



## **MBA Membership Meeting Minutes, September 14, 2017**

**Welcome:** President Michael Higgins called the meeting to order at 7:39 a.m.

**Secretary's Report:** August minutes were approved as presented.

**Treasurer's Report:** As of August, 2017: Income: \$825.00; Expenses: \$464.01; Balance: \$19,211.56

### **Report on 2017 Bites on the Boulevard (BOB) Food Truck Community Events: Katie Davison, BOB Co-Chair**

- Katie reported that MBA increased its sponsorship to four events this year, which were held on the second Tuesdays of the month from June through September. Katie said Bites has become a model for other Springfield neighborhoods. The first food truck event in the North Grand Avenue neighborhood will be held in October.
- The increase in the number of vendors this year offered more variety and reduced long lines and lessened wait times. Truck purveyors expressed success with the amount of their sales at all Bites events.
- Other positive characteristics of BOB events are that they attract large crowds that reflect the diversity in our community, engage neighborhood schools and their families to attend the event and request donations to support specific school projects that benefit students. A total of \$1500 was raised for Butler, Blessed Sacrament, Blackhawk and Franklin Schools this year.
- Katie thanked all volunteers who made BOB possible and particularly her Co-Chair Jess Weitzel who worked with City departments and the vendors to ensure all requirements were met, Laurie and Dave Farrell, Alana Reynolds, Delta Church, South Side Christian Church, and Julie Dirksen.
- Katie was acknowledged for her leadership as the originator of Bites on the Boulevard. Katie's philosophy is: "When you see something that needs to be done, just do it."

### **Local Government Update**

- **Joe McMenamin, Alderman, Ward 7**, announced that Ruler Food will not exercise its option to purchase the Esquire Theatre property. He said that Esquire, Federated Funeral Directors and Town and Country Shopping Center, which are available for purchase, are opportunities for development on MacArthur.
- He described several positive things that are happening on MacArthur; such as, sales for Pies the Limit surpassing its best performing location on West side, Free Press Coffee continuing forward on its renovation; a large attendance at the BBQ at the MacArthur Town Homes and an increase of 20 new rentals there, reinstating the After-School Program at the Town Homes staffed by retired

school teachers, and training for the residents on personal finances and maintaining their property. Julie Dirksen thanked Laurie Farrell and the wonderful, dedicated retired teachers she recruited to work with the children.

In response to a question about how MBA can influence what is constructed on the Esquire property, McMenamin suggested we ask the owner about his plans for the property and said MBA should invite local elected legislators and candidates to hear what MBA supports and ask for a significant commitment of assistance by the legislators. The Alderman suggested negotiating a jurisdictional transfer of MacArthur Boulevard from the State to the City by accepting less money than the costs of IDOT proposals saying the City could move much faster on making needed improvements; such as, resurfacing, curbing and light poles.

- **Mike Lopez, Mayor, Village of Jerome**, said property north of Shop and Save will be demolished. The village will no longer grant video gaming licenses since the market has been saturated. The new retail mall on Wabash is nearing completion. Village revenues are shrinking and the State reimbursements are slow to arrive. Fortunately, the village got a good bid on repairing potholes. A rock painting program in the village park is planned for September 28<sup>th</sup>.
- **President Michael Higgins** announced the formation of a committee to examine in more depth IDOT MacArthur Boulevard Study and recommend options going forward. He urged MBA members to volunteer to serve.

#### **Announcements**

- October Guest Speaker: Rasha Said, owner of Sensible Innovations, a locally-grown start-up, will discuss her invention of Aware, an app she created for her son. Aware delivers accessible information for the visually impaired about the person's surroundings that is far beyond the best Braille signs. It has been piloted at Glenwood High School and Mary Bryant Home.
- Wing Stop on Wabash by Osaka is planning to open mid-November.
- Napa is doing well at its new location on Wabash.
- Local First is expanding and plans to reach out to the community by newsletter and radio announcements.
- Calling MBA volunteers: Boulevard Clean-up Day  
Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup>  
9 a.m., Franklin Middle School

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Loretta Durbin, Secretary