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## Walnut Hills Area Council: Business Group

### Minutes

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Minutes: January 17, 2019 - Walnut Hills Area Council: Business Group Meeting

Taken by Michael Rountree, Childress & Cunningham, Inc.

#### Attendance:

Kathy Atkinson	Officer _ Edwards	Samir Kulkarni	Robert Stradtman
Matthew Cuff	David Estep	Baba Charles Miller	Betty Waite
Gary Dangel	Cindy Fischer	Samantha Reeves	Greg Warner
Laura Davis	Christina Hartlieb	Michael Rountree	Allen Woods

#### Opening:

Meeting called to order by Samir Kulkarni at 9:09 AM, with introductions. Samir said that there was no specific agenda this month, but his goal is to discuss how the Business Group should operate and define its committee structure.

December meeting was cancelled, no Minutes to be approved. No action taken regarding Minutes from meeting on Nov. 15, 2018.

Treasurer's Report by Kathy Atkinson presented as handout. Current CNBDU funds have been approved but not yet received. Samir requested that a summary of fund allocation be developed by the next WHBG meeting.

#### Committee Reports:

*Safety (Safe & Clean)* – Officer Edwards

Handout was presented to announce training for an active-shooter event response, to be held on the evening of February 13<sup>th</sup>. This training is aimed at church staff, but a similar event can be planned for businesses if there is interest.

An arrest was made regarding a homicide that occurred near the N&I store, early in January. Police details are being committed to this area, at varying times of day.

*Strategic Planning & Committee Structure* – Samir Kulkarni

Handout was presented describing three main goals: Safe and Clean Neighborhood, Increasing Traffic to and Awareness of Businesses in WH, and Ensuring that Development Creates Jobs and Development. Samir has conversed with WHRF regarding clean streets, and it was noted that consistency is needed. The momentum of the streetscape efforts needs to be continued down to I-71.

Samir said that we need to continue to build on our social media / online presence as a means of increasing traffic and interest in WH. He mentioned the “Humans of New York” Instagram account, which includes well-told people's stories, which might serve as an example we can adopt. Maya had begun to lay some of the groundwork for doing something like this. Betty noted that consistency of posting is what builds an audience.

Regarding special events, the WHRF would prefer to remain in charge of the Street Food Festival. Laura mentioned that we used to do monthly meet-ups at various locations. Other events to consider would be to bring back First Fridays, or to manage the 5K run as a potential fundraiser. The goal will be to have one event planned for each month.

Samir also presented a handout outlining the (3) proposed committees he wishes to convene, noting that he has given these some aggressive goals which might need to be refined by the committee chairs to be more feasible. These three are as follows: Communications and Membership, to be headed by Allen Woods with participation by Kathy Atkinson; Events, to be headed by Laura Davis; and Planning and Development, to be headed by Samir Kulkarni. One additional committee was discussed during the meeting, Safe and Clean, with participation by Gary Dangel and

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Christina Hartlieb, though a chair was not yet appointed. Michael said that every BG member should participate on one of the committees, not just leave it to one appointed chair.

The Safe and Clean committee may include the hiring of a part-time person to clean along the streets as well as deal with the City to get them to collect trash or fix busted sidewalks. This might need to be done in partnership with WHRF in order to afford reasonable wages, and we may need to consider asking for businesses with street frontage to pay in some form of subscription or assessment. Samir noted that there are Safe & Clean funds available at the City. Christina asked how far north such a program would cover, and Kathy commented that we used to be able to get trash pickup twice a week. Gary noted that the Beautification committee of WHAC has not been active recently, and the proposed paid position should include the management of volunteers. Betty said that Ed Horgan had previously been paying Leonard for this kind of work in front of his buildings, but is no longer doing so.

#### **Other Matters:**

There was discussion about the development of an overall WH tenant space inventory, which could be made to be online. Cindy said that the City has an app that can recommend leasable space based on desired square footage and other criteria. Matt asked how we might go about recruiting businesses to locate in WH, and whose responsibility it would be to do so. Samir replied that our ability to support them or not would be a factor, but that we can all become active recruiters. Allen asked whether we have a strategy regarding the types of businesses we would like to attract, as some current establishments fail to generate foot traffic. Kathy cautioned that we should take care not to disrupt existing residents and consider the development they may want to see.

Samir said that we should stand as the third community pillar, alongside WHAC and WHRF. Matt noted that City funds have been decreasing in recent years, and asked what it might look like if the BG operated separately from WHAC, even without having its own 501c-3 status. Kathy explained that the BG joined with WHAC several years ago primarily to gain a 501c-3 status for dealing with City contracts. To write and apply for grants one needs to know what they are doing, but Kathy noted that both WHAC and the BG are run by volunteers. The way the City operates, it is structured to go to the area councils for any community recommendations, so Kathy asked whether an independent BG can achieve an equal parity with WHAC.

Allen asked whether our website or any other website includes a listing of all WH businesses. Gary said that he has been working on aggregating such a list into a Google doc, but Allen said it should be an outward-facing brand tool and not just for internal use. Matt said that such a map and list were among the endeavors undertaken by Maya last year.

It was noted that dues for the new year are now due, and the first task of the Communications and Membership committee will be to get reminder notices out.

Meeting adjourned at approx. 9:42 AM.