



Bloomfield Development CORPORATION

BDC Board Minutes

Feb. 23rd, 2022 Notes by Dave Zak

Board Attendance: Kyle Gracey, Dave Zak, Dan Barrett, Vicki Mayowski, Matt B, Dan Fox, Lauren Nichols, Mike Q Roth, Jodi Lincoln, Bruce Chan, Mary Ann, Maura Bainbridge, Vlad Lungu, Tara Fay Coleman, Robin N,
Staff: Christina Howell, Heather Hanus,

Status: Approved

Time Call to Order 6:31pm

Introductions, Announcements, Icebreaker: Fundraising Committee - *What's the most memorable, unprompted compliment you've ever received.*

Resolution to approve January 2022 Meeting Minutes, approved.

Finance Committee: Vicki Mayowski

- *Sent out the financials more recently than the ones linked in the email*
 - *New finance person named Aurora, she'd only been working for 3 working days and is the reason the financials are more up to date in the drive.*
 - *Still using Quickbooks.*
 - *Aurora has put notes and will be taking thoughts*
- *Financial Position is negative on the statement but not in reality, we're holding to avoid overdrafts. Since these financials we've had some good developments on the cash front, we received \$17,500 from Acobo, also a sponsorship from Highmark for \$7,500, also a loan from the Small Business Association for \$150,400. Should have it in the next four to six weeks. Also vendor fees will be coming in soon, a little earlier than usual b/c we've incentivized vendors to pay a little earlier. Cash front moving in a good direction.*
- *\$29,199.10, that includes the Acobo money.*
 - *Other current assets 20k from the URA, hoping to start billing on for the benches by April.*
 - *Additional \$35k from Acobo*
 - *Total here is \$55k*

- Aurora will be going over everything.
- Total assets at the end of Jan. \$84,867.20
 - Accounts payable a little over \$20k.
 - CC balance will be paid down and the line of credit (a little over \$10k)
 - Our only debt will be the SBA loan.
 - Still have payroll liability on the books (what we own Christina)
- Total liabilities = \$130,501.36
- Bruce had positive feedback on the notes function in Quickbooks
- Statement of activity
 - \$1300 from individuals
 - \$500 sponsorship
 - Vendor fees starting to come in, we offered vendors to keep their fee flat if they paid early, otherwise a 5% increase
- Revenue = \$16k
- We did pay our staff half of our normal salary in January and the other half in mid Feb. due to cashflow issues. At the end of Jan we had a loss of \$8k and change.
- Vicki invites everyone to look at the accounts payable and receivable reports if anyone has any questions, there's a lot of detail in there.
- Kyle suggests that we don't incentivize vendors to pay early, due to the SBA loan coming through. It's less important to get money from vendors quickly.
- Jodi mentions there's no actual to budget in the financials.
 - Christina will work on this.

IAR: Jodi

- Last meeting as part of board recruitment work. Has some updates to board job description, invites people to look at it and give feedback. LINK = https://docs.google.com/document/d/1h2wd_l8Rnlq9R7m2rNacDG3vQSCT3NaJb4Q455ocPg/edit
 - Most changes were on the last page about qualifications for ideal candidates. Changed language to be more inclusive and focused on lived experience and removing what could turn people off. A couple of open questions were added too, also looking for feedback.
 - Question for fundraising committee in notes, wants to make sure some rules are aligned with their language.
 - Dan and Lauren agree the changes are reflected in the recent change not to require 100% board giving and instead can allow other philanthropic acts supporting BDC.
 - Dave will check in with this @ the next Fundraising meeting.
 - Lauren requests we add this updated language about board recruitment to the website and to the email.
 - We can edit it but not useful if no one sees it.
- Jodi asks if we need a formal vote to approve these changes. Kyle says yes and asks for any objections.
 - The motion passes.
 - Any future edits can be added.

Fundraising: Dave Zak

Business District Committee: Heather Hanus

- *Asks for help from the board re: research on anti-racism @ the market. References handbook from a black farmers market manager in Portland. She lists a handful of anti-racist farmers markets do. Most straightforward, two stuck out to her and wants to see what they'd look like at our market.*
 - *1. Understand and explain the history of farming with regard to race, discrimination, and other harm to people of color - nationally and locally.*
 - *Asks for ideas on how to do this, documentary screenings?*
 - *2. Have clear and accessible feedback mechanisms. "Feedback needs to travel in all directions, including lateral."*
 - *How to setup feedback where people feel safe?*
- *Q. says there are many local orgs like Grow Pittsburgh, Black Urban Farmers, other orgs. We could try and figure out a way to partner with them. Whether it's at the market or otherwise, we do have people closeby doing similar work, it might be better to make those connections rather than inventing on our own. They can talk about growing food and mixing some of our goals with this particular goal.*
- *Tara is in favor of talks, via the chat.*
- *Bruce, echoes what Q said but we need to be more deliberate about it re: anti-racism. Would be great to actually have events, thinking about the space of the farmers market where we could hold an event like this, would people be comfortable attending? Are there ways to lift up the current vendors who either identify as a minority group or as a member of our scholarship program, not to ask them for above and beyond but reaching out to them and asking what they think about these ideas b/c they might have some insight into these barriers. Both current and former members.*
- *Jodi - In terms of the history of black farming and in addition to events, there's plenty of articles and things like that, that we could share on social media on a timeline. Also asks about posterboard displays about different people, farming techniques, info booth, we can use and display info on site. Maybe QR codes to lead people down a deeper path.*
 - *In terms of feedback, have we ever had a comment box?*
 - *Christina, no not really.*
- *Dan B. likes the event idea, but also the class divide between minorities in PGH. Wants attention to price points, wants more accessibility for low-income people.*
 - *Bruce is chat also mentions he wants farmers to earn a livable wage.*
- *Kyle - education component, trying to do that more at the market instead of driving them to external events would be better. If we're going to ask other people and orgs, particularly those of color, we need to pay them for their time. Needs to be part of the budget.*
 - *For the feedback, need to think about how we'd do lateral feedback. Not as clear how we do that well.*

- *Maura sees Dan's point about the class point, but doesn't want to undercut the farmers. Thinks the food bucks program provides some access. Also some comments on the lateral feedback, there's been one or two times vendors had some criticism.*
- *Heather agrees with Kyle that outside orgs need to be paid. Really likes the idea of having displays around the market that could lead to educational content. How do we post things about land loss without triggering people? Sending them to outside content via QR is a good idea.*
- *Christina not sure we can control prices, but also mentions SNAP has increased 300% over the past few years. More billboards this year for SNAP are planned.*
- *Kyle thanks Heather and says if there's more we can help with, don't hesitate to ask.*

Property & Planning Committee: Bruce

- *Bruce thanks everyone, and asks to share his screen.*
- *P&P started a new meeting format where they first discussed issues and then a working meeting.*
 - *Started with 'working space' and a small presentation is upcoming about linking open space into the existing Bloomfield plan.*
- *Bruce excited to mention we'll be getting benches on Liberty Ave. Directed staff to a specific bench.*
- *(note: Jodi left the meeting)*
- *Bruce's shared screen shows a pilot bench being installed in 2016 in the rain in front of Station. Installed in Sept and removed in Nov, a survey was included. We heard people really enjoyed that style of bench, it's wood, looked like high quality.*
- *BDC has been in discussions with DOMI about these benches, DOMI gave us the option of installing city standard benches instead of these wooden ones. If we do the city standard ones then they'll do maintenance on them. Ultimately the committee would go with the wooden ones, which are the Knight from forms and services which is a local furniture company in Etna. Decided on these vs the city standard for a few reasons - we heard from the 2016 survey that residents liked it, but also the maintenance seems reasonable, they're made for urban and outdoor spaces, also can't rely on the city. P&P voted to go with the Knight style bench.*
 - *Christina in the chat - "wood didn't hold heat and cold like metal and in October we had both kinds of weather, and having only 2 legs was favored by folks with disabilities"*
- *Bruce also will also plan a, "bench brigade" to do simple maintenance on these benches.*
 - *Next phase is to get the money for the benches, and we're applying to grants. We really just wanted to choose a bench design first and then move on to the money.*
 - *SVA loan could go towards this bench, coming first in Liberty Ave with bus stops and spots in front of doctors / healthcare / dental offices are priorities.*
 - *Plan also eventually includes Main St.*
 - *Christina - Sam put together a timeline, finalized Monday. Ready to update now that the SVA loan came in, \$20k can buy 7 benches and pay for installation + materials which aren't much.*

Executive Committee:

Staff Updates: Christina

- Wants to discuss our next legislative push. Deb Gross feels she missed the mark in the Strip District with so much parking with the new housing developments with many many empty parking spots.
 - There are ways in other cities to have a zoning overlay that reduces the parking minimum. Oakland and downtown have one as well. We're going to start looking into the language of that legislation. Probably going to wait until inclusionary zoning passes to start.
 - Shur-Save ad hoc committee, made up of community members, with professional and lived experience. Several members have been brainstorming ways to convince Echo Realty to have more affordability, perhaps building a story higher. Other mechanisms that non-profits can receive grants and become a partner with the development for certain contingencies. Looking at all the different ways of financing this, ECHO Realty has only done one other houses development and has done zero affordable housing. ECHO doesn't need the housing credits and can pay for it themselves. Sam and Christina are meeting with them next week to begin talks.
 - Kyle - Are you looking for any feedback from us?
 - Christina - not right now, the legislative things we're doing can create a lot of questions. Also Christina could ask board members to attend a meeting. Wants everyone to have a general idea around this large development.
- Strategic Plan - broken up into 4 parts. LINK HERE - <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KnHR6cXjU4EyY50BfMJ-G-x4c9KpMMaCDQn0mvfTQPk/edit#gid=0>
 - Housing support: education, land trusts
 - Advocate for building and affordable city-wide
 - Pushed for inclusionary zoning
 - Working to put affordable housing in Shadyside via Baum center initiative
 - Sam has joined the affordable housing roundtable / working group, we get to learn about a lot of initiatives and support those actions.
 - Christina active on Pittsburgh Community Investment Group
 - Also want to advocate for affordable housing and livable wages.
 - Preserve and Create Affordability and Equity for low-income homeowners
 - On hold, there is the housing opportunity fund
 - Increasing the ability for people to become homeowners
 - Slowly chipping away via the land trust, will also keep looking for properties.
 - Affordable rental opportunities
 - Sam has started reaching out to older property owners to build relationships and plan for the future of those sites.
 - Landlord Issue
 - Lots of small landlords that say they can't afford.
 - We want to focus on renters, we want to look into a tenants council

- There has been a lot of activity in Bloomfield Buzz, see an opportunity to organize.
- Accessibility and Activeness
 - Want to assist with ramp construction for business owners who don't have one.
 - Also working with business owners who are remodeling and not including a ramp.
 - Working on what accountability looks like for these businesses.
- Facade Improvement Grants
 - On hold, most people aren't worried about facades at the moment, more focused on more urgent needs
- Reducing commercial turnover
 - Even in the pandemic have been pretty good about this. Working hard to get businesses resources and support. Collectively brainstorming ideas, definitely seeing some movement. Will be on-going, haven't helped with business planning because other places have great support like Pitt Univ.
- BIPOC and women owned businesses
 - Focus of the Explore BGL initiative. Tried to prioritize them in initiatives.
 - More point of contact since Morgan joins us, hearing about their needs, what's working and not working.
 - A lot of calls for an event that features Bloomfield businesses and not outside vendors that perhaps features a closed street. Looking at it for the fall this year.
- Sidewalk and parking spaces for businesses
 - Christina testified in support of the legislation @ city council to make city permits for outdoor sales and seating, permanent and not just a pandemic thing. Normally they have to apply every 3 months.
 - It did pass
 - Also zero increased complaints about parking.
- 8 new business via RK Mellon grant
 - 3 developed online sales platform
 - Mostly have been referring the to URA's program in partnership with one of the foundations.
- Recruiting and identifying businesses
 - Doing this as it comes up, discussing currently with a design firm.
 - For example they don't need a vent system
- Not a whole lot of litter removal, did participate in the litter removal day in Sept. and some smaller periodic cleanups last year. Planning to bring those back on a regular basis. Also have a larger amount of returning volunteers @ the market. Look for that in 2nd quarter of this year.
- Advocating with DOMI to give money for bump outs instead of bollards that keep getting run over.
- Increase Bloomfield households engaging with Saturday Market

- Wants to do a survey with Bloomfield business to see if their sales go out around Saturday Market time.
- Increasing EBT usages
 - Has increased 300% in the past two years
 - Some of this is driven by EBT cards sent to every school aged child in the city. Just shy of \$2k for each kid, but still continues to grow.
- Staff capacity has increased.
- Created a regional market managers farmers market network.
- Definitely have increased sales data and demographic tracking.
- Conducted an Individual Giving Campaign
 - Asked fundraising committee for help
- Increased sponsorships
- Good working relationships and applied values internally
- Started working on program management infrastructure with Kyle's help
 - Have redone work plans and found a better way to do things and stick with it, so by the end of the year things aren't forgotten.
- Strategic Plan has been worked on but not revisited throughout the year
- Sam has a goal to do a newsletter every month to increase visibility.
 - Morgan working to improve website.
 - Sam and Chsirinta are active on Bloomfield Buzz to help people with questions that we can help with.
- Mobility, supporting traffic calming
 - We're about to install art around Friendship park
 - Pushing for ECHO to give money towards Bloomfield Bridge
 - Crosswalks and bike paths
 - Fighting to get a bus stop back
 - Sidewalk and repair grants are on hold
 - Liberty Ave streetscape = new benches
- Creating public art
 - Working with Trace and Liberty Beer to expand graffiti wall
- Trees and greenspace
 - Planted 5 trees and 4 shrubs last fall, would like to do more as capacity allows.
- Park system
 - Changed bad light system and one end of Friendship park
- Under the Bloomfield Bridge
 - DPW has money for cosmetic additions, some petitions for a skate park and a small dog park.

Executive Session: Christina and Kyle

- Asking for Aurora to be approved as a check signer
 - Authorizes payments and sign checks
 - Doesn't change the process that is Christina sees all invoices, and then goes to board chair who double checks them.

- Kyle moves that we authorize Aurora Smith as a signatory for BDC
 - No questions, objections, or abstentions
 - Motion approved
- Kyle - Strategic Plan plans:
 - Wants a more needs based assessment of what people need from Bloomfield and how BDC can we really serve the neighborhood as best as possible.
 - Met with a contact via Dan B to discuss - <https://jacksonclark.net/>
 - What kind of resources are available, we don't have a budget
 - Maura, Matt, Christina, Jodi and Kyle helped draft the strategic plan survey. What makes sense with getting feedback from the community to be member driven.
 - Christina mentioned staff time is limited when it comes to commitment for in-depth surveys. More time available by June. We'd also need more volunteer hours from board members to talk with neighborhood members on what they need.
 - Given all of this we have a plan of how to accomplish this, we'd be doing a version of talking to neighbors, reaching out to businesses about their needs, and bringing this all together into a strategic plan. Best case we do this over the summer and worse case over the fall, would involve the board and anyone else who wants to contribute. We'd then be sitting down to draft a strategic plan and would push back the timeline.
 - Two key changes - June = election for boards; July = strategic planning meeting at regular board meeting time in lieu of our usual board retreat.
 - The reason we're suggesting using the board meeting time b/c people are usually available and we'd get good attendance and wouldn't require additional scheduling.
 - Would be a longer meeting at 3 hours (5:30 - 8:30 or 6:30 - 9:30).
 - Need to figure out how we'll communicate with people and how to gather that data to draft a plan.
 - Asking board to approve the updated schedule and use July for the planning process as the board retreat.
 - Dan B questions - July will be beyond the board turnover date, asks staff and more active board members to take a large roll in this planning.
 - Wants to bring a cohesive message to community.
 - Kyle - we also discussed this, it could be a useful intro for new board members, and how we want to approach getting info from the community. We'll prep them to be part of that convo.
 - Also members rolling off the board would consider coming to that meeting to provide some knowledge that they've built up over their time.
 - Kyle moved to adopt the updated board meeting 2022 schedule.
 - No objections or absentions, motion passes.
 - New plan for strategic planning.
 - Election timeline moved up a little bit, still around 4 months to find new recruits.
- Christina - upcoming events
 - INclusionary zoning legislation is April 5th @ 1:30pm
 - We believe we'll have a unanimous vote but also could use this as an education opportunity around city government and the work BDC does.

- Also by turning up to testify, it bolsters the case, and builds a case for future cases from other neighborhoods like Oakland
- Market is closed for April.

Meeting Adjourned 8:30pm