner will be announced at the LUTH tree lighting.
- 81 N Chicago and 215 N. Chicago windows are in process of being painted with a holiday theme and decorations are being installed in order to beautify those prominent storefronts which are currently vacant. These storefronts are on the parade route. Priscilla stated that the CCP has paid Strange & Unusual Gallery to decorate and paint these storefronts.
- The city has started the process of setting up Christmas lights on Chicago Street. The Christmas tree is scheduled to be cut down and transported November 11th.
- Megan stated that Priscilla reached out to Public Works regarding sidewalk and street cleanup downtown. PW plans to clean up leaves on the sidewalks and streets on the parade route before the parade.

4. Staff Report

- Priscilla stated that the Joliet Taco Trail launched and has so far started off well. 42 check-ins over the weekend at the eight different restaurants participating.
- Priscilla and Ken Plante, LUTH Committee Chair were interviewed on WJOL 1340 am to promote the Light up the Holidays Parade & Festival. Dr. Johnson and Ken are on the air again this morning and Ken and Priscilla will announce Santa Float winners on November 22nd.
- Priscilla stated that she and Megan serve on the city's Art Commission and that Pace is looking to paint a portion of the wall at the Gateway Transportation Center. More info will be provided as the project moves forward.
- CCP will be hosting another business seminar, this one for existing businesses, on December 13th at the Joliet Public Library on the topic of "How to build a profitable, high-growth business." Our speaker is John Mautner, an entrepreneur, who has been consulting for over 20 years.
- CCP has hired an intern through Joliet Junior College. She will be starting on November 14th.
- The Ready to Rock Sculpture project is moving forward. Sarah Payla and Priscilla are interviewing someone today for a project manager/contractor role.

5. Chair Report

- Rod stated in lieu of a December Board meeting, we will have a December holiday gathering after the OMA meeting on December 1st. More information to come.

6. City Report

- Cesar Suarez stated that the Rock Run Crossings' PUD was approved by City Council on November 1st.
- The 2023 Budget was presented to City Council on November 1st. Cesar submitted a Capital Improvement project for Rock & Roll Museum and a small business grant program, but it was cut before being presented to the City Council. The full budget will go back to City Council for discussion on December 15.
- City Council approved the Downtown National Historic Register District.
- The city currently owns an estimated 520 properties. Over 100 are considered surplus properties and will be discussed at a City Council meeting. Cesar stated that he and Priscilla are beginning to meet regularly to discuss downtown development as well as those surplus properties located in the SSA.
- The Economic Development Commission is meeting today, November 10, to discuss a TIF extension for the Monroe building.
- Will County released ARPA funds and grant opportunities, and Cesar encouraged CCP and other non-profits to apply.
- The city has released an RFP for the Loughran Building.
- CMAP and RTA reached out to the city and the city submitted a transit-oriented development grant for a possible project on the south end of the SSA. CMAP will make a decision in December and January. There were 14 applicants, and 8 grants will be awarded.
- The city is also looking at an EV charging station grant, and the downtown will be an ideal location for these stations. Rod stated that the county also released grant funding opportunities for an EV station study. Cesar stated that the city is partnering with Lion Electric on these projects.

Meeting adjourned at 8:47 a.m.

- Denise Winfrey motioned to adjourn.
- Jim Roolf seconded.
- All Aye – Motion approved.