

Thursday, March 9th, 2023

Meeting called to order 7:30 AM

South Side Christian Church

1. Welcome: Michael Higgins, President

2. Board Reports

a. Secretary – Bill McMahon

i. February membership meeting minutes submitted, approved.

b. Treasurer – Adam Cook

i. Treasurer's Report as of February 28, 2023

Starting Balance:

\$16,454.15

Income: \$64.26

Expenses: \$383.72

Ending Balance:

\$16,134.69

Submitted 3/8/2023

3. Speakers -- Candidates for City Council:

Ward 7 candidates John Houlihan and Brad Carlson

Brad Carlson:

Nearly 30 years in SPFLD. District has changed.

Public service experience.

Listened to people in the ward as he knocks on their doors.

Endorsed by police & fire.

Police dept is 20-25 officers down. Will work with them and fire department.

Four different labor unions endorsed.

Funding pensions and infrastructure.

Working with all stakeholders on MacArthur Boulevard widening and the MBA.

Michael Higgins question/statement about Penny lane

Adam Cook question: Wyndham hotel question/Horace Mann.

A: Listen to the experts regarding Wyndham hotel staying a hotel because of potential loss of convention business.

Discussion of how hotel space is accounted for follows.

John Houlihan:

Born/raised Springfield.

Worked at Illinois state senate.

Economic development.

Need a vibrant downtown. Big investments. Now is the time to develop the "Y" block.

Infrastructure.

More police. More community policing.

Be responsive to all citizens.

Working with all stakeholders on MacArthur Boulevard widening and the MBA.

Will work with other aldermen on the highway interchange.

Michael Higgins question/statement about Penny lane

John Houlihan question: Wyndham hotel question/Horace Mann.

A: There is a better plan. Before we proceed, they need to pay the city what it owes the city.

Ward 8 candidates Erin Conley (incumbent, running unopposed.)

Chose to move here. Five adult children.

Wants Springfield to attract younger people.

Work experience, mostly environmental regulations. Department of Public Health.

Very supportive of a boulevard plan which would support existing businesses.

Q: How often ward meetings?

Would like to do once a year, but COVID threw everything out of whack.

Q: Michael Higgins what could city do to lead on the environment.

A: We have a lot of native insects/bugs. Ease off mowing for awhile to let native pollinators develop. Don't plant Bradford Pears! City should educate on environment. Preserve old growth trees.

Q: Michael Higgins what about dandelions?

A: I love dandelions.

Q: TIF?

A: Was once of the first "yeses" on the Horace Mann TIF demolition. I changed my vote in light of new historical information. City need to proactively inspect buildings -- especially in historic district -- and fine bad actors. I will be much more discerning on my TIF votes.

A: Need to know more about the Wyndham deal before voting.

Q: Ferguson/Booth building.

A: No updates.

#### 4. Local Government Update

##### a. Alderwoman, Ward 6: Kristin DiCenso

Answer to Wyndham question coming soon.

Last meeting as alderwoman!

Five unopposed ward races in some the the highest voter turnout races. Traditional turnout 20-30%.

Incident after last city council on Tuesday night. What has gone on over the last four years... the harassment & threats ... are disgusting. Threat of harm. Have to make a more welcoming environment for people running for office.

##### b. Alderman, Ward 7: Joe McMenamin

Q: What about demolition on Laurel?

A: Texted Eric Hoogland. "Very, very hush-hush".

##### c. Mayor, Village of Jerome: Michael Lopez

Echoes alderwoman DiCenso's comments about safety.

Two more requests for video gaming. Have to find another alternative for village revenue.

July 4th parade coming up!

d. Mayor, City of Leland Grove: Mary Jo Bangert -- Not present

e. Board Member, Sangamon County: Kevin McGuire -- Not present

f. Springfield Neighborhood Police Officer: Cody Musson -- Not present

5. Announcements/Other Business

a. Call for volunteers to join a Membership Committee

b. May Shred Event.

Fill out the Springfield Master Plan survey online.

ICONS website has candidate survey results.

Meeting adjourned 8:31 AM