

Minutes of Neenah Central City Business Improvement District Board
February 18, 2025 – 8:00 am
Council Chambers – Neenah City Hall

PRESENT: Board Members: Alex Wenzel, Ald. Mark Ellis, George Brownell, Ben Ziemba, Alex Noskowiak, Tori Dorn, Bob Gillespie, Michelle Bauer and Christine Rondeau. Also present: Flo Bruno (1002 E Forest Avenue), Mayor Jane Lang, Executive Director Brent Bowman (FNI), Assistant Executive Director Sara Hanneman (FNI), Community Development Deputy Director Brad Schmidt (City of Neenah Community Development) and Community Development Specialist Samantha Jefferson (City of Neenah Community Development).

Approve minutes of January 21, 2025 meeting: MSC Ellis/Brownell, the BID Board to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2025 BID Board meeting. Motion passed.

Public Appearances: None.

Financials:

Bills for Approval: **MSC Ellis/Wenzel, the BID Board to approve the bill packet for \$15,203.40. Motion passed.** Administrative costs were historically pulled twice/year. That has changed to once/month.

2024 Review – Baker Tilly in Neenah March 24: Assistant Executive Director Hanneman thanked Member Noskowiak and Accountant Julie Last for their help throughout the year and at review time.

Budget Status Report: No report.

Executive Committee:

Thank you's for the month *to* the BID Board - Assistant Executive Director Hanneman sent around a Thank You to the BID for sponsoring A Very Neenah Christmas.

Members were able to sign a thank you card for Amy James. Amy was a previous Executive Director of Future Neenah and currently owns The Natural Boutique. She will be closing the shop as she is relocating.

Retention & Recruitment Committee:

(Action) & Recr Grant (145 W Wisconsin) – this was discussed at the January meeting and again at committee. Because the work was completed before the grant application was submitted, there were not two bids, and historically this kind of work is not within the grant's scope of work, the committee has recommended denial.

MSC Ellis/Sheikh, the BID Board to deny the Retention and Recruitment grant application for roof work at 145 W. Wisconsin Avenue. Motion passed.

Maintenance Committee:

Next Meeting March 12.

Public Relations and Marketing Committee:

Upcoming events: March 18 & 19 – Art Party Pop Up, Paintings by Kathryn Wedge; March 20 – Shop and Stroll; April 4-18 – Spring “N” Scavenger Hunt; April 12 – Love Local Saturday; May 1-May 31 – Tiny Doors; May 10 – Wine Walk.

Assistant Executive Director Hanneman looked into the cost of having a billboard on Highway 41 during the draft. This would cost \$2,800 for one month (\$1,000 for the lease, \$1,800 for the wrap). Member Ellis suggested electronic transportable reader signs be considered that could be placed in different areas of Neenah to advertise things happening in the downtown.

For four years, the tree beds have been decorated by different groups in the spring. This year, there will be a new tiny door project instead of this. Ald. Erickson will be working with art students from the high school to create tiny doors that will be placed around the downtown.

Attendees at Warm Your Heart donated over 12 large containers of items that were donated to the blessing box at First Presbyterian.

City of Neenah Updates:

Community Development has received the first draft of the housing study and is reviewing. The Mayor is currently conducting year-end financial reviews with each department.

Round Table and Information Sharing:

New board member Ben Ziema was introduced. He owns J. Anthony Jewelers. He discussed his long history with Downtown Neenah and is appreciative that he can be a part of this board.

Members discussed the possibility of expanding the current BID or adding a BID area to Neenah.

Mello will be opening soon on S. Commercial Street.

Future Neenah Updates:

Love Local Saturday is a new event this year. Bags of goodies will be given out to shoppers in the downtown are part of the promotion.

S. Commercial Street construction from Stanley Street to Winneconne will be completed between March and October 2025. There is a meeting at Neenah PD on Thursday, February 18 from 5-6 about this.

FNI was able to use Placer AI to get data from some events:

Warm Your Heart – 2,500 people in the downtown during the event and they stayed for an average of just over four hours.

Very Neenah Christmas – 12,200 people

Two event Saturdays in October – Wine Walk: 4,100 people and Old Fashioned Saturday: 4,300 people
Two non event Saturdays in October – 2,700 people and 3,400 people.

Members discussed how this information can help businesses increase sales.

Account Julie Last provided an explanation of how she determines which gift certificates have been used and not used. Every couple of years, FNI looks into plastic gift cards but so far, there have been logistic issues that makes paper gift certificates the best option.

Announcements and future agenda items:

Next meeting: March 18th – Annual meeting likely at Future Neenah

The Board adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Jefferson
Community Development Specialist, Community Development