

# Business Development Commission (BDC) MEETING MINUTES

**APPROVED**

MEETING DATE: Thursday, February 24, 2022  
 LOCATION: City Hall/Teleconference  
 CALLED TO ORDER: 8:01 AM  
 MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:06 AM  
 NEXT MEETING: Thursday, March 24, 2022

Name	Present	Absent
Mike Pincus, Chair (Citizen at Large)	X	
Pam Neihaus, Vice Chair (Citizen at Large)	X	
Kara Bowlin (Citizen at Large)		X
Andrew Scavotto (Citizen at Large)	X	
Ceci Bartels (Home-Based Business Owner)	X	
Bud Bellomo (Chamber of Commerce)	X	
Tim Delanty (Old Webster Rep)	X	
Tammy Behm, (Commercial Business Owner)	X	
Erbab Majeede (Commercial Business Owner)	X	
Laura Arnold, Council Liaison	X	
Eric Peterson, Staff Liaison	X	

**Also in Attendance**

Dave Buck – Webster Groves Citizen  
 Jenny Starkey – Director of Public Affairs & Engagement, City of Webster Groves  
 Officer Ahmar Rasool – Webster Groves Police Department; Traffic Unit  
 Fran Sudekum – Administrative Support

**Approval of Minutes** – A motion to approve the January minutes was made by Tammy Behm, seconded by Bud Bellomo, and unanimously approved.

**Visitor Comments** – Dave Buck, a Webster Groves citizen, averred some business owners in the Old Orchard and Old Webster Business Districts want the business community to be more unified.

**Member Discussion of Visitor Comment** – Members inquired: What does that mean? What are the specific grievances? Are these business owners talking about improving communication amongst each other? Are they looking to having forums where they can all participate and speak to one another for example. What is their specific concern that the BDC could identify more concretely and start working towards addressing? State law district infrastructure and geography separate the business community into areas, neighborhoods, and districts; each have their own identity. Treating them together whenever the opportunity arises could strategically address perception issues and provide a connectedness.

**Business Survey Update** – The business survey has been sent to not only all the licensed businesses in Webster Groves, but also contractors who do business with the City; 5K+ email addresses. The survey is open until April 5th. The link is available on the City’s Roundtable page. Members have all been sent the link via email as well and are encouraged to share the link.

**Webster Groves Website Update** – Work continues on revamping the City’s website. Jenny Starkey’s shared an initial mockup of the main landing page (See Appendix A). When you click on the Explore Webster “bubble,” you will be directed to the Explore Webster Groves landing page with its own photo and set of bubbles. With input from the BDC Website Sub-Committee, those bubbles will be See and Do, Dining, Shopping, Arts, and Events. Ms. Starkey is working on the method businesses and organizations will use to provide information to be uploaded to the site, i.e. events.

Jenny's next website meeting with CivicPlus is March 22 to do further work on the design and get an update on the timeline of the revamp project; hopefully sometime in the spring it will be completed. Once completed, Jenny will do outreach to let people know that the website is different and refreshed. Members inquired what is the plan to encourage people and businesses to actively use the revamped website.

**Business Bingo Scavenger Hunt Update** – The event will be held on October 1st. Ceci Bartels asked any Members with knowledge of how to structure such an event to please share that knowledge with her. Ms. Bartels also invited Members to join her on the sub-committee to work on this event.

**Budget** – The BDC has three items on the general fund budget:

- Professional Services for administrative support - \$6,900
- CVC Membership and Miscellaneous - \$900
- Social Media activity with Creative Entourage - \$6,000 monthly
- Holiday Advertising - \$4,500

These are the same figures used in the '22 fiscal year budget. Members agreed recommending keeping the same numbers in the proposed '23 fiscal year budget with an eye to discussion of possible changes to the Creative Entourage contract now that some of what they do can now be handled in-house with Jenny Starkey's new position. Mr. Peterson noted, the City is happy with the work that Creative Entourage has been doing, we now have in-house resources to do some of that work that we didn't have previously.

**Construction Project Communication** – Communication of major construction projects needs to be shared with businesses. The example brought forth was the recent construction project that took place in the Zeta Dell Business Neighborhood at Summit and Marshall. Such a major construction project affects businesses' staffing and inventory needs; not knowing in advance that such a project was to take place negatively affected the businesses in that neighborhood. Knowing in advance would have allowed them to plan their business accordingly. Improvements in technology to communicate within the City are in the works, for example, all City departments knowing what construction projects are on the Public Works Department's calendar which could then be a source to connect that information to businesses. Having timely knowledge of projects conducted by outside interests, such as Missouri American Water or Metropolitan Sewer District is a need the City has on its.

**BDC Working Group Sub-Committee** – Members decided to re-start the sub-committee to look at the next "communication" recommendation to make to the Commission. Tammy Behm, Erbab Majeede, Laura Arnold, and Fran Sudekum will be part of the re-started committee. In addition to members of the BDC on the previous sub-committee, there were representatives from all three business districts on the committee.

**Business District Summit** – An annual summit of the three Special Business District Advisory Commissions (Old Orchard, Old Webster, and Crossroads) and the Business Development Commission was seen as an important avenue to improve communication and cohesiveness in the business community as well as increase everyone's understanding of the state laws governing business "districts" and how to establish them, and also an opportunity to provide Commission Members with an understanding of their role on the Commissions.

### **City Update**

- Business license renewals have gone out. Currently, there are 1,723 active business licenses.
- Live Well Massage Therapy is a new business going into the Zeta Dell Business Neighborhood.

- Fuzzy Tack in Yorkshire Plaza has a new owner.
- Kate and Company, a wedding planning business, is going into the Old Webster Business District.
- Headcase Hairapy, a hair salon, is going into the Old Orchard Business District.
- Hellmuth Family Gardens is a small home-based business Fairview doing seasonal bouquets.
- February 23rd was the final day for citizens to use the Balancing Act software to submit their funding suggestions for American Rescue Plan (ARP) Funding. Results will be presented at the next City Council meeting. Soon the software will be available to submit suggestions on the General Fund Budget.
- City Council has received the results of the City’s Diversity Equity and Inclusion Study and the Compensation Classification Study.
- The Sustainability Commission will present the first draft of their city-wide sustainability plan which is expected to set some ambitious goals for the community include ways for residents to behave in a sustainable manner
- The Lions Club 4th of July Carnival plans to return to Eden Seminary’s green space.
- The Crossroads Business District will be holding a Pickle Ball Tournament sometime this summer and will close down Gore at Big Bend to do so.
- Webster On Wheels, a community biking event, will be on May 1st; the route will take advantage of new bike lanes on several Webster streets.
- The Hearts of the Community Awards put on by the Webster Groves et al Chamber will take place on April 1st.

**NEXT MEETING**

- Meeting Date – March 24, 8:00 AM

# APPENDIX A

