

## **Ohio City Incorporated Board Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, October 7, 2020**

### **Attendance**

Board: Benjamin, Brown, Frondorf, Greer, Knittel, Mallory, Qin, Rocha, Schmitt, Smith, Trares, Trivisonno, Wimbiscus

Not Attending: Doyle, Malone

Staff: Bailey, Biggers, Long Jones, McNair, Raber, Shaw

### **Executive Session**

Entered Executive Session immediately at meeting start, around 6:05pm, to discuss employment matters.

Exited Executive Session around 6:20pm.

### **Minutes**

Approved minutes of August 5, 2020 Regular Meeting. All in favor.

### **Executive Director Report**

Biggers summarized the 100 Cups of Coffee program. Will meet with neighbors and stakeholders about what they think could help build a better Ohio City, why they've stayed, why they've moved here, etc.. Great way for staff to reach out and get to know residents who aren't just the same residents that staff typically meets with.

Members asked if there were any updates on Fulton Road, Franklin Circle, of the Willow Lift Bridge. No substantive updates to share. City Administration now seeks greater involvement from Ward 3 and 15 Council members for future decisions on the Willow Lift Bridge. McNair states that discussion of the Willow Lift Bridge will likely also be a focus on the new Lakeview Terrace Master Planning that will begin in the near future.

Smith suggested that state and federal representatives be invited to tour the Willow Bridge area situation.

Frondorf asked for Design Guideline updates. Tom stated no new updates from City Architecture, and will be prioritized once outstanding amounts are received from the City. Members generally expressed disappointment about delivered work product from City Architecture, and questioned whether City Architecture should receive full final payment. Frondorf also inquired about Stoneleigh project east of the West Side Market. Shaw stated that some City approvals have been received from Design Review and Planning Commission. RELU committee agreed to further consider each of these issues listed above at their next meeting and determine appropriate next steps.

### **Committee Reports - presented by Committee Chairs**

### **Governance Committee - Frondorf**

Frondorf announced creation of a By-Law Review Subcommittee, Frondorf is the chair. Invited members to join new subcommittee. Frondorf hopes to have by-law review completed before the December board meeting. There are four open board appointment seats. One for St. Ignatius, one for Skylight employee, potential PNC bank, and St. Malachi. Seeking someone from the small business community. Would like to have open seats filled by end of year.

Membership database will also be examined to make sure it is up to date and accurate.

Governance committee will also be reviewing recommendations for racial equity and impact on organization operation.

### **Resolution 2020-1007-01, Issue 68 endorsement - Trivisonno**

Trivisonno introduced the CMSD Issue 68 resolution. Schmitt explained that the Board has endorsed levies before, such as the Port Authority issue and the Cuyahoga Arts issue. Some members have concerns about endorsing issues, especially ones that increase property taxes where residents can no longer afford them with rising property values around neighborhood.

Schmitt suggests amending resolution to read “that OCI endorses Issue 68 and encourage voters to approve its passage.” Trivisonno moves to approve, Benjamin seconds. Scheve opposed, all others in favor. Resolution 2020-1007-01 adopted.

### **Real Estate and Land Use Committee - Wimbuscus**

Wimbuscus stated that RELU discussed Vision Plan and demolition within service area but outside of historic district. Wimbuscus also mentioned Franklin Circle fountain, and other items in the most recent RELU minutes shared with the board. Stated 2525 property is for sale, and explained that the committee/board wants to make sure any proceeds are used in a meaningful manner.

Schmitt explained that NWP board met recently, Near West Land Trust board members now appointed. NWLT board recently convened, McNair attended. Ohio City resident Isaac Robb elected president for year one.

### **Finance Committee - Trares**

Trares shared that we knew the last fiscal year would be a large deficit, but that this fiscal year would have a surplus because of PPP loan. Combined, deficit of \$20K-21K overall. 2019-2020 fiscal year deficit near the projected number. 2523 Market Corp. ran a small deficit, mostly parking lot related and also related to vacancy at old OCI HQ. A number of loans have been deferred and suspended management payments to OCI. Fodor (new OCI HQ) has fair amount of cash, ran some deficit.

For current fiscal year starting July 1, had \$95K surplus, assuming PPP loan forgiven. New fiscal year included a very conservative budget. McNair noted that traditionally we receive \$150K as management fees, but this year we project only \$50K for Great Lakes parking lot. Cars are now parking at the Great Lakes parking lot, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  full during days.

City owes OCI tens of thousands of dollars, and is behind on sending out payments. OCI loaned itself \$34K to maintain cash flow, in anticipation of receiving outstanding accounts. OCI still has \$147K in savings account.

2525 Lorain (old HQ) is open and viewable to interested tenants. Decision to sell may change if good tenant is found. Potential buyers have expressed interest in bidding for purchase. Flying Fig has some rights if sale, has a lease with ten years remaining, new buyer would need to buy out their lease.

### **Economic Development Committee - Trares**

No update.

### **Advancement Committee - Schmitt**

No update.

### **Safety Committee - Smith**

Smith offered updates on camera system upgrades, and also shared updates on the new Ward 3 safety coordinator job description. Also explained that OCIC board chair updated Safety Committee on its work of hiring additional security for the SID. Additional information can be found in the ED report. Smith highlighted collaboration between OCI and OCIC boards to promote safety.

### **Community Engagement Committee - Rocha, Qin**

McNair showed new OCI neighborhood flag designs, both traditional blue/red flag, and also updated Pride flag and Black Lives Matter flag. Explained that BLM flag revenues will be allocated to racial equity fund to pay for specific racial impact work.

Rocha presented racial equity and inclusion (REI) goals developed in the CE committee work. See chart. Goals include (1) instill a culture of REI decision making at the staff and board levels, (2) diversify organization membership and board member representation, (3) increase transparency at OCI and within neighborhood process.

Rocha and Qin both thanked all that assisted with the development and feedback on racial equity policies. Feedback continues to be welcome. Long Jones offered further information on work alongside OCIC and efforts to provide clean and safe SID without adding more guns to the street. Long Jones also explained that the policy encourages all partner organizations (not just OCIC) also work toward fulfilling these same REI goals. Long Jones also noted request for further discussion of governance-related topics such as term limits or geographic residence requirement/zones to ensure adequate representation across neighborhood.

Schmitt thanked group for organizing policy items. Smith noted that some of the governance issues may be considered by the By-Law Review Subcommittee, and that group should consider the expense and time requirements of REI training program, should explore other training opportunities also. Rocha,

Biggers, and Mallory all offered that other REI trainings exist and should be considered so that there are enough alternatives for available funding and schedules.

Trares encouraged group to reflect on programming available, e.g., should examine how our programs do or don't target or meet needs of all resident groups, as this may impact organization membership diversity.

Knittel, Schmitt, and Scheve each offered insights on board composition with zones, and how that might affect recruitment. Schmitt mentioned possible options for junior boards/young professionals groups, to further mentor/grow interest in board membership.

Biggers offered example of recruiting residents to serve on committees, and then moving to the Board. Brown suggested developing other new ideas in the Advancement Committee.

Mallory suggested further engagement with younger residents. Shaw explained that Keri Palma often takes lead on youth engagement in neighborhood development, alongside her role with Near West Recreation. Staff intends to further develop meaningful ways to engage young residents and their families.

McNair invited board members to meet and discuss further financial/personnel policies.

Schmitt feedback: "Go forth and execute."

### **Board Chair Report - Schmitt**

Schmitt announced Ad-Hoc Strategic Planning Sub Committee. Trares explained CHN and May Dugan strategic planning process as examples completed without external consultant, as well as benefits such as cost and implementation speed and ease. Schmitt, Frondorf, Doyle, Trares, McNair, and Shaw will first consider scope and direction of committee; more updates to come soon.

### **Final Thoughts**

Schmitt noted that annual donation expectation is changed from \$100 to any amount that is personally meaningful. Donations of any size help OCI in its work and mission.

### **Meeting adjourned 7:52pm.**

**Minutes by Trivisonno.**

# OCI Racial Equity Policy Chart

(rev. 20oct5)

| Goal 1   | Policy Item  | Lead Role                            | Recommendation/Action Item  | Lead Role                  |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Instill a Culture of Racial Equity and Inclusion decision making at the Staff and Board Levels | Provide for all board and staff members some form of racial equity training each calendar year and create a plan that works for each individual.                             | Board President/Governance Committee | Create a fund for and encourage resident and business leaders within the community to take REI training. Set a goal of recruiting X people per year. (What can funds be used for?)                        | ED/Staff/CEC               |
|  | Create racial impact STATEMENTS and REI lens questions and goals to help define ALL work and projects. (This should be done at the staff, board committee, and board levels. | Board Committee Chairs/Staff         | Create a targeted, intentional, and equitable outreach and engagement strategy.   | Engagement Staff           |
|  |  |                                      | Each staff member will develop a workplan for how their work encompasses these issues.  | COO                        |
|  |  |                                      | Seek funding for OCIC board to take on REI training.  | ED/COO/SID Manager         |
|  |  |                                      | OCI and OCIC boards partner on racial equity and showing how special improvement districts can be a national model in providing clean and safe neighborhoods without adding more guns to the street.      | ED/Board Chair/SID Manager |
|  | Have an annual conversation in each board committee through an REI lens on how the committees work is impacting the community.   | Board Committee Chairs (and Staff)   | Have bi-annual board and staff retreats with one conversation focused on REI impact our work has in Ohio City and a second conversation based more broadly on the equity impact of our work in Ohio City. | ED/ Board President        |
|  |  |                                      | Include paid holidays that promote racial equity and inclusion in OCI personnel policy including Juneteenth and Election Day. (C)   | ED/ Board President        |
|  |  |                                      | Create more inclusive Ohio City Flag to help raise awareness of these issues within the community. Proceeds of these flags could help fund REI work. (C)  | ED/Board President         |

| Goal 2  | Policy Item  | Lead Role                                    | Recommendation/Action Item   | Lead Role   |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| Diversify the Membership of Ohio City Incorporated and the Ohio City Incorporated Board of Trustees | Broaden the membership base and diversify voter turnout for the organization by focusing on and having a targeted strategy for geographic areas that traditionally have low participation. | Board Engagement Committee/ Engagement Staff | Each board member recruit X# new members per year. (Add a line asking residents who suggested that they join.)   | Board/ Governance Committee/ Engagement Committee                 |
|   | Work with the board to recruit additional members for the organization.  | Staff  | Make OCI membership a requirement to receive benefits from OCI (Small Grants, Home Safety Audit, etc.) ***   | Engagement Staff  |
|   |  |  | Explore board term limits to increase opportunities for diversity. <i>(continue discussion)</i>  | Governance Committee  |
|   |  |  | Explore setting geographic zones for board seats. <i>(continue discussion)</i>   | Governance Committee  |
|   |  |  | Create a board application with a simpler format with questions geared to racial impact. This could be as simple as asking people if they have taken any form of racial equity training. <i>(IP)</i> | Governance Committee  |
|   |  |  | OCI Board workshop discussing who OCI is and what our board does, offering assistance to applicants filling out the OCI Board Application. <i>(C)</i>  | Engagement Staff/ Board Engagement Committee/ Executive Committee |

\*\*\* Any additional items?

| Goal 3   | Policy Item  | Lead Role       | Recommendation/Action Item  | Lead Role           |
|--|--|-----------------|---|---------------------|
| Increase Transparency within Ohio City Incorporated and in Facilitating Neighborhood Process | Make the work of Ohio City Incorporated more accessible to the community. (language translation)             | Staff           | Record board meetings on zoom and make meetings accessible on website. Investigate ways to be more transparent with board meetings in the future when we are operating in an in-person or hybrid setting. | ED/ Exec. Assistant |
|  |  |                 | Continue to build upon CoUrbanize platform to facilitate neighborhood conversations around development and planning issues.   | Staff               |
|  |  |                 | Host recorded neighborhood conversations, schedules, official City process meetings, plans, etc. in one place.  | Staff               |
|  | Apply a racial equity lens in providing and making organizational financial matters available to the public. | Board Treasurer | Publicly display condensed budget on website.   | ED/ Accountant      |
|  |  |                 | Publicly display a pie chart showing percentage breakdowns of revenues and expenditures of organization by category, including staff work.  | ED/ Accountant      |
|  |  |                 | Place pay ranges for positions on job postings. (C)   | ED                  |
|  |  |                 | Remove advanced degrees or transportation requirements in job postings.   | ED                  |
|  |  |                 | Publicly display a list of companies and organizations OCI contracts with and dollar amounts. This should include notating whether businesses are minority or woman owned.                                | ED/ Accountant      |



## **Resolution 2020-1007-01**

### **Resolution to endorse Issue 68 in the November 2020 election**

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**WHEREAS**, through collaboration, Ohio City Incorporated (OCI) guides the physical, economic, and social development of the neighborhood it serves toward an improved quality of life;

**WHEREAS**, OCI's Strategic Vision declares that "education is a bedrock of economic opportunity and plays a significant role in a range of quality of life measures" and that OCI "will promote quality education opportunities by assisting neighborhood schools" (page 11);

**WHEREAS**, schools are integral to physical, economic, and social development in OCI's service area: preparing students for future careers and civic life, providing valuable recreational space for community activity, and influencing land use and property development opportunities;

**WHEREAS**, the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) is one of the fastest improving school districts in Ohio: increasing access to high quality preschool, ensuring continual improvement on reading and math scores, and raising its graduation rate to over 80%;

**WHEREAS**, the CMSD board has voted to place a 20-mill school levy (\$200 per \$100,000 of the assessed property value), Issue 68, on the ballot in November of 2020: the school levy will provide necessary funding to continue improvements to education by investing in academic and extracurricular programming, providing enhanced counseling, distributing technology to students to shrink the digital divide, and training teachers to better serve students both in-person and online;

**WHEREAS**, without passage of the school levy, CMSD will lose \$66 million per year from its budget (~12%), which would have major ramifications for educational quality and could impact continued operation of schools in neighborhoods across the city;

**WHEREAS**, such cuts will only exacerbate challenges residents face in our neighborhoods and further disadvantage Cleveland students in comparison to their suburban counterparts;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that OCI endorses Issue 68 and encourages voters to approve its passage.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chris Schmitt, Board President

Date: \_\_\_\_\_