

May 30, 2019

Constituency Executive Committee draft minutes

6:00 p.m.

Attendance: Jerry Baroh, Nick Setten, Ali Mowry, Betty Halfon, David Ghoddousi, Joan Paulson, Mark Brady, Russell Monroe

Updates:

Jerry invited Nick to provide updates since the last General Assembly meeting. Nick said during the Programs Committee there was a discussion of inconsistencies with the marketing program, and a concierge program for small shops. Bylaws: there was a discussion about the use of the word "public." We need to have a vote on the bylaws. Showbox: There is a letter that the Constituency can sign off on, signed by other stakeholders, about the inclusion of the Showbox in the historic district. Orca cards: Ali wants the Constituency to administer the program. Budget: Discuss. Nominations committee: updates.

Betty suggested inviting Amy Wallsmith to talk about the PDA's marketing goals to understand the situation better.

Showbox:

Jerry said the Showbox came up at the last meeting, and that there had been an extension of six more months. Four people from the Constituency that are on the PDA Council can't say anything about it, since the PDA isn't taking a position. Ali pointed out that it's possible for individual PDA Councilmembers to speak on their own behalf. There was a discussion about liability insurance. Ali said that all the Constituency members she has talked to are concerned about the Showbox. Betty suggested that the Constituency vote on the issue.

Committee members reviewed a copy of the letter. Nick explained that the city had been planning to do outreach to one member of each group, but canceled those plans, choosing to send a survey instead. There has been a significant delay by the city. Historic Seattle held a meeting last week and discussed three strategies for preserving the Showbox: landmark the Showbox, include the Showbox in the Market Historical District, and find a new buyer for the Showbox. Historic Seattle has offered to withdraw the landmark nomination if the Showbox owner will give Historic Seattle a year to raise the money.

Joan said the purpose of the Constituency is to bring people together to discuss important issues that need to be addressed. This letter does that - it's consistent with the Constituency's objectives. She thinks the Showbox owner just wants money and to get out.

David objected to the inclusion of organizations' names that had not yet agreed to the letter.

Mark was concerned that the Showbox owner had threatened a lawsuit and the liability of being involved. Ali explained that the PDA had been subpoenaed, therefore the Constituency

officers had been notified as well, but that it does not mean that they are liable. Discussion ensued about Constituency vs. personal liability. Mark said he thought the Constituency board should get liability insurance. Ali asked, for the purposes of signing this letter, if reassurance from the PDA's attorney would be sufficient. Mark agreed that it would be. Ali said that she would request that the attorney attend the next General Assembly meeting. Ali underscored that constituents are concerned about this issue. Betty suggested that they email the Constituency or attend a Constituency meeting to communicate their concerns. Jerry said that he has an opposing opinion about the Showbox. He encouraged surveying constituents.

Nick agreed that the letter should not go out until there is consensus. Jerry said he would follow up on legal advice for the Constituency about signing the letter supporting the Showbox.

Orca Lift cards

Ali talked about reviving the Orca Lift card program. She was unsuccessful in having the PDA or Foundation administer the program, so she suggested that the Constituency could function as a merchants association and be the one to administer the program. She went over the costs of the program and how it worked previously. She suggested that the Constituency discuss what the program would look like. She said she has been working with Commute Seattle/DSA over the past year. She said they are supposed to be forming an equity committee, but that hasn't happened. She suggested that the Constituency do a needs assessment, to see how many Orca cards it would need to buy. The benefit would be for employees of businesses at the Market. She thought that the Foundation could help with fundraising and that the PDA could act as treasurer, with the Constituency administering the program.

The Executive Committee discussed administering the program. Committee members were supportive of such a program, but were concerned about the responsibility for administering the program, particularly the financial aspect. The Committee voted to move forward with the program.

Elections

Nick said he was having trouble attracting candidates. He and Mark will be getting together next week. He is going to submit the announcement in the Market News and the Market Insider. Russell said that he's running for the PDA Council Constituency seat. Betty suggested recruiting candidates from outside the Market. Ali said there are people interested but can't make the time commitment. Mark suggested doing some outreach on the crafts line and to shop owners, in order to explain what the Constituency does. There was a discussion about apathy. Nick asked what happens if there is no one running for a position. Discussion ensued.

Bylaws

Betty moved to approve the revisions of the bylaws, as identified September 2018. Mark seconded the motion. 5 in favor. Motion passed. Jerry abstained.

Marketing

Mark suggested that there be questions for the PDA about marketing. He said income at shops in the DownUnder is down at least 15-20% from the previous year. Discussion ensued: perhaps it's the lack of parking under the Viaduct, more tourists. Mark thinks it's not being addressed through marketing. Joan said the PDA doesn't have a plan to spread people through the Market and has not evaluated where the pedestrian traffic is going. How to make up for this deficiency? Betty says there needs to be more done in the shoulder seasons. She says the DownUnder is too dark and people don't know it's down there. She thinks there is no reason for people to go down there because they don't know about it. She suggested a Market passport that can be stamped in exchange for a Market tote bag. Ali said that consumers are responding to an economy that is changing. There was a discussion about wayfinding signage. Joan said that 80% of the questions at the information booth are asking where to find bathrooms. Joan said it would help to use larger lettering. Nick and Ali said that would be a facilities question, not marketing. Nick said the Market passport was adopted for Mother's Day. You had to spend money to get a screen printed tote bag. Nick went over the questions discussed today. Mark suggested that Nick facilitate the questions.

Agenda for next General Assembly meeting

Executive Committee members went over the next agenda, with some items for June. Lori asked if the Committee had seen the email from the city arborist. She said that the cherry trees on Pike in front of the Hahn Building would be replaced with healthier trees. Discussion ensued. Mark asked about settling the budget so the Constituency can get insurance. Jerry said he would try to get it all ready for the General Assembly meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.