

## **Minutes 11-14-11**

Officers Present: Paul Grewe, Deb Weiss

Others attending: Stacy Ness, John Prey, Pat Peckham, Judith Miller, Anders Tietz, Bob Karls, Kate Larsen

Call to Order made at 5:32pm by Deb

Motion to approve minutes for 10/24/11 made by Deb, seconded by Paul, approved by all.

### Introductions

#### 501(c)(3) and officers:

Deb said she met with the mayor last monday. Discussed with him and the city attorney the founding of the commission. Was founded was ad hoc committee by resolution, supposed to go on and file 501(c)(3) with IRS, never done. Deb asked should we go for it or not? Mayor has also requested that the officer list for the Ad Hoc Committee be updated from the original 9. Judith asked why do we need 501(c)(3)? Deb indicated she felt we should go for it, reasons being for grant funding. Indicated she would be willing file form 1023 with the IRS herself. Paul mentioned that we are eligible for the benefits of the 501c3 tax status under the Community foundation, wasn't sure, indicated legal advice might be in order to find out.

Judith asked about the WPS grant, Paul informed her about it, continued discussion about fund at Community foundation, Paul asked if the Commission was shut down last meeting, and Deb informed him they weren't. Judith brought up that we are not at the organizational level to apply for 501c3. Might put off average citizen with the nonprofit label.

Deb asked can we apply for grants without the 501c3. Discussion about money ensued. Paul indicated we have 2999.07 in the account, listed off various expenses. Judith mentioned that we should also be able to apply for grants being part of the city. Deb said the only reason she wanted the 501(c)(3) was for grant funding. Discussed elections and the filling of the officer positions that the mayor had requested. Small discussion of holiday party this year, and the elections that normally occur then. Paul mentioned maybe we should delay elections till Earth Day (April 22). Deb asked what does the group want to do in terms of filling the officers. She recommended we wait till the holiday party to fill the officer and board positions. She indicated that the mayor seemed that he wasn't in a huge hurry to fill the positions but that it needed to get done soon. Deb moved that we table the discussion about filling the officer position till the holiday party, seconded by Bob Karls, voted, all were in favor of waiting till the holiday party. Deb also motioned that we decline to pursue 501(c)(3) status, it was seconded by John, voted, all were in favor of declining.

#### Website:

Deb said that the website needs to be moved and updated. Website is still on the Samuels server. She indicated that Samuels Group, seeing as how they are no longer involved with the group, had mentioned moving the site, and Deb said it is in a format that is too complex for her. She indicated she has a friend who does website design, would do it for free, we would have to pay for the hosting, but the host would be 1&1. Mentioned the former discussion about fat cow server. In the interest of efficiency we decided to do it through 1&1. Paul mentioned spending up to \$50 to do this. Deb said the domain has been paid through 2016, so it shouldn't be that much, but we decided to allocate that amount anyway. Paul moved to approve this plan and allocate 50 to do this, Judith seconded, voted, all were in favor of moving site to 1&1.

#### Community Garden:

The Commission helped sponsor a garden with the Bridge Street Clinic, and a garden in Marathon City (?) the prior growing season. Deb said the Commission had approved a \$400 donation to the Bridge Street Garden (may 23rd minutes(?)). Was waiting to hear back from Bridge Street as to the status of the garden. Judith volunteered to find out what is going on with it. She was told to ask about whether they want us to grow plants for them again next year. As far as we know it is a organic garden, and we will give the \$400 with the emphasis on organic agriculture. We are waiting on finding out what is going on their end before we donate the money. Deb indicated she would be willing to grow the plants again next year.

#### Water Quality:

Water quality expert will not be there till next meeting, it will be Brad Marquardt, director of public works. Deb said when she wrote the grant to the EPA in spring, she discovered a few concerning things from the DNR. Mercury is over limit at intake according to a report she received from the DNR dated February 3, 2010, and over limit at discharge and so if one connects the dots, in all likelihood it is coming out of the tap then as well. Tap water is regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act, but it seems that mercury is not covered under that. Current data puts the level of mercury in the water is 11 ng/L, where the limit is set at 1.3ng/L. The same documents mentioned pentachlorophenol from the Wauleco superfund site, a form of dioxin, which has no safe limit. Deb also indicated that Wausau Water Permits do not list testing for mercury. She acknowledged she is working from limited information and as a result would like someone who is an expert to be present, so these questions can be answered. Judith asked if the Wisconsin legislature had been working on this, and Deb said yes, it is resolution 40 (?), it reduces mercury emissions by 40% by 2010, and 90% by 2015. John seemed to think that mercury advisories for the fish were no longer in place and so it had to be getting better. Pat corrected him reading off the current fish advisories. Deb said that the UWSP water lab was willing to test a sample. The issue was brought up that there are multiple wells and that readings might be different throughout the city. Deb motioned we approve 1 sample be taken, it was seconded by both John and Judith, motion passed with no opposition. Paul also motioned we commission the study only as a guideline. Seconded by John, all approved.

#### Water Bottles:

Council apparently uses single use plastic water bottles. It was brought up by three different people to buy council reusable water bottles or glasses. Discussion ensued as to where we would acquire these bottles, and to what kind we would get etc. Paul brought up the very good question of whether there was a recycling bin in the council chambers. Deb indicated she thought there was one in the main lobby. Talk about engraving, which brought up the point of the wordiness of our name. There was talk of corporate donations, and possibly getting more as a promotional items. Will revisit subject at next meeting when we have whatever members have found out.

#### Brainstorming:

1. Finding interest-focusing through committees, not losing inertia through dissipation
2. Ice Age trail
3. Reaching out to UWMC and NTC students, if not K-12 projects
4. Library partnership
5. Farmers Market-signage and sponsorship
6. Restructuring-mission statement, motto, learning from what we did wrong, defining positions within the group, possible paid position to help work get done, business plan and 1 yr, 5 yr plan, set 5 main goals for next year with quarterly reviews to see how we are doing on that.
7. What happened to Green Drinks?
8. Solar Panels for the City
9. Come to next meeting with areas we want to focus on

#### Next Agenda:

same as previous, without 501 discussion, adding restructuring

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm, motioned by Deb, seconded by everyone:)