

**Business Development Commission (BDC)
MEETING MINUTES**

DRAFT

MEETING DATE: Thursday, September 23, 2021
LOCATION: City Hall
CALLED TO ORDER: 8:02 AM
MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:56 AM
NEXT MEETING: Thursday, October 28, 2021

Name	Present	Absent
Mike Pincus, Chair (Citizen at Large)	X	
Pam Neihaus, Vice Chair (Citizen at Large)	X	
Kara Bowlin (Citizen at Large)	X	
Andrew Scavotto (Citizen at Large)	X	
Ceci Bartels (Home-Based Business Owner)	X	
Rebecca Now (Chamber of Commerce)	X	
Tim Delanty (Old Webster Rep)	X	
Tammy Behm, (Commercial Business Owner)	X	
Erbab Majeede (Commercial Business Owner)		X
Laura Arnold, Council Liaison	X	
Eric Peterson, Staff Liaison	X	

Also in Attendance
Jenny Starkey – Director of Public Affairs and Engagement
Fran Sudekum – Administrative Support

Approval of Minutes – A motion to approve the August minutes was made by Tim Delanty, seconded by Tammy Behm, and it was unanimously approved.

City Business Roundtable – The Business Roundtable “listen session” will be held in the morning the first week of November (exact date and time to be determined) at Webster University’s East Academic Building which is a flexible space with access to garage parking. A pre-survey will be sent out. Mike Pincus and Tim Delanty will be the moderators for the event.

Holiday Marketing – Jenny Starkey is continuing to put together the promotion pieces for the upcoming holiday season. The budget will be the same as last year and most of the same promotion pieces will be kept for this year. The Great Day St. Louis piece will be done jointly with the Old Webster Trade Association is proceeding. A new streaming promotion with ABC 30 will be added to the mix.

Webster Groves Gift Certificates – Eric Peterson shared with potential future technology changes, there is the potential to move from paper WG gift certificates to a plastic gift card which would streamline logistics for both the City and retailers while adding online functionality as well. Commission Members saw this as a positive step.

Business Involvement in Civic Spaces and Events – As the Special Activities Permit process transitions from Mara Perry to Mr. Peterson, it’s likely the process will be put online and adding the business involvement component will be addressed at that time. Will possibly update at the November meeting.

Three Business Districts Scavenger Hunt – Ceci Bartels have visited two of the three business districts and will meet with the third district when they have their monthly meeting. Ms. Bartels recommends planning to hold the scavenger hunt in the spring. She would like to move forward with a sub-committee on the event; Pam Neihaus and Andrew Scavotto had previously expressed interest in helping. Next update will be at the January BDC meeting.

Webster University Business Videos – Ms. Starkey continues to coordinate working with the Webster University video production class on producing videos of Webster Groves businesses with the BDC as the University's client. Previous videos were grouped around style, food, and gardening themes. This semester will possibly use a sweet treats theme and will be available in December. It's likely a video will be produced during the spring semester as well.

City Website Redesign – As Ms. Starkey moves forward with the redesign of the City's website, she'd like to work with a sub-committee of the BDC on the Explore Webster Groves landing page. Mike Pincus, Pam Neihaus, Ceci Bartels, and Laura Arnold volunteered to be on the sub-committee; looking at the January meeting for an update.

District Updates

- **Crossroads** – Moving forward with the Streetscape Project is their sole focus at the moment.
- **Old Orchard** – The Gazebo Music Series has been very successful. The Trick or Treating event is planned.
- **Old Webster** – Old Webster meets next week.

City/Council Updates

- Betty's Books is opening in Old Orchard.
- Union Studio is moving a couple doors west in Old Orchard.
- Field Theory is opening in Old Orchard.
- SMR Auto expanded CUP has been approved.
- With the retirement of the current Fire Chief, the City is looking to find a new one.
- City Council's Strategic Planning Retreat is October 15th.
- Proposed Douglass Hill Redevelopment: There are three actions the City Council will need to act on related to the proposal; zoning changes, TIF, and the Redevelopment Agreement.
 - City Council's public hearing on the zoning changes starts on October 5th.
 - The TIF Commission's public hearing is on October 27th.
 - City Commissions are being asked to give their input to City Council; the BDC will discuss at their October meeting.
 - A great deal of Information about the project is available on the City's website.
 - Councilmember Arnold encouraged Commission Members to give their views on the project as well as encourage their friends and neighbors to give their input as well. City Council wants to hear from as many citizens about the project.
- American Rescue Plan's first tranche of funds have been received; \$2.3 million dollars. City Council is looking for public input on how that those funds are used; what does the community need.
- The Sustainability Commission got a good response to their survey from businesses and now have opened the survey to residents.
- The City's email domain changes today from webstergroves.org to webstergrovesmo.gov.

NEXT MEETING

Meeting Date – October 28 at 8:00 AM, In person, City Hall 2nd Floor Conference and also via Zoom.