

## ODWNA Association Meeting Minutes

**Date:** Wednesday, February 21, 2024

**Place:** Third Christian Reformed Church, 2400 Winchell Ave, Kalamazoo, MI

**Board Members:**

**Present:** Chris Shook, President; Diana Morton-Thompson, Vice President; Rachel Bennett, Treasurer; Christopher Bovid, Secretary; Peter Kushner, Past President; Barb Miller; Christine Chadderdon; Stephanie Watkins, Paul Scott

**In Attendance:** Approximately 23 people (includes Board members)



- I. Meeting called to order by Chris Shook, President; 7:01 PM
  - A. Announcements:
    - i. The City of Kalamazoo Planning Commission has an opening and is looking for applicants. Copies of the application flyer have been printed off and are available for anyone interested.
    - ii. Introduction of Pastor Agshin of Third Christian Reformed Church (TCRC)
      1. TCRC is awarding
    - iii. Introduction of KDPS Officer Bagley (Community Policing Officer for Zone 7, including Oakland Drive-Winchell Neighborhood)
      1. Larcenies and mail larcenies are picking up in the neighborhood.
      2. KDPS opened up the application for Citizens Academy ([kalamazoopublicsafety.org](http://kalamazoopublicsafety.org), online application on the main page). Basically be a cop for a day, drive police vehicles, etc.
      3. Inquiry from an attendee regarding trending for trespassing/larcenies in garages. Officer Bagley reported that it is often juveniles and often goes in waves.
- II. MINUTES – January 17, 2024 (Chris Bovid, Secretary)
  - A. Minutes from the 11/15/2023 ODWNA meeting are posted on the ODWNA website and some printed copies available for review in the back of the room. Please email the Board of Directors with any questions.
- III. TREASURER'S REPORT - (Rachel Bennett, Treasurer)
  - A. Copies of the ODWNA Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet through January 31, 2024 are available for review in the back of the sanctuary.
  - B. ODWNA Checking Account Balance as of 1/31/2024 was \$7,821.52.
- IV. BUSINESS ITEMS
  - A. Ad-Hoc Committee updates (Stephanie Watkins, ODWNA At-Large Director)
    - I. The Board formed a couple of committees to manage projects for the 2024 year.
      - i. The first is a Bike Week event to coincide with the City's "Bike Show" at Bronson Park
      - ii. The second is a storm water project looking at the storm drains that flow to Woods Lake and looking into an adopt-a-drain program.
      - iii. There is also a flyer from the City about the Neighborhood Betterment Program (successor to the Quick Win Projects program) to empower residents to come up with a project within their neighborhood and have the City help with funding it and/or connecting with funding resources.
  - B. Constitution Review Committee Update (Chris Shook, ODWNA President)
    - I. The Review Committee turned recommendations to the Board.
    - II. The Board has scheduled a specific Constitution review session to go over it more in depth as a board.
  - C. Woods Lake Association (Chris Bovid)
    - I. The City of Kalamazoo Dept. of Parks & Rec's "Winter Golf Classic" on Woods Lake did not take place this year as there was inadequate ice on the lake.
    - II. The Michigan Dept. of Environment, Great Lakes, & Energy (EGLE)'s chloride study of Woods Lake continues (note the red ball in the middle of the lake with monitors attached to its cable underneath). The Kalamazoo Dept. of Parks & Recreation's water quality study of Woods Lake also continues.
      - i. Recent months' measurements show good oxygen levels in the lake down to a depth of about 28' before they drop off. EGLE was unable to obtain chloride data from the lake in January due to ice on the lake that was too thick for a boat and too thin to walk on. EGLE did obtain chloride data from the retention pond showing high salt loads (around 1700mg/L) in the retention pond (ie, not the lake). This was to be expected given the cold and snow in January and the salt spread on Parkview Avenue and other streets in the western part of the watershed.
      - ii. Any questions may be directed to Chris Bovid at [cbovid@gmail.com](mailto:cbovid@gmail.com) as president of the Woods Lake Association.
- V. FEATURED SPEAKER – ODWNA SPEAKER SERIES: Sheena Foster, Business Program Manager; – *Can Do Kalamazoo*: Collaborative Business Incubator & Enterprise Hub: Accelerating Entrepreneurship
  - A. Introduction by Chris Shook
  - B. Can Do Kalamazoo is a 501(c)(3) organization
  - C. Recognizes several barriers to small business in general (social, economic, language, etc.)
  - D. Goal is to keep ear to the ground to listen to the folks in the community and ask them questions about the barriers that exist and how those might be broken down and what opportunities might be opened

## ODWNA Association Meeting Minutes



- E. Overview of Team Members (Lucy Dilley, ED, Deleon Dyson, Operations Director; Sheena Foster, Business Program Manager; Jarrett Blackmon, Marketing Director). Also looking to fill other positions now so feel free to apply.
- F. Started in 2008 with a trailer at the Kalamazoo County Fairgrounds.
- G. 2009 continues to support entrepreneurs at First Baptist Church
  - i. Realized people needed help with licensing, brand development, marketing
- H. 2011 opened commercial kitchen in the People's Food Co-Op
- I. 2015 grows operations and moves to 3501 Lake Street
- J. 2023 changed name from Can-Do Kitchen to Can Do Kalamazoo
  - i. Expanded scope enables it to be the hub and connection point for entrepreneurs and small business owners from all walks of life, in any industry.
- K. 2024 Began move to new facility and became hub for all entrepreneurs (hoping to be in the first weeks in April)
  - i. Realized a lot of the start up cases to starting a food business are similar across business types (need company, need brand, need marketing) so now support all types of businesses rather than just food
  - ii. Helps streamline the process and connects entrepreneurs with helpful resources
- L. Key Services:
  - i. Business Incubator:
    - 1. 12 week incubation program called Can Do Camp – 1.5 hrs/wk discussing aspects of business incubation and development)
    - 2. Business incubation package (5 individual meetings with the entrepreneur to focus on their specific needs)
    - 3. Kitchen Quick Start (allows people to have the bare minimum they need to get started with a commercial kitchen; helps get license, etc.)
  - ii. Resource Hub partners
    - 1. BETA
    - 2. El Concilio
    - 3. Room 35
    - 4. Kalamazoo Startup Center (help with books, paying taxes)
    - 5. United Way (learn about funding opportunities)
  - iii. Work Spaces
    - 1. In new space will include conference rooms with technology for presentations, private long-term office rentals, commercial kitchen space being expanded by 400% to increase number of businesses that can be in the facility at one time
    - 2. Increase access to professionals (City of Kalamazoo will have office hours there to discuss building codes, etc.)
- M. Working with about 20 food businesses in the Can Do kitchen currently serving locations all around the State
- N. Featured clients: "Papa's Brittle" (doesn't stick to your teeth!); Dough Chicks; Brazillian Oven; many others)
- O. Entrepreneurship is not for everyone but everyone should have the opportunity to try it out without losing everything.
- P. Far too often people get in too deep too early and don't have a strong foundation to build upon.
- Q. Can Do Kalamazoo tries to focus on helping those who have been traditionally disenfranchised.
  - i. Committed to disrupting traditional systems and breaking down barriers with an inclusive business ecosystem
  - ii. Supporting underrepresented groups with translation services, sliding scale memberships, reduced rates and culturally responsible guidance
  - iii. Providing evolving spaces for all entrepreneurs in Kalamazoo to thrive.
- R. Community Impact – inclusive programs, valuable resources, and physical spaces foster an environment where all can thrive. From dedicated mentors to meaningful networking connections, Can Do Kalamazoo provides the tools and opportunities to achieve success.
  - i. Entrepreneurs – provide them invaluable support to a thriving community of entrepreneurs fueling their remarkable business journeys
  - ii. Financing – Helped entrepreneurs access financing at all stages, turning their dreams into reality
  - iii. Graduates – numerous businesses have graduated from Can Do Kalamazoo courses and its incubator showing impressive growth and success
- S. Can-Do Growth
  - i. CDK has experienced remarkable growth, expanding its core services for entrepreneurs, including microloans, licensing guidance, food safety sessions, stipends, Can-Do Camp, personalized support, diverse mentors, Kiva trusteeship, and the Can-Do Navigator platform.
- T. New location is at 519 S. Park Street (right behind "Walnut & Park Café"). Owned by KPEP but currently leasing and renovating the space.
  - i. They will hold open houses and host Art Hops and welcome visitors
- U. Invitation to get involved – volunteer, mentor
- V. Q&A:

## ODWNA Association Meeting Minutes

- i. Funding source is primarily grants, some rent from kitchen space, some capital campaign (for funding building build-out)
- ii. Discussed ways to capture information and define success for the organization's entrepreneurs
- iii. Is the term "business" exclusive of nonprofits or is support offered for nonprofits as well? CDK can provide a little help with that but the new "Justice Hub" is usually where nonprofit folks are referred.



### VI. OLD BUSINESS / NEW BUSINESS

- A. Kalamazoo Marathon is returning this year. Dates have gone back to the first weekend in May (May 5) with the same route through the Oakland Drive-Winchell neighborhood.
- B. An attendee spoke about radon seeping up from the ground and having a radon detector. He indicates that his radon detector in Winchell shows high levels regularly and inquired about others' experience mediating it. Many others also have Radon

- VII. Chris Shook, ODWNA President, thanked Steven for his presentation and all those who attended and adjourned the meeting at 7:58 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Christopher Bovid, ODWNA Secretary