



Commons Board Meeting - Council Chambers, City Hall  
January 8th, 2014  
11:30 am EST

The Commons Board met on Wednesday, January 8, 2014 at 11:30 am (EST) in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Board Members Present: Ryan Brand, Tracy Souza, Sharon Beach, Cheryl Buffo, Sherry Stark, George Dutro and Paige Harden

Others Present: Jillian Keller, Jamie Brinegar, Shanda Sasse, Karen Shrode, John Clark, Jeff Logston and Heather Pope

Board President Sherry Stark welcomed everyone and presented a review of the agenda. Sherry requested two additional items be added; election of officers and discussion regarding development of a Commons summary “dashboard” suggested by Tracey Souza. No objections.

Sherry requested approval of November, 2013 Board minutes. Minutes approved by consensus.

Jeff Logston provided an update on The Commons retail tenants. Leases have been signed for Jordy McTaggart between Redevelopment Commission and City Council. The owners are still on schedule for the March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 opening date. Heather Pope notified The Commons Board the owners have applied for the Riverfront liquor license. The license will be on the January CRC meeting agenda. Heather Pope will provide a construction update to Shanda Sasse and Jillian Keller. Shanda Sasse will submit the update to The Board via email once obtained.

Jeff stated communication has taken place between the attorney for Snappy’s Tomato Pizza and the attorney for Redevelopment Commission. No payment towards the outstanding rent has been received. Redevelopment Commission will hold an executive session on Friday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014 to discuss the status and pending litigation.

Sherry Stark, on behalf of the Board, wished everyone well involved in the situation.

Jamie Brinegar provided an update regarding Subway signage requests. Plans had been made to meet with their Property Manager towards the end of 2013 but were

rescheduled due to tornado damage to their Kokomo, IN store taking priority. Jamie will reach out for an update. The Board stated they continually want to be receptive to how they can work with the tenants in ways to be helpful with needs and requests for their business.

Jeff Logston stated that he had spoken to the Mayor regarding appointment of Board Members. Paige Harden has been reappointed. Sharon Beach had not yet had a chance to speak to Mayor Kristen Brown but anticipates reappointment as well. Ryan Brand reported the City Council has also asked George Dutro to remain on the Board as their representative. Sherry Stark thanked the Mayor and City Council for their involvement.

Shanda Sasse provided an update on the Lower Lobby Sound System project. The funding request has been submitted to Heritage Fund but the invoice has not been received. Shanda will contact Commons Board Architectural consult, Steve Risting, to place the order. In response to a question from Paige Harden, Shanda stated the sound system will be used for both private and public functions, and the new and improved sound system will serve the community well.

The Commons staff has received positive feedback in regards to the installation of the second level blackout shades.

Shanda provided The Commons revenue update. The building hosted 13 revenue events that totaled over \$13,000 in December. Total year-end revenue was \$142,889.95. After grant allowance was applied, total revenue was \$137,879.95.

Holiday décor will be removed from The Commons on Tuesday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The Commons staff is also working with the Park partners in order to remove the outdoor décor. Shanda stated the pleasure it has been to have the additional tree outside The Commons for the 2013 season.

Shanda also stated The Commons served as a public warming center on Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014 and Tuesday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014 due to extreme winter weather. Jamie said use of the space was more recreational due to the area maintaining power throughout the storm.

The Christmas Village was a successful event at The Commons. Shanda reported turnout was better than expected considering the weather and cancellation of the Festival of Lights parade. She hopes the event will grow each year and has had requests for participant information. She anticipates flow and programming will improve with future years. She also hopes to include programming in The Commons calendar once a month.

Karen Shrode provided the Columbus Area Art's Council update. First Friday with Johnny Magic was well attended with an estimated 300 headcount. The Tim Grimm CD release concert was also a well-received event. Karen noted The Commons is a

wonderful venue for Tim Grimm's type of music. The Art's Council's next event is Monday, January 20<sup>th</sup>. They will again be hosting a Martin Luther King Day presentation at The Commons with "The Right to Dream." They have partnered with local teachers to offer extra credit to students who fill out study guides provided at the event. Karen noted that East High School always hosts breakfast the morning of the event. The Arts Council would like to bring the breakfast to The Commons in order to make a central location for events throughout the day. The presentation is at 2:00 pm on Monday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The next First Fridays is on February 7<sup>th</sup> and will host Billy Jonas.

Tracy Souza proposed a "dashboard" concept to The Commons Board to help track key indicator information. Revenue numbers, programming importance and emphasis on rental priorities would be displayed in an easy-to-understand method for quick reference on a monthly basis. George Dutro encouraged the information to be publicly accessible. Paige Harden mentioned tidbits of information regarding facts about The Commons might help keep the public interested. Tracy will work with The Commons staff to pull together a team to direct the idea.

Sherry spoke on behalf of the Board in regards to Ben Wagner, former Parks and Recreation Director. She stated the Board sincerely enjoyed working with him, appreciate the ways he helped with The Commons and personally thanked him for his work.

Sherry called for action on electing officers for 2014. Following discussion Sherry was elected President and Cheryl Buffo was elected Vice President on motion by Cheryl Buffo and second by Ryan Brand.

Meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Jillian Keller, acting secretary

Next meeting: Wednesday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014