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## Walnut Hills Area Council: Business Group

### Minutes

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Minutes: April 21, 2016 - Walnut Hills Area Council: Business Group Meeting

Taken by Michael Rountree, Childress & Cunningham, Inc.

#### *Attendance*

Jeff Brewster	Katy Dietz	Cindy Fischer	Solomon
Michael Rountree	Matthew Cuff	Officer Kandice Roper-Issa	Mike Cornette
Greg Warner	Clarence Taylor	Kathryne Gardette	
Baba Charles Miller	Joe Sandmann	Tracy Flanagan-Ryan	

Meeting called to order at 11:40 AM, with a prayer of thanks by Jeff Brewster for safety after an incident earlier that morning.

Minutes from meeting on March 17, 2016 were not discussed; Jeff asked that approval be delayed until the next meeting. Members were reminded to use the sign-in sheet to provide us with current email addresses, if you are not getting meeting reminders.

#### **Committee Reports:**

##### *Safety – Officer Roper-Issa*

Crime statistics were distributed. An arrest has been made regarding a robbery at Life Skills, and there were other robberies at CVS and at the gas station on Gilbert. Recently an arrest was made for drug traffic in the Kroger parking lot; police are trying to address the activity there.

For National Night Out in August, there is an Asset Forfeiture Request Form that is due April 30, if we are interested. Kathryne said the WHAC tried to fill it out last year, the information it asks for is not simple. Clarence noted that there are logistical challenges, and Officer Roper-Issa said they might not have officers present all night. It was noted that Avondale Community Council is working to organize such an event.

A follow-up inspection of the property at 926 Chapel was scheduled for later that day, to check for compliance with the list of things that TCB is supposed to have done.

##### *Website – Jeff Brewster*

There is an upcoming deadline for collection of initial content, and the new site may be able to demo in May. All committee chairs will bear some responsibility for managing or updating some of the content once it is live. The new site will feature a common calendar and links useful to both WHAC and the Business Group.

##### *By-Laws – Jeff Brewster*

The Executive Committee has been considering whether the Business Group should return to an independent status and seek its own 501c-3 designation, as the WHAC has recently been restructuring its by-laws in ways that can be a hindrance to our functioning. Jeff said that we have been denied a Board vote, and that additional dues are being required from businesses if they intend to participate as Area Council members. We don't want to jeopardize any funding this fiscal year, which might be contingent on the current 501c-3 status we have as a standing committee of the WHAC, so any change would not take effect until 2017 at least.

Kathryne noted that current WHAC By-Laws provide for 2 Board positions to be filled by WHBG representatives, but Jeff said that the language referring to "elected Board members" has been used to deny a vote, since the WHBG positions are appointments (current By-Laws allow for WHBG to hold its officer elections separately, then make appointments based on the outcome).

Joe said that it is likely that new businesses would understand a separate business association better, as what may be the norm. The City enjoys working in Walnut Hills thanks to the effectiveness of the Working Group, which would remain in place regardless of the business group's independent status. Motion was approved, to have the Executive Committee proceed with pursuit of a separate 501c-3 status, Jeff Brewster 1<sup>st</sup>, Michael Rountree 2<sup>nd</sup>.

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#### *Planning & Physical Development* – Jeff Brewster

Jeff spoke about the management agreement for the parking lot adjacent to the Dillard Center; we have previously voted in favor of paying for necessary management of this public lot. There are additional lot locations that may come under our purview as well, later, for which this lot will establish a precedent. Jeff said that he is not willing to sign the agreement as written (it is an agreement between the City and the Dillard Center, the Business Group would just reimburse Dillard for management costs). Project dollars of about \$150k for lot refurbishment may not happen if a deal is not signed, but Clarence suggested that by acquiring the City's stake we might consider paid parking (current agreement stipulates a free lot). Joe noted that streetscape improvements along that stretch of McMillan are intended to occur at the same time as the lot improvements. Jeff said that he is amenable to any easement that might be needed for a new Metro bus shelter.

#### *Education / Workforce Development* – No Report

#### *Finance* – No Report

#### *Beautification* – No Report

#### **Other Matters:**

There was a vision for fiber-optic deployment in WH dating back to about 12 years ago, and over a mile of cable was laid, but it has not been fully utilized yet. The Area Council and Business Group have been paying 50/50 for the pole lease each year. Jeff said that we have an opportunity now to implement Fiber-Optic service in the neighborhood, with either of 2 proposals. Cincinnati Bell is working on its Light Up Cincinnati initiative, to bring its F.O. service to whichever neighborhoods are most likely to produce a customer base, and may prioritize WH if we can demonstrate a sufficient number of sign-ups. Cincinnati Bell's service would be without an up-front installation cost, but they would retain ownership of the network and set monthly rates, etc.

An alternative proposal would be from PowerNet, who has already provided service to the Zoo and a portion of Avondale. This would involve significant up-front cost but we could gain ownership of the network once installed, and via data analytics we could have access to data that allows us to host targeted advertising or broadcast local information. The network might become a revenue-generating asset that may produce enough to support commitments such as public parking lots. The up-front costs of installation may be shared with UC Health or other partners, and CNBDU project funds could be tapped for this.

Jeff said that we will try to have a presentation by one of the Fiber-Optic vendors at the next meeting.

Katy said that Green Man Twist will be presenting at the upcoming "Life's a Pitch" event on April 26, hosted by Mortar, noting that they are the only WH candidate. They will have their grand opening on Memorial Day weekend and will have a soft-serve ice cream truck at the new park.

Meeting adjourned at approx. 1:10 PM.