

MARCH 2023 – MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Downtown Residents' Council, Inc.

Date: March 13, 2023, 6:00 pm

Place: First Financial Innovation Center, 4th & Vine Streets

Members absent: Jackie Bryson, Lorry Hartley, Tricia Lynn, Chase Mosijowsky, Andrew Naab. Victoria Pershick, Esther Wing



President **Alan Bunker** called the meeting to order at 6:02.

1. Approval of January minutes – Teri Boland made a motion to approve the January Board meeting minutes, **Mary Heimert** seconded, and all voted in favor.

2. Review/approval of Treasurer’s report – Lisa Sprague moved approval, **Teri Boland** seconded, and all voted in favor.

3. Reports of Committees:

A. **Nominating Committee – Joan Meyer** reported that three candidates (Sue Byrom, Sally Donovan, and Tim Nolan) have agreed to stand for Board election. There are four vacant seats. The Committee recommends not filling the fourth at this time, enabling us to fill it later if a match between need and candidate can be identified. Alan reminded the group that the Board will need to name a President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, and IT Chair. Joan moved approval of the three-person slate, **Christian Rahe** seconded, and all voted in favor.

B. **Social – Mary Heimert** reminded the group of the brunch scheduled for Sunday the 19th at Kroger’s On The Rhine Eatery.

C. **Clean, Green & Safe** - Alan had previously emailed his report on this topic.

D. **Speakers – Seth Harmon** provided copies of his speaker schedule for the rest of the year. Most are confirmed.

E. **Brent Spence Bridge Advisory Committee – Andrew Naab**, unable to be present, sent the following email communication to the Board, “With regards to Brent Spence Bridge – City Advisory Committee, we had our introductory meeting on Wednesday, March 8th. I was joined by colleagues of the City of Cincinnati, The Port, Hamilton County, Camp Washington Business and Community Council, the West End Community Council, CUF Neighborhood Association, and a few individual business representatives. We discussed the history of the project, regional impact, and a preliminary overview of what we hope to achieve. We will meet again on Wednesday, April 12th, at which time I expect to have a more substantive update.”

On a related matter, Seth said that Dylan Lurk still very much hoped to receive a letter of support from the Board for expanded attention to resident priorities that Bridge Forward Cincinnati is urging on ODOT and KYC. He understands that this would not entail support for Bridge Forward's specific proposals. Christian had agreed last month to edit Bridge Forward's suggested letter to reflect our views. He did not have it with him, but said he would email it after the meeting. Board members agreed to approve the letter in principle, with opportunity to comment. Kurt proposed that we send a letter reflecting our concerns and priorities, Joan seconded, and all voted in favor.

F. New Business

Alan shared with the group a communication he received from a company called Ascend Wellness Holdings. The company's representative declared its aspiration to open a medical dispensary at 830 Reedy Street. The representative said the company had talked with the city about community engagement and was advised to approach the DRC.

Much back-and-forth ensued. Alan and **Jackie Bryson** met with CPD officers, who said they knew nothing of the company's plans, but offered to look into its presence in other Ohio communities. City planners Dan Bower and Danny Jones subsequently reported that Ascend's interest is in a medical cannabis dispensary. Such dispensaries are regulated by the State of Ohio's Department of Pharmacy. To date, there are four provisionally licensed dispensaries in the Cincinnati area. Ascend was unable to complete the required paperwork on time and has asked for an extension.

Board discussion centered on whether we want to take a position on this issue. City officials would like to know whether there is support for a dispensary downtown. While DRC does occasionally take a position of liquor license applications, which may be seen as analogous to medical cannabis applications, we have done so only when we have become aware of a problem with the applicant. In general, Board members do not feel that we have sufficient information to respond to Ascend's request for our support. Jackie has drafted a list of questions, including what the business model looks like, what product categories would be supplied, what plans are for security, and what Ascend means when it refers to "collaborative initiatives" with DRC. Consensus was that we should offer Ascend the opportunity to make a presentation to DRC members.

Teri agreed to greet members at the door at Tuesday's meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:58.

Next meeting: Wednesday, April 12, 2023, 6:00 pm, First Financial Innovation Center