



OFFICIAL NOTICE AND AGENDA

of a meeting of a City Board, Commission, Department, Committee, Agency, Corporation, Quasi-Municipal Corporation, or sub-unit thereof.

Meeting of the: **BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT BOARD**
Date/Time: **Wednesday, January 25, 2023 @ 8:00 am**
Location: City Hall (407 Grant Street), Birch Room
Members: Mark Craig (C), Rebecca Bearjar, Mary Gallagher, Maryanne Groat, Adam Jamgochian, Mark McKinley, Robb Shepherd, Gizo Ujarmeli, and Blake Opal-Wahoske

AGENDA ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Call to Order
- 1 Approval of September 2022 minutes
- 2 WRD First Quarter ED report
- 3 Discussion on potential changes to parking fee and fine structure

Adjourn

IMPORTANT: SIX (6) MEMBERS NEEDED FOR A QUORUM: If you are unable to attend the meeting please notify Blake Opal-Wahoske by calling 715-218-9457 or via email Blake@WausauRiverDistrict.org

This Notice was posted at City Hall and faxed to the Daily Herald newsroom on 1/19/23 @ 2:30 pm.

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Other Distribution: Media, Mayor Rosenberg, Alderpersons, Brodek

**Business Improvement District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Submitted by Blake Opal-Wahoske**

Business Improvement District Board of Directors met on Wednesday, September 14th, 2022, at 8am in the birch room of Wausau city hall.

Directors present: Mark Craig, Rebecca Bearjar, Mark McKinley, Mary Gallagher, Robb Shepherd, and Blake Opal-Wahoske

Directors absent: Adam Jomgochian, Gizo Ujarmeli, and MaryAnne Groat

- I. Call to Order at 8:02am by Mark Craig
- II. Review and approval of July 2022 minutes
 - a. Motioned by Shepherd, seconded by Bearjar, unanimously approved
- III. Wausau River District Updates on 2022 Work plans
 - a. Opal-Wahoske, executive director of the Wausau River District provided an update on workplans
 - b. Organization/Exec
 - i. Stated Goal: Maintain strong organization with sustainable funding, staff retention, and adequate office equipment while limiting overhead.
 - ii. Team members: Joe (Ch), Katie, Erik, Alfred, and John
 - iii. Project statuses:
 - iv. Strategy 1: Manage organizational funding
 1. Maintain/secure appropriate funding to execute work plans
 - a. 86% fundraised for year
 2. Monitor BID discussions and Room Tax legislation
 3. Diversify funding sources
 - v. Strategy 2: Engage in community outreach
 1. Distribute News You Need to River District stakeholders
 2. Engage in meetings with community groups
 - a. Wausau's 150th Anniversary – August 17th
 3. Trainings for WRD Stakeholders
 - a. Survey to be conducted to determine 2022 trainings
 - vi. Strategy 3: Develop, recruit, and engage new Board and team members
 1. Recruit, orient, and train new Board and team members
 - a. Tyler Vogt and Liz Brodek
 2. Volunteer recruitment and engagement
 - c. Placemaking
 - i. Stated Goal: Create and enhance a memorable sense of place within the River District.
 - ii. Team members: Gary Gisselman, Ian Reese, Kristi Nowitzke and Christine Martens
 - iii. Strategy 1: Encourage pedestrian exploration throughout the District
 1. Downtown History Tour – Sat., May 21st
 - a. Great reach and roughly 9% engagement
 2. Festival of Arts partnership – Sat. & Sun., Sept.
 - a. Update on communication and the River West market
 - iv. Strategy 2: Implement a minimum of two placemaking programs/projects per year

1. Merchandise
2. Walk Your Wheels sidewalk stencil
3. Umbrellas over Third Street
 - a. BID members would like to see a display changed every 90days
 - b. WRD will send input back to committee
 - c. WRD will send back input for sustainable funding source to the executive committee.
4. River West sign
5. Street pole banners
6. Wausau Pride – Sat. June 4th 11am-3pm & 6-9pm
7. Downtown Employee Appreciation Week – Mon. July 11th – Fri. July 15th
 - a. Due to the changes in remote working this even will be consolidated to one day next year.
8. Art Lives Here – Mon. August 6th – Sat. August 13th
 - a. murals will be installed over the month of August in the river west neighborhood.

d. Business Development

- i. Stated Goal: Undertake business retention, recruitment, and marketing efforts in the River District.
- ii. Team members: Joe (Ch), Alfred, Mark C., Keri Anne Connaughty, Brian Jojade, Kevin Porter, Matthew Shin and Brit Samuels
- iii. Strategy 1: Advocate for a change in focus on parking as an economic incentive
 1. Maintenance of website
 2. Educational parking campaign
 3. Work with the City's IT Dept to improve SEO of existing parking structures
 4. Advocate for improved parking signage
- iv. Strategy 2: Provide support to organization and constituents that are actively recruiting businesses to the district.
 1. Write and submit Wisconsin Main Street Awards
 2. Host annual roundtable for property owners
 3. Maintain vacant commercial listings on website
 4. Operate Friends of the River District program (FORD program)
 5. Create and distribute News You Need newsletter
 6. Update and maintain business directory
 7. Update welcoming packets for new and potential businesses
 8. State of the River District Open House – Weds., Sept. 21st 5-7pm
 9. Participate in the Small Business Expo – Thurs., May 12th
 10. Collection of business testimonials and showcase on website and social media
 11. Update and distribute annual business resource guide
 12. Administer the sign grant program
 13. Maintain directional signage
 14. Update and distribute market profile
 15. Advocate for short term leases and micro retail spaces
 16. Advocate for a startup business grant for minority owned businesses
- v. Strategy 3: Implement a minimum of four event that have a direct economic impact and undertake marketing of the district as a destination.
 1. Dining on the Street – Weds., June 8th – August 17th 5-9pm

- a. Miron to take on in-kind printing on banners for 2023
 - i. Discussion of creating taller banners to help protect the umbrellas.
 - 2. Sidewalk Sales – Fri., June 24th – Sun., June 26th
 - a. Feedback from retailers is that they would like to continue hosting this event in conjunction with Sidewalk Sales and would like to see more marketing for the events together.
 - b. Discussion from BID members of eliminating Friday.
 - c. 50 years ago the event was hosted on 1 day.
 - 3. Exhibitour – Sat., August 13th 5-8pm
 - 4. Holiday Open House weekend – Sat. Nov. 5th – Sun. Nov. 6th
 - 5. Small Business Saturday – Sat. Nov. 26th
 - a. Update providing included photos with santa and an ale trail.
 - 6. Fashion Show – Spring 2023
 - 7. General District Marketing
 - a. Grand Theater
 - b. JSI Digital Kiosk
 - c. Granite Peak trail map
 - d. Hot Happenings
 - e. Shop Local Season campaign
 - f. District brochure map and directory
 - 8. Other
- e. Residential Development
 - i. Stated Goal: Advocate for increased residential density within walking or biking distance of the River District.
 - ii. Team members: Ann (Ch), Matt Barnes, Mark C., Tammy, Nick, Ben Streckert, Willian Harris, and Kevin Porter
 - iii. Project statuses:
 - iv. Strategy 1: Develop an inventory of residential listings within a walkable distance of the district:
 - 1. Update and maintain open residential units on website
 - 2. Market unit listings with testimonials, amenities and walk score
 - 3. Creation of process and collection of vacancy rate of residential units
 - v. Advocate for increased residential density within .5 mile radius of the district.
 - 1. Advocate for a city-wide housing study
 - 2. Partner with Wisconsin Main Street to conduct a district specific housing study
 - 3. Promote existing funding and design opportunities for property owners
 - 4. Creation of a best practices guide for potential developers for new housing developments
 - 5. Gather and share economic data on the impact of improved and increased housing
 - vi. Other

IV. Discussion and possible action on 2023 BID Operating Plan

- a. **Motion to approve plan as presented by Shepherd, seconded by McKinley, unanimously approved.**

V. Adjourn

- a. **Motioned by Shepherd, seconded by McKinley 8:35 am**

Respectfully submitted,
Blake Opal-Wahoske
Executive Director

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

BID BOARD

**1/25/23 AT 8AM
BIRCH ROOM
WAUSAU CITY HALL**

PREPARED BY
BLAKE OPAL-WAHOSKE
Executive Director
Wausau River District

WAUSAU RIVER DISTRICT

ABOUT


Wausau River District (WRD) is the hub of activity for central Wisconsin. With easy access to northern Wisconsin's natural amenities and a thriving business community, downtown Wausau is the heart of both a growing local economy and regional tourism destination. A sustained focus on high-quality design has created a unique and compelling sense of place, supporting a wide variety of locally-owned shops and restaurants, complemented by a well-rounded program of events and activities for all seasons. Over its 15-year history, WRD has embraced opportunities to partner with a wide variety of local civic groups and stakeholders to maximize opportunities in the District's 34 block area.

Areas of Focus:

Placemaking - Create and enhance a memorable sense of place within the River District.

Business Development - Undertake business retention, recruitment, and marketing efforts in the River District.

Residential Development - Advocate for residential development within walking or biking distance of the River District.



**THE PURPOSE OF
THE WAUSAU RIVER
DISTRICT IS TO
PROMOTE AND
FACILITATE THE
ECONOMIC VITALITY
AND HISTORIC
PRESERVATION OF
DOWNTOWN
WAUSAU FOR THE
BENEFIT OF THE
ENTIRE COMMUNITY**

ORGANIZATION/EXECUTIVE

STATED GOAL: MAINTAIN STRONG ORGANIZATION WITH SUSTAINABLE FUNDING, STAFF RETENTION, AND ADEQUATE OFFICE EQUIPMENT WHILE LIMITING OVERHEAD.

Team members: Joe (Ch), Katie, Erik, and John

Strategy 1: Manage organizational funding

- Maintain/secure appropriate funding to execute work plans
- Monitor BID discussions and Room Tax legislation
- Diversify funding sources

Strategy 2: Engage in community outreach

- Distribute News You Need to River District stakeholders
- Engage in meetings with community groups
- Coordinate neighborhood meeting between WPD and WRD stakeholders
- Annual Business Survey

Strategy 3: Develop, recruit, and engage new Board and team members

- Recruit, orient, and train new Board and team members
- Volunteer recruitment and engagement

PLACEMAKING

STATED GOAL: CREATE AND ENHANCE A MEMORABLE SENSE OF PLACE WITHIN THE RIVER DISTRICT.

Team members: Gary Gisselman, Casey Demers, Carlie Peterson, Traci Wisz and Christine Martens

Strategy 1: Encourage pedestrian exploration throughout the District

- Downtown History Tour
- Festival of Arts partnership
- Walking/Running Trail map with public art

Strategy 2: Implement a minimum of two placemaking programs/projects per year

- Memorial Bridge Restoration
- Merchandise
- 715 Day
- Walk Your Wheels sidewalk stencil
- Umbrellas over Third Street
- River West sign
- Wausau Pride

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

STATED GOAL: UNDERTAKE BUSINESS RETENTION, RECRUITMENT, AND MARKETING EFFORTS IN THE RIVER DISTRICT.

Team members: Joe (Ch), Mark Craig, Keri Anne Connaughty, Lucas Sczygelski, Liz Brodek, and Brit Samuels

Strategy 1: Advocate for a change in focus on parking as an economic incentive

- Maintenance of website
- Educational vehicle and bicycle parking campaign
- Advocate for improved vehicle and bicycle parking signage

Strategy 2: Provide support to organizations and constituents that are actively recruiting businesses to the district.

- Write and submit Wisconsin Main Street Awards
- Host annual roundtable for property owners
- Maintain vacant commercial listings on the website
- Operate Friends of the River District program (FORD program)
- Create and distribute News You Need newsletter
- Update and maintain a business directory
- Update welcoming packets for new and potential businesses
- State of the River District Open House
- Update and distribute annual business resource guide
- Administer the sign grant program
- Maintain directional signage
- Update and distribute market profile
- Advocate for short term leases and micro-retail spaces
- Advocate for a startup business grant for minority-owned businesses

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

STATED GOAL: UNDERTAKE BUSINESS RETENTION, RECRUITMENT, AND MARKETING EFFORTS IN THE RIVER DISTRICT.

Team members: Joe (Ch), Mark Craig, Keri Anne Connaughty, Lucas Sczygelski, Liz Brodek, and Brit Samuels

Strategy 3: Implement a minimum of four events that has a direct economic impact and undertake marketing of the district as a destination.

- Dining on the Street
- Sidewalk Sales
- Night Market
- Downtown Employee Appreciation Day
- Exhibitour
- Holiday Open House weekend
- Small Business Saturday
- General District Marketing
 - Business Storytelling campaign
 - 6mos of CWA video ads
 - Hot Happenings
 - Shop Local Holiday campaign
 - Shop Local Summer campaign
 - District brochure map and directory
- Other

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

STATED GOAL: ADVOCATE FOR INCREASED RESIDENTIAL DENSITY WITHIN WALKING OR BIKING DISTANCE OF THE RIVER DISTRICT.

Team members: Matt Barnes, Tammy, Willian Harris, and Kody Hart.

Strategy 1: Develop an inventory of residential listings within a walkable distance of the district:

- Update and maintain open residential units on the website
- Image campaign showcasing the experince of living in the district
- Creation of process and collection of vacancy rate of residential units

Strategy 2: Advocate for increased residential density within .5 mile radius of the district.

- Advocate for a city-wide housing study
- Promote existing funding and design opportunities for property owners
- Advocate for design cohesiveness in new developments
- Gather and share economic data on the impact of improved and increased housing
- Other