

September 24th Board of Directors Meeting 6:30-8:00 Baker Community Center

Present:

Craig Wilford
Katie Haas
Bahieh Hartshorn
Martin Hernandez
Monica Bravo
Leah Porter
Nancy Paez
Jen Crea
Signe Hushagen
Kareem Smith
JJ Bermo
Monica Morocco

Guests:

Kali Freeman

6:35 Call to order

Consent Agenda- August Board Meeting Minute Corrections, September Agenda, Committee Minutes-

Kareem moves to approve Agenda. Nancy seconds. Passed Unanimously

St Paul Public Library Survey - Kali Freeman

The Riverside Library conducted a community survey over the winter. The goal was to get an idea of how to better serve adults on the West Side. They used a community listening model as well as a survey form. There were 169 survey participants. The goal was to mirror the demographics of the community in those who responded; this didn't quite happen but there was diversity in the responses. Kali would like to call to attention for WSCO the theme around the desire to cultivate neighborhood strength and connectedness. Another major theme was language learning, with an equal desire to learn Spanish as there was to learn English. Healthiness kept coming up across multiple areas, as well as access to healthy foods, grocery stores, etc. West Side history was a huge point of interest for many participants as well.

The library has now gone to their adult education coordinator and their book purchasers to share what our community wants, and they are also looking at what programs they can develop on their own such as a West Side History class. They are also doing a Read Brave series for youth through adults - the adult book this year will be Evicted. Monica Bravo encourages us as West Side residents to read this book. Kali

has asked for some key issues that residents on the West Side are facing to create a display.

Monica Bravo - this information is important for us to see and consider as we end our three year strategic plan and begin to think about a new one.

Kali asked if we could create a WSCO recommended reading list. Can be books, websites, resource lists, and can be annotated as well.

This information is thematically relevant to us as we continue our work, having hard data to look at is beneficial to us.

ED Report

Monica passed out a sheet with dates of partnerships with other groups around key issues:

October 6th - March to the Polls with MN Voices and Humboldt High School - March to the Polls wants to also give us some funding

October 23rd - Twin Cities Media Alliance & WSCO - host St. Paul Voter Education @ Wellstone - only one in St Paul, centered around people of color

October 27th - Mobilize a BUS to the polls partnership with Color My Vote & City of St. Paul - decorate the bus with WSCO identity, bring people to the polls to vote early

November 6th - Execute a GOTV Hub at 88 Cesar Chavez

Renters Rights - Slower pace and smaller scale, could use help posting resources for tenants and landlords on our website - we want to help both

Anti-displacement Policy Link Twin Cities Cohort - This cohort offers policy and strategy recommendations on anti-displacement and anti-gentrification in St. Paul. They are going to a national conference in mid-November. The Frogtown Neighborhood Association for Community Work and Councilmember Mietra and Jeremiah Ellis and Andrea Jenkins, as well as some community orgs are going.

Racial Equity and Healing Initiative National - All in Cities cohort that Monica is attending in New Orleans, positioning WSCO on another national stage.

Katie reported back on Combined HEJ and RDLU meeting - there is a lot of shared topics between these groups, it makes it more feasible to bring them together so people who want to be involved in both can do so. Next time we will offer food, childcare, make it more inclusive and less intimidating. Katie heard positive feedback from those attending.

Nancy reported back on the Indigenous Women, Women of Color Table Conference - they are going over feedback from attendees, people felt safe, felt good. Other organizations also heard about what we were doing, and there is a potential to connect with them. The interest for it exceeded 1000 people, if we had the capacity it could have been much larger. Views on social media were in excess of 10,000. We were the leader, the hosts, and this is a big deal. There were 127 confirmed registered, and just a little under 100 attending. Food and childcare were provided for 4 hours on a

Saturday. Nancy uplifted Bahieh for the work she put into this effort. There were some challenges, but having a strong WSCO code of conduct helped.

JJ asked about creating an Indigenous and People of Color youth group through WSCO, the interest would be there.

Financial Update

Review of profit and loss statement - we are currently under budget, we currently have a deficit of a little over \$20,000, but our bank accounts are not in the red, just our accounting books. Slightly under for expenses compared to budget as well.

Craig asked about contracted services line, is that over budget primarily because of Amplify? Leah explains that Amplify is definitely part of it, but also when we started working with Propel we got a new chart, so this line item is now combining several line items from our previous accounting.

Balance sheet review - Cris cleaned up some of the lines we had asked about at our last meeting, current total assets as of August 31st is \$28,993.28.

Cash flow projections slate us to run out of cash in November, by the end of the year we would be in the red \$16,000 if we continue on current projections.

Fundraising Update

In talking both with Amplify and Propel, they said it is common to have a cash flow gap at the end of the year and a line of credit is a feasible option, but we would need to fill a \$20,000 fundraising gap.

We have a line of credit we haven't tapped into, it is typically used when we have something coming in that we know is secured. We do not have that currently.

Current recommendations are to not pull back on staff and for an aggressive end of year campaign - direct asks outside of foundations.

The proposal is to activate the line of credit which is \$20,000 and aggressively accelerate the end of year giving campaign.

There is a fundraising plan in place now that we have never had. Monica will get an electronic overview of the plan. This will include a package with talking points, how to send the message out, etc.

Other options are to drastically cut down on staff, or shut down for a month or two.

We are applying for continuing grants, but only one additional is expected for this year.

Monica is hoping to sit down with a group of possible donors to make a pitch for investing in WSCO.

Kareem asked if we had hired a grant writer. We did, but the return on investment wasn't there for us. Propel is currently writing two grants for us and a template for us to use in the future.

Nancy asked what happens if we get the line of credit and we can't pay it back? If we can't take pay it back they will take the lot we own, this is what we offered up as

collateral. We are getting free rent in exchange for Humboldt using the lot, which comes out to about a \$10,000 value.

Katie asked if other district councils face similar challenges. Yes, but they also generally only have 1 to 1.5 staff, and don't do nearly as much as we do.

Action Steps: All board members need to take the forms we filled out at the last meeting and fill in addresses in a spreadsheet and return to Leah Shepard by Friday the 28th. Craig suggested pre-asking the people on your list as well. Board will also need to come in and help stuff envelopes.

The board would like to see the end of year giving campaign laid out.

Jen suggested to reach out to past board members to get their contacts as well.

At the Annual Meeting there will be a raffle for the 76" flat screen TV. We will sell tickets for \$5. Each board member will be asked to sell at least 20.

Martine asked about the Annual Meeting, are we doing an ask? Monica would like to do an ask at the meeting.

Board Retreat

Was slated for November 20th from 5:30 - 9 p.m. at Dodge Nature Center. We have about \$6,000 earmarked for these retreats, but after a conversation with the city it is clear that we could change this to general operation and postpone the retreat until we have the funds next year.

Nancy asked what the main outcomes we were hoping for were - thinking about equity in our spaces at WSCO. There is a bucket of funds coming to us in 2019 for work around equity that we could use towards this retreat.

Kareem pointed out that there will be new people on the board next year, so having them in and on the board in January this will be more impactful.

Monica will ask the facilitators if there is any pre-reading content that we could look at before January.

The board will still get together on November 20th for a more informal gathering at Dodge Nature Center.

Nancy moved to reschedule the board retreat to January and redirect the funds from 2018 to general operation. Signe seconds. The motion passed unanimously.

Annual Meeting

Everyone got the silent auction spreadsheet, this is a way to track who is making what asks.

Jen will get a volunteer spreadsheet out to the board soon.

Sponsors need to be solidified by the end of this week - September 28th - in order to get their name on the mailings. The mailer will then be designed by Signe. This mailer hits every household on the West Side.

Monica asked if we want to consider a matching gift for the meeting itself.

We are looking for someone to help with creating a video. Nick Johnson has that skillset. We could also reach out to Rivers Edge for class projects.

West Sider of the Year will be decided on at the next WSCO board meeting, and the ballot and e-blast will be coming out shortly.

Board Candidates should have a conversation with either Craig or Monica before deciding to run. Looking for candidates that reflect the neighborhood, balance of race and gender.

All alternates need to re-run, and a few board members are ending their terms. Help will be needed for set-up, take-down, and tables.

JJ motions to close the meeting, Jen seconds. Passes unanimously at 7:58