

SOSNA Board meeting

March 30, 2005

Meeting Minutes

Board members in attendance: Matt Corcoran, Richard Gliniak, Ann Hoskins-Brown (Chair), Ted Lee, John McHugh, Sharon Melvin, Tony Moretti, Soledad Perez Gillespie, Les Robbins, Sam Porter

Others in attendance: David Feldman (Executive Director), Eve Lewis (NAC Director)

The meeting was called to Order at 7:00 by the Chair, Ann Hoskins-Brown.

One change was pointed out as needed to the Minutes, to note that the line of credit which can be applied for is to bridge Housing Counseling invoices, not NAC invoices. Matt Corcoran made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by John McHugh, which was passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report:

The Executive Director briefly summarized the written report that was included in the Board package. Key points of discussion included use of compensatory time by salaried staff, and the need for the Personnel committee to provide specific policy, and the services to be provided by a bookkeeper.

The scope of work for a bookkeeper was reviewed, and it was agreed that Program Directors should retain primary responsibility for their invoices to OHCD. A motion was made by Ted Lee to have a specific scope of services for the Program Directors v. the Bookkeeper, and that the Bookkeeper would report directly to the Executive Director and work closely with the Treasurer. This was seconded by Rich Gliniak, and approved unanimously. It was agreed that the Executive Director and Treasurer would identify the Bookkeeper, and review relevant information with the Personnel committee prior to contracting with the Bookkeeper.

Thrift Shop

The Treasurer reported on revenue and expenses related to the Thrift Shop, and on the situation with the adjacent construction. Losses on a month to month comparison between 2005 and 2004 indicate that the adjacent construction has further reduced revenue from the shop. The issues of rent escrow, maintenance problems, and process for termination of the lease were all reviewed. It was noted that the Board had previously agreed to close the shop if there were no improvement, and the losses have increased, not diminished. Rich Gliniak made a motion to close the Thrift Shop at the 1635 South Street location within thirty days, and to have the Board suggest places to donate the remaining merchandise. John McHugh seconded the motion which was passed with a sole dissenting vote by Ted Lee. It was agreed to pursue a "getting out of business" sale. The Chair will send a letter to the landlord, informing of the shop's closing.

LaSalle Non-Profit Center

The proposal for services was included in the Board's packet. The Chair reported on the meeting she and the Executive Director had with Jason Alexander, the consultant assigned to work with SOSNA on the strategic planning process. His proposal includes extensive community outreach and feedback, and will be paid for mostly by William Penn Foundation. SOSNA will not sign the contract for services until the net cost to SOSNA is known .

Les Robbins made a motion to move forward with the strategic planning process as proposed, seconded by Ted Lee, and approved unanimously.

Board Membership and Nominations

The list of eligible nominees was compiled by Eve and Sonyia, and distributed to the Board. This list was reviewed, with specific candidates discussed. Discussion included having CDC Board members serving on the SOSNA Board simultaneously, and whether to have a short list, or to invite one candidate and await their response. Matt Corcoran made a motion to invite Stephanie Green to join the Board. This was seconded by Soledad Perez-Gillespie, and passed unanimously. Rich Gliniak will send a letter of invitation to Stephanie Green.

Pathmark Partnership

The City's Commerce Department approved transfer of the tax credit partnership from the CDC to SOSNA. The partnership will begin in the 2005 tax year, so the first check for \$100,000 should arrive in the next month. A tentative budget for the Economic Development program should be presented by the NAC Director at the next Board meeting, along with copies of the previously approved budget and approval letter for the economic development program.

The grant payment will be deposited in a separate, dedicated bank account, to avoid co-mingling with other SOSNA funds. It will likely be up to six months before program activity requires drawing down from the initial grant.

The Chair will review the start of the partnership, and receipt of initial grant, with the Council President's office, and discuss a public announcement of the partnership.

In related activity, the Chair and Executive Director recently met with PNC community banking personnel, and discussed the potential for opening a PNC branch bank as part of the economic development efforts.

Universal Housing

The Chair and Executive Director met with Rahim Islam two weeks ago to review Universal's current development efforts in general, including Bainbridge West and the 17th Street partnership specifically, with regard to Universal presenting at the next SOSNA General Meeting. Follow up information was promised to be delivered by Universal prior to this Board meeting, but has not yet been supplied to SOSNA. The details that Rahim Islam supplied verbally at the meeting regarding the 17th Street development were reported, including unit costs, subsidies, down payment assistance. The NAC Director quoted from OHCD's Year 31 Consolidated Plan, which specifically states SOSNA and Universal are joint developers of the project. There pursued discussion on specific information needed by the Board from Universal, and the benefits of having Universal executives attend a SOSNA Board meeting.

NAC Director's Report

The NAC Director gave an update on Cava's expansion, and on Washington Avenue corridor issues, following on her recent meeting with the President of the Washington West Business Association. Cava has requested additional community meetings to review their expansion plans, and it appears the ward leader is coordinating this effort.

Committee Reports

Facilities Committee: Board member who visited the former bar at 19th and Christian reported on the possibility of relocating the SOSNA office to that building. The interior is in good condition, but the exterior of the building is only in fair condition. Board members inquired about the possibility of acquiring City owned property to develop for a SOSNA office that SOSNA would own. The Chair and Executive Director have met with the AIA's Community Design Collaborative about the possibility of obtaining pro bono services to assess space needs, and evaluate possible office options.

There was a request to form a Facilities Committee to explore relocation of the SOSNA office. Rich Gliniak, Sharon Melvin, and Tony Moretti volunteered to serve on this committee. Les Robbins requested that outreach be made, specifically at the SOSNA General Meeting, to include non-Board members to serve on this committee.

Financial Committee: The State tax exempt letter was received today, enabling SOSNA to make purchases without paying State sales tax.

The Mastercard was approved. Two cards will be issued, one in the Treasurer's name and one in the Executive Director's name. Initially they will have \$20,000 limit, with a weekly limit of \$1,000. There was much discussion over what limits should be maintained. This, and other usage policy will be developed by the Finance committee.

The IRS has put a lien on SOSNA's bank account due to past non-payments. Tom Strybuc is filing an appeal, and working to negotiate with the IRS on SOSNA's behalf.

Tom reviewed the letter that was sent to Tom Strybuc to curtail his services, and reviewed status of OHCD invoices. Tony Moretti distributed samples of reports generated by Quicken to show the improved financial reporting that will be possible. Soledad Gillespie commended Tony, and the Board joined her, for his efforts confronting the scale and difficulty of financial management issues he is addressing. Among the items where the Board requested additional information were cash flow, expense detail reports, and a "macro" picture of sources and uses.

Open Space Committee: Ann Hoskins-Brown reported on the garden at 20th and Catharine, specifically due to negotiations for a lot swap ending unsuccessfully. A plant move has been organized to rescue the mature plants and perennials from this garden. A vacant lot at Gray's Ferry and Carpenter has been prepared to receive these plants until a more permanent garden location is secured.

Personnel Committee: The committee agreed to meet next Thursday at 4:30, in the Graduate Hospital cafeteria, to review compensatory time and staff review items.

Safety Committee: Sam Porter reported on locations where field units are working, specifically from 18th to 24th Streets, Federal to Fitzwater. The area around 20th and Catharine has been a high priority area lately, as have restaurants at 20th and Carpenter and 18th and Washington.

Les Robbins reported on recent muggings of kids in the area around 21st and Fitzwater, and on break-ins by youths around 15th and Kater.

Planning Commission

The Chair gave an update on the status of the Community Plan. She is working to increase the amount of community review and input before the Planning Commission issues a final report.

Rich Gliniak announced the work being done by the Coalition for Victim Advocacy, and will be sending out printed information.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted

David W. Feldman
Interim Executive Director