



## **MBA Membership Meeting Minutes, Thursday, February 9, 2017**

Welcome: President Michael Higgins called the meeting to order.

Secretary's Report: January minutes were approved as presented.

Treasurer's Report: January Income: \$240; Expenses: \$567; Balance: \$19,855.31.

Guest Speaker: Kristin DiCenso, candidate for Ward 6 Alderman

- DiCenso believes Springfield needs creativity and vision to develop a plan that will move the City forward.
- She believes leaders should study other communities that have succeeded in revitalizing their communities like Normal, Illinois has done.
- She supports business incentives, such as, Tax Increment Financing, to attract new business development and says the City needs a full time City planner.
- As a 38-year-old single mother, DiCenso said she is running to add demographic balance to the Council. There is only one woman serving on the City Council.
- She has worked 12 years for government in the areas of management, budget and policy. She currently works for the Illinois Health Care Association.
- Martin Fruchtl, candidate for Ward 6 Alderman, will speak at the March MBA meeting.

Joe McMenamin, Alderman, Ward 7

- MacDonald's follow-up: Spoke with corporate representatives who said the property's location did not fit their business model. MacDonald's is willing to lease or sell it to another restaurant but not as a drive-through. It is obligated by ordinance to maintain the appearance of the property.
- City budget: The hotel-motel tax that passed will increase from 6% to 7%. It establishes a funding source for maintaining Oak Ridge Cemetery. Funds in excess of \$500,000 are designated for use Downtown.

Michael Lopez, Mayor of Jerome

- Because of declining revenue, Mayor Lopez had to lay off a police chief and anticipates the need for further reductions, most likely by reducing services.
- Warehouse at Flooring Depot site is on schedule.

Tammy Russell, Neighborhood Police Officer

- There were five calls for service at MacArthur Town Homes last month.
- A count of the number of homeless in the area showed no increase over last year.

Miscellaneous:

- An MBA member expressed concern over the condition of Town and Country Shopping Center highlighting the vacancies, the closure of Burlington Coat Factory that has been announced, and its appearance. He urged MBA to become involved stating that the conditions at Town and Country affect the vitality of the Boulevard.
- President Higgins presented to Skip Costa, owner of Roy's Alterations and Custom Tailors, a plaque of the feature article about him in the Illinois Times.

**NEW LOCATION for MARCH MEETING: March 9th Membership Meeting will be at the newly renovated South Side Christian Church, 2600 S. MacArthur, at 7:30 a.m.**