

**Business and Economic Sustainability Committee**  
**Southside Vision 20/20**  
NOTES

**February 19, 2019**

ATTENDANCE: Donna Taggart, Gail Mrowinski

STAFF: Anna Smith, Juliana Bolivar

**Networking Event Recap**

Anna explained that over 120 people attended the January 24 networking event, including 25 vendors. The committee reviewed responses to a survey of participants in the event. Twenty-seven individuals answered the survey and results were very positive. As in previous surveys, attendees indicated that they would prefer to have networking events quarterly. The committee discussed how to provide opportunities for networking during times of year when CADCB does not hold events, including partnering with other organizations or connecting Southside businesses to the Southside Arts District's monthly event. Anna mentioned that the survey results indicated that participants were primarily in search of business contacts for potential partnerships rather than potential customers. Juliana mentioned that the networking event was featured in *The Bethlehem Press*.

The committee discussed the date for the next networking event. Gail will check to see if June 20 is available at the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

**Start Your Business Spring 2019**

The committee reviewed statistics for the spring 2019 Start Your Business class, which began with Business Basics on February 7. Forty-two participants have attended thus far with 35% coming from Bethlehem, 33% from Allentown, 17% from Easton, and the remaining 14% from surrounding townships and boroughs. The committee discussed the high number of participants from Allentown and how to fund their attendance at the class, since CADCB does not receive funding for Allentown residents. Staff commented that some attendees from Allentown receive technical assistance from staff in Spanish, while others found the location or day and time more convenient. Donna asked that staff look into opportunities to receive funding to support work with Allentown residents.

**Southside Vision 2019-2020 Proposals and Business Development Funding**

The committee discussed projects for the Southside Vision 2019-2020 program year. The committee agreed to request funding for networking events due to their success and growth over the past two years. The committee also discussed requesting funding once again for the Southside Ambassadors extension. Donna asked if there is a steering committee or advisory group that is charged with developing a long-term plan for the Ambassadors. Anna mentioned that she, Adrienne McNeil, Asher Schiavone, and occasionally Tony Hanna meet with Hector Lopez regularly to discuss priorities and the Ambassadors' work, but this group does not discuss funding sources. Donna recommended that a long-term plan for Ambassadors funding be

developed at some point, although this is a challenging task. Anna will consult with the City to determine what level of funding would be needed for the extension area for 2020.

The committee discussed the ongoing commitment of \$60,000 to CADCB's business development programs. Committee members emphasized the importance of ensuring that this funding is being used to support Southside businesses and entrepreneurs. Anna explained that given current participant trends, approximately 30% of Yari and Juliana's time is spent on Southside businesses. The committee suggested that approximately 30% of Yari and Juliana's salaries be requested for business development programming, and additional funding be requested to support Anna and Estefania's work, which is 100% dedicated to south Bethlehem initiatives, primarily in the areas of housing and community development. Anna agreed to calculate the breakdown between the two areas and provide information to the committee to ensure that time spent on each activity is appropriately accounted for in this year's proposals.

Donna asked if additional funding is needed to support existing south Bethlehem businesses, and whether a survey could be conducted to find out what support existing businesses need. This could be carried out in partnership with the Southside Arts District, or potentially by an intern. Juliana committed to looking into needs of existing businesses and recommending potential funding opportunities for projects.

***The next meeting will be held on March 19 at 8:15 am in the first floor conference room of the Forte building.***