

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Sixth Ward Democratic Organization**  
Southside Wellness Center – Saint Louis, MO  
General Membership Meeting – October 15, 2009 at 7:00pm

Alison Gee called the meeting to order at 7:10pm.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the July 16, 2009 meeting were presented. M/S/A Ira VonHombrecht/Ollie Stewart

**Treasurer's Report**

Mary Sue Rosenthal presented a written report. Taste of the Sixth Ward brought in \$1,935 and cost \$185.64; most of the food and beverages were donated. Bev Buchheit offered congratulations and thanks to all who worked to make the event a success. From January 1, 2009 through October 15, 2009, income totalled \$4,682.00, expenditures totalled \$4,604.13, and cash on hand was \$5,339.35. All PAC reports are available for review at the MEC website. M/S/A John Maxwell/Ollie Stewart.

**Election of Nominating Committee**

Alison read Brandon Davis' resignation letter from the position of Vice Chair. Brandon's work has taken him to Washington, DC, however, he and Brandi continue to maintain a house in the ward. The organization wishes them well. Mary Sue Rosenthal, from the Executive Committee, Ira VonHombrecht, Theresa Hebron, and Mary Kay Christian (in a call placed after the meeting) agreed to serve on the committee. The Nominating Committee is charged with introducing a slate of officers at the November general meeting. Elections are held in January.

**Paul McKee's Northside Project**

Alderman Kacie Starr Triplett provided an overview of the project and its status. It is a complex project that can create and regenerate a large section of north St. Louis including part of the Sixth Ward. It is planned to unfold in four phases and is the biggest project ever proposed in St. Louis. The project has been tainted by controversy due to the purchase of properties under different corporate names and the subsequent deterioration of those properties. In order to move forward, McKee needs several things from the City in order to qualify for a land assemblage credit from the state: specifically a TIF and a redevelopment agreement.

She noted that a meeting with the Mayor and the developer and others had been contentious and demonstrated a lack of trust in McKee to follow through on his plans. This project impacts many wards, specifically the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup>. A vote on a boilerplate redevelopment agreement is scheduled for 10.16.09, however he will not yet get financing. A question is whether the City will guarantee bonds. Kacie noted that this puts the City at considerable risk. The project is eligible for \$95 million in credit from the state.

The project has a 15-20 year timeline and would start in the downtown area of the Sixth Ward. While Kacie recognized the McKee is a man of vision and means with successful projects (Winghaven, Mastercard) under his belt, she noted that there was no guarantee that the credits would go towards the project rather than paying down the land purchase debt. The Aldermen have discussed that a vote for a redevelopment agreement include a requirement that a certain percentage of the state credits go towards infrastructure. 85% of the \$390 million in TIF must go to infrastructure. She noted there is a HUD Committee hearing the week of October 20<sup>th</sup>.

The Board already rejected a request for broad eminent domain rights. Kacie suggested that a meeting be set up for ward residents.

John Maxwell, who attended a McKee presentation, agreed that the plan is impressive and will start with highway infrastructure rebuilding in the downtown Sixth Ward. He noted the promise of 19,000 new jobs, retail and office space construction, however he also noted this is still just an idea.

When asked what residents could do, Kacie suggested:

- Attend meetings
- Read the plan at [www.northsideregeneration.com](http://www.northsideregeneration.com)
- Send opinions to her
- Attend the HUD meeting on October 22<sup>nd</sup> at 10am in Room 208 of City Hall.

### **Health Insurance Reform**

Jessice Byrd, Regional Director for the City and North St. Louis County for Organizing for America (OFA) described OFA and provided an overview of the health care insurance reform that President Obama is advocating as well as the progress of the 5 bills in Congress.

She encouraged members to personally contact their Congressional representatives and asked them to join a canvass/phonebank on Saturday, October 17 from noon to 3pm to recruit phoners for the national Day of Action on November 20<sup>th</sup>. The goal of the Day of Action is to close down the switchboard at the US House.

Bob Burns asked about proposed changes to Medicare and a potential mandate on young people to purchase insurance.

### **Elected Officials Reports**

Beverly Buchheit advertised the Halloween Party being sponsored by STL Young Democrats and the Democratic Central Committee on Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> at Glaziers Hall. She moved that SWDO purchase \$200 in tickets and offer them to any members interested in attending. M/S/A Ira VonHombrecht/Christine Ingrassia.

John reported on the improvements to Water Tower Park.

Alderman Kacie Starr Triplett advertised the Day of Peace rally in the Lafayette Square/Peabody neighborhoods scheduled for Sunday, October 18<sup>th</sup> at 3pm. She mentioned that the City smoking ban bill was to be debated and a vote taken on October 16.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.