



CITY OF DOVER

McCONNELL CENTER ADVISORY BOARD - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: McConnell Center, 61 Locust Street, Dover, NH 03820
Room 323
Meeting Date: Monday, September 24, 2012
Meeting Time: **7:00pm**

DRAFT

CALL TO ORDER: Judy Zalansky (Chair) called the meeting to order at 7.00 pm

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Patti Rawding-Anderson; Doug DeDe; Steve Pruyne; Cora Quisumbing-King; Joe Tenuta, Rec Advisory Board; Judy Zalansky, Chair; Gary Bannon, Administrator
Members Absent: Michael Crago, City Council Liaison

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Doug DeDe made motion to accept the August 13, 2012 minutes as presented. Motion seconded by Patti Rawding-Anderson. Motion passed unanimously.

CITIZENS FORUM:

None

REPORTS:

Staff Report

Administrator: Gary Bannon

The McConnell Center is going thru seasonal transitioning to Fall Programming. Room 323 is available for meetings as of today and is equipped with a whiteboard/screen on the wall for use. Joe Tenuta asked what the rate for rent is: Outside group is \$20 per hour; outside non-profit is \$10 per hour and in house use is no charge.

A small Day of Caring project was held and is still unfinished. There were a couple of trees planted last fall which have died and are waiting on replacement. Phillips Company from Andover, MA had a group of workers here for 2 ½ to 3 hours weeding all of the beds out front. Gary has ordered the replacement tree and two shrubs from Northern Nurseries. The driver did not get here in time so the nursery staff will plant them.

Gary spotted a couple from Virginia taking pictures of the building and grounds. It was mentioned that Dover was named “one of eight places haven’t found yet” in the Mother Earth Magazine. Doug DeDe mentioned that Dover was recognized in the Wall Street Journal for Human Technologies.

Tenants Collaborative: Steve Pruyne

First meeting in September was mainly focused on Apple Harvest Day. There are 20 confirmed vendors for the Arts Display on the front lawn of the McConnell Center and hoping to pick up 10 more. This means \$1000 for the Collaborative. There are two new tenants we will be inviting to



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attend the meetings. UNH Social Work office gave its notice that it will be vacating the building within 2 years, earlier if space is rented.

Gary Bannon mentioned the Stained Glass Windows on the fourth floor are planned to be worked on the week of October 8th. Work to be done: remove windows; do repairs on brickwork/woodwork and put in temp Plexiglas windows. The windows will be taken back to the shops dismantled, rebuilt and reinstalled by late November.

Financial Report: Gary Bannon

The cash flow is ahead of budgeted Revenues. Year to date Revenues is \$150,798.80 and Expenses are \$50,565.74

OLD BUSINESS:

Food Service Status: Gary Bannon

Bon Ami is working on refinishing countertops out front and sanding/painting on the inside. Judy Zalansky asked what the timeline is. Gary said most equipment is in and needs to be installed. Wanted to be open around Columbus Day, but if not will still provide food service at the Arts Event at McConnell Center on Apple Harvest Day. There is no specific date for opening.

Fit out plans for rooms 236 to 239 and 346: Gary Bannon

The estimate from Martini Northern for basic fit out came in at \$122,000. Original price was \$182,000. This will include lights, drop ceilings, sprinklers, flooring and sheetrock. Rooms 236/237 will have VCT flooring and 238/239 will have carpeting. Gary mentioned Recreation may be interested in room 237 which is across from the gym entrance for storage of equipment. Have to look at budget to see if feasible. Gary mentioned an option for room 236 to be used for the Senior Center Food program (working with Bon Ami) and maybe sharing space with outside group who may need meeting space. With the fit out there will be two HVC units with controls being in the two larger rooms 236 & 239.

Gary will have the bid sent out. Adding room 346 to fit out will be another \$11,000 making total \$133,000.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion on Hosting Political Events: Gary Bannon

We were asked if we would like to host Paul Ryan here at the McConnell Center which we did on September 18th.

Doug DeDe mentioned that this group (MCAB) had passed a formal resolution that in the future we were going to dictate the terms how the building was going to be used including not parking



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in Senior Center Handicap parking spaces or this side and including not disenfranchising rent paying tenants. In addition, the board had recommended that the policy for political campaigns is that they would pay first but asked why we are going to bill them later instead.

Gary Bannon stated that we can dictate to the campaigns that if you want to be here this is the only way we will do it. There is a risk to that. The campaign will come back with the response that they can't do it all that way because they work on a less than one week schedule. Doug DeDe stated if they can't work with that then they can go someplace else. Gary stated that is a bigger question than just he or the McConnell Advisory Board, it would be a city wide question. This is what we want to avoid, if we don't have candidates that can find a suitable inside space they will not come to this city and I don't want it to be because the McConnell Center said no. The decision should be one from the City Manager or City Council level if we are going to set policies that are very restrictive. Alternatives for interior space in the city are very limited. Schools are one which has been used in the past.

Doug DeDe said there was no intention to keep them out. If they were going to come they were going to come on terms that was established by municipality and that does not appear to be what happened. It appeared that Secret Service Agents and campaign workers came in and did whatever they wanted and appears to me they were given no guidelines to go by. Gary disagreed that they were not given direction but security needs will override most requests and it is done at a level higher than the site agents. The onsite agents worked well with the requests we had but the regional office in Boston added more restrictions just prior to the event. No one outside of the event organizers would be aware of that process.

Joe Tenuta stated; as I have learned from the Recreation Advisory Board, we can tell what would like to do but the city has to adapt. They can take our suggestions, recommendations, advice and proceed. We can suggest this is what we would like to do because the McConnell Center could get stiffed or the City gets stiffed.

Doug DeDe said one agency lost a substantial amount of income which was inappropriate, unfair and unacceptable. Patti Rawding-Anderson said Easter Seals had to cancel 16 children and 20 services which was a loss of revenue but still had to pay staff.

Doug DeDe asked how did this whole procedure come to be and who was in charge. Gary Bannon stated the campaign calls us when they are in area which is usually less than a week in advance of the event taking place for a variety of reasons. We received the call on Thursday asking if the gym was available on the following Tuesday for the time needed which was late morning due to Paul Ryan having to be in Virginia that night. Anytime of the day seven days a week there would be disruption of programs. We always look for ways to minimize disruption. We don't know what restrictions are going to be until Secret Service is on site. Doug mentioned



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that they need to be dictated to as where buses will park and where he will come in. We tell media buses were to set up and they need to have enough cable with time so if needed they have it. They need to be told we have experience with this. After letting them know what the terms are they can respond within 6 hours if they would like to come. Payment needs to be up front.

Judy Zalansky is interested to investigate other places in the city where events like this can be held like Goss on Broadway, Hellenic Center and McIntosh School campus. Our dissatisfaction needs to be raised to the city.

Patti Rawding-Anderson stated Easter Seals did everything we were told and asked my staff to co-operate fully. The children would not be rescheduled under last minute notice. This was an absolute loss of revenue and still had to pay staff which. Many families were upset that a political candidate was more important than their children receiving services. An important conversation needs to be had because if you are going to have tenants and want to keep tenants you need to respect the fact tenants are here running a business and that's how they pay rent. Doug DeDe asked Gary to add the responsible debt to the campaign bill that will be sent. Patti said can't do that cause other tenants were also affected. Doug said that it might be best to tell them we don't take political candidates here at the McConnell Center period.

Gary Bannon said if we cannot be flexible and ask them to be flexible too we will not be able to host another national level political event in the regular election cycle. We can potentially do primary candidates which require smaller space like cafeteria and gym which does not affect the rest of the building only the space they are in. Once you get on the national level I and no one else is in the position to dictate the security terms, the Secret Service does. We can make certain areas available and others can be off limits but if they need to check patrons or limit travel in the building for periods of time that is their responsibility. None of us can take that off of their shoulders no matter how many times we host events. It is always a new team and they look at it with a fresh set of eyes which can change it significantly. Doug DeDe: Then fine they don't come. Gary said that the Secret Service did not set the terms without understanding the consequences and apologized profusely for the inconvenience the security caused. They were very professional and reasonable and they were great to work with. From above them they were receiving terms of what to do like sweeping every person which was not anticipated and came day before event.

Patti Rawding-Anderson: I understand that this is a boon for Dover, really nice prestige for the city and puts us on the map but my job is to ensure to provide a safe place for children to come to receive their services and support their families and also to pay staff. So this was a financial hardship for us.



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Gary Bannon: The other side to this is the roll this building plays as a community center. The only other option to hold a big event like this is to give you a month's notice to say this day there is going to be an event that may take a few hours of our time that if you can avoid scheduling if that can be done. Patti said even two weeks we could have accommodated.

Steve Pruyne: Obama was here later in the day which wasn't as bad. Gary stated level of security on this was a lot higher than the Obama visit. If Dover wants to have national contact opportunities need to have a place for them to go. We are a bigger city than Rochester and Portsmouth and it would be a shame that we can't host an event. Gary said that we can do it if we work together and anticipate as much as possible the impacts. We just want people to know we have tried.

Joe Tenuta: Patti hit it on the head if two weeks' notice can handle that. I like the idea of candidates coming to Dover. Hellenic Center would be a great place for events to take place but ideal to have events here at the McConnell Center. Does the call come to city hall or here? Gary stated because we've host before we get referred from City Hall to call the McConnell Center. The money we receive is revenue for the building which is another part of budget I am also obligated to bring in.

Doug DeDe: Needs to be an acceptable lead time.

Gary Bannon said that we are trying to do the job the best I can with all challenges the tenants and community needs.

Gary stated approximately 500 people attended the event. Gary will communicate the board's thoughts to the next department head meeting.

Judy Zalansky asked Joe Tenuta to chair next month's meeting.

ADJOURN:

Joe Tenuta made motion to adjourn. Motion seconded by Cora Quisumbing-King. Motion passed unanimously. Time adjourned was 7:59pm.