

Old Town Commercial Association  
Meeting of the Board of Directors  
Tuesday, September 12 – 5:30 PM  
Temple Lofts Conference Room | 502 E Cesar Chavez Avenue

Beth Herendeen, President	<u>X</u>	Chad Jordan, Director	—
Daniel Rials, Vice President	<u>X</u>	Amanda Hadley, Director	<u>X</u>
Samantha Benson, Secretary	<u>X</u>	Bradly Rakowski, Director	<u>X</u>
Jacob Horner, Treasurer	—	Eric Hannah, Director	<u>X</u>
Kat Palmer, At-Large	—	Rick Preuss, Director	—
		Summer Schriener, Director	<u>X</u>
Vacant (OTCA Executive Director)			—
Cathleen Edgerly, DLI Executive Director; Advisor			<u>X</u>

***Our Mission: To maintain a vibrant business community in Lansing’s historic Old Town district by providing services and opportunities that foster economic growth and community engagement.***

**PAUSE – PARAPHRASE – POSE A QUESTION**

**MEETING AGENDA**

**Meeting Called to Order:** Beth called the meeting to order at 5:31PM.

**Public Comments – limited to three minutes**

**Approval of Agenda:** Summer moved to approve the agenda, Eric seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

**Approval of August Minutes:** Daniel moved to approve the August board minutes, Amanda seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

**Consent Agenda:**

Approval of August Committee Reports

**Treasurer’s Report:**

- Jacob was not in attendance; the board members in attendance reviewed the financial reports.
- Jamie has donated funds for the fall mums, this will show on the report next month.
- Daniel would like clarification on how phone & internet and computer & internet are coded.

**Downtown Lansing, Inc. Update:** Cathleen provided updates to the board:

- the Comprehensive Marketing Analysis was released to the public; anyone wanting to view it can go to [cma.downtownlansing.org](http://cma.downtownlansing.org)

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- The downtown fall cleanup will be hosted on September 30
- The annual Trick or Treat on the Square will be held October 27 starting at 5pm
- Promotions Committee will begin promoting the holiday season over the next few months
- Nubian will be opening their doors Saturday, September 19 at 118 S Washington Square
- Daniel asked who DLI goes through for their gift card program (Yiftee)

**City of Lansing Update: N/A**

**Director's Report: N/A**  
**Strategic Plan Update**

Sub-Committees Update:

- ✓ Website and Membership (Daniel)
  - Status of website - **moving along**; InVerve received the embed link from 517Living.com, Daniel will confirm our hashtag and relay back to the board. Local vendors, merchants will need to use the Old Town hashtag for their events to populate on the new site. Is OTCA able to filter the events before they're live? Daniel will check with Sarah how we monitor those. If anything, Tia can check the site a few times a day to make sure everything looks fine.
  - Membership outreach - **Bradly** has been completing the outreach to merchants and is doing a great job. Daniel will go through **Bradly's** list of merchants and continue to reach out.
  - Membership benefits listing - this will need to be refreshed, list is outdated; once the benefits are more clear we will move on to the contact form and use **Bradly's** outreach flier to push for signups; **Sam** and **Tia** will flesh through this next week and work with **Mark Chamberlin** to remove the unnecessary perks from the lists (better to underpromise)
  - Contact form for membership - **Daniel** and team will put together communication on the process for updating information. A group will follow up with anyone that does not submit information and get updates face-to-face. This communication will be sent to the merchant email distribution, the merchant Facebook page, and any remaining merchants face-to-face.
  - Membership: board decided that **Sam** and **Tia** will work through the **Wild Apricot** database and help clean everything up
    - **Eric** recommended testing the membership sign up to see what it looks like as someone who is a current member updating their profile; **Summer** or **Chris Swope** will test and let the group know how it goes
    - We will need to remove all membership perks that we cannot promise at this exact moment
    - Dialogue will be that we are not pushing for memberships until 2024 cycle

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- o Summer asked how we are invoicing members/future members; Daniel said every option should be available (check, cash, card, etc.)
- o Goal for push to have everything updated, cleaned, organized, etc: October 1 and hit HARD from there.
- ✓ Membership Meetups
  - Next meeting would technically be end of October/early November
  - Need a location
  - MSUFCU funded these
  - Beth and Sam will work on securing space and date
- ✓ Executive Committee
  - Start dates for Sam & Tia
    - o Announcement/statement will be made Friday, September 15 for the community
    - o We will be putting out a new newsletter with more information to come, will be out by end of September
    - o With verbiage “look forward to a push for membership for 2024”
- ✓ Silver Gala
  - Set next meeting - meetings weekly going forward starting the week of 9/19; about 10 in-kind tickets are available, need to decide who these will go to; Bradly and Eric are in favor of recommended donation tickets
  - Sponsorships needed - Bradly and Beth both have sponsorship information out to a few interested parties, push will need to be hard for the next month to get this off the ground
- ✓ Fundraising and Fund Development - N/A

**Old Business:**

Parking updates - survey, meeting with Walker Consultants

- Meeting went well, Walker Consultants listened to the merchants that attended and were in agreement with most; will need to push for surveys to be submitted within the 3 week timeframe
- Will require a lot of advocacy going forward
  - o Side comment: need to acknowledge new and expanding businesses

Main Street Accreditation

- Self-Assessments due ~~August 25th~~ September 12
- Onsite visit November 1
  - o Board: please complete assessment ASAP, return to Sam by midday 9/13

Strategic Plan and workshopping next year’s programs/events (prior to budgets in Nov)

- Set a date for the board to workshop in October - Sam will set
  - Merchant map - digital map will be larger, linked to websites and with more extensive information for all the businesses; Mark is working on this information

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ARPA funds - planning, grant amounts - **decided that grants will be thirty (30) \$1k grants; all Old Town community members will be considered.**

- Summer asked how we judge who gets the funding. Eric gave ideas on how to rate applicants (first come first serve, point system, how impacted was the business, etc.); Recommends only keeping the application open for 3 days. Daniel said LEAP has a great system for scoring, maybe use this as an example.
- Bradly expressed that constant communication is absolutely essential and we should add this into the newsletter.
- 3-4 questions at most, if we do not meet the number of necessary applicants we'll keep it open a little longer
- Businesses have to:
  - Have operated during COVID
  - Still be in operation
  - Membership not needed (all businesses will be considered members)
- Need a technical way of facilitating grants (Google forms?)

**New Business:**

Bradly's outreach - east side feels entirely left out of district; need to capture the businesses outside the normal "T"; connections are very important come 2024 planning; Eric announced demo of the blue building near the Temple;

Board recruitment for open seat(s) - Bradly nominated Eric for Treasurer, Summer seconded. All in favor, Eric has been nominated to Treasurer. We will mention the vacancy to the community in the announcement re: new employees & board members

Committee structure - Eric would like to be on EV and has two people interested in joining, but this group will need a chair; Brianna was also interested in this group. Bradley will be joining Design.

Bylaws update workgroup - bylaws ad hoc group needed, we would love to get this going in the next month and ask Karen and Jamie to join, if possible.

**Old Town Upcoming Events**

- Walnut Neighborhood Park grand opening - September 13
- BluesFest - September 13-16
- River trail cleanup - September 22
- Arts Night Out - October 6
- Old Town fall cleanup - October 7
- Silver Gala - October 14
- Volunteer orientation/meet & greet - TBD, late October

**Adjournment:** Bradly motioned to adjourn, Summer seconded. Meeting adjourned at 6:59PM.

*Next OTCA Board Meeting to be held on Tuesday, October 10, 5:30 pm,  
in the Old Town Commercial Association office.*