

Thursday, February 9th, 2023

Meeting called to order 7:35 AM

South Side Christian Church

1. Welcome: Michael Higgins, President

a. Jess Weitzel's daughter, Ryan, is introduced and is *adorable*.

2. Board Reports

a. Secretary – Bill McMahon

January membership meeting minutes approved.

b. Treasurer – Adam Cook

i. Treasurer's Report as of January 31, 2023

Starting MBA Balance: \$16,419.12

Income: \$501.78

Expenses: \$466.75

Ending Balance: \$16,454.15

Approval motion made & passed

3. Speakers -- Candidates for Ward 6 City Council. Order decided by coin toss.

Alyssa Haaker remarks:

Background:

Lifelong Springfield resident.

college town Fla. Law school SIUC

Sang County state's atty.

Private law firm. Small business. IL FOP Labor Union.

Wants to encourage people to stay & start businesses in Springfield. And their kids.

Endorsed by a number of unions and trade associations.

Priorities:

Speeders. Red-light runners. Property theft. There is no police traffic unit now. Police understaffed.

Be more business friendly. Only one person at the city reviewing liquor licenses, business licenses, etc.

Blighted properties. City should enforce the ordinance violations.

Work with principals at the four schools in the neighborhood.

Legacy Pointe development down by Scheels.

Questions to candidate:

Q: Zoning variances?

A: Deal with case-by-case.

Q: How to advance Legacy Point?

A: Keep driving it forward. City has done all it can. Tax abatement, etc. Developer needs to keep moving. Will be the anchor for the boulevard.

Q: "Midtown" How do we attract student, young people, to build up the neighborhood?

A: Increase the police numbers. Fully staffed. Infrastructure problems in future years in Ward 6. Strong neighborhood associations. Advocate for the neighborhood.

Jennifer Notoriano remarks:

Background:

Thanks MBA for the invitation

Excited about MBA mission.

Moved here in 2011 from New Orleans.

PhD in Political Science.

Adjunct at Millikin U. Career switch to contract specialist at HSHS.

Deeply invested in Springfield.

Wanted to live near the urban core. Music. Restaurants. Walkable/Bikeable.

Priorities:

Proud of the work Ald. DiCenso has done.

Endorsed/Supported by Ald. DiCenso. Signed up to volunteer/door-knock.

Lots of untapped potential. Listen to residents.

Solutions to speeding on residential streets.

More and better lighting.

More attractive pedestrian walkways.

City needs to prioritize business services.

Committed to collaborate with neighborhood groups.

Question:

Q: How to advance Legacy Point?

A: Oversee contracts and plans for it. Make sure everyone is doing their job. Also concerned that IDOT's plans for MacArthur Blvd is too "highway"-centric. Needs to be pedestrian and business friendly.

Questions for both candidates:

Q: What local groups/organizations are you a part of?

Candidate Haaker -- Board of Trustees for the Arts. Head deacon Westminster Presbyterian church.

Candidate Notoriano -- Volunteers with the Sangamon County Democratic party.

Worked on campaigns for Doris Turner, Mark Ayers. Girls on the Run volunteer coach

Q: Most important role city government can/should play?

Candidate Notoriano -- City too slow in approving business licensing/purchases. City needs to hold vacant lot owners accountable.

Candidate Haaker -- City's business office is understaffed.

Q: Biking and walking, parallel alleys. Why not make some of those open spaces on Walnut to create a linear park?

Candidate Notoriano -- Have talked to some people in the area. It would be a boon to the neighborhood, but have to get buy in from property owner(s).

Candidate Haaker -- Would support such a park.

Ald. DiCenso: Third street corridor will become a linear park. She is working with Doris Turner on that project now.

Q: On zoning variances?

A: Both candidates think the city needs to keep better handle on variances.

Q: The city's corporate funds are in good shape. How should they be spent?

Candidate Notoriano: City salaries. Why can't we fully staff city departments.

Candidate Haaker : Salaries. Infrastructure.

President Higgins comments on San Francisco's Safe Streets program and thinks Springfield should have something similar.

4. Local Government Update

a. Alderwoman, Ward 6: Kristin DiCenso

- Legacy Pointe Update. Expect to hear from developers end of Feb/early March
- Budget hearings. Amendments due tomorrow. Our salaries are not competitive with the state.

b. Alderman, Ward 7: Joe McMenamain

- Salaries. 25% of city employees make > 100K
- WSJ housing rating index. Springfield is ranked #17.

c. Mayor, Village of Jerome: Michael Lopez

- Comments deferred

d. Mayor, City of Leland Grove: Mary Jo Bangert

- Comments deferred
- Would like to see more of a younger crowd in the Town & Country area.

e. Board Member, Sangamon County: Kevin McGuire

- Not present

f. Springfield Neighborhood Police Officer: Cody Musson

- Not present

5. Announcements/Other Business

- Call for volunteers to join a Membership Committee

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 AM.