

Ed! Board Retreat July 16, 2025

Meeting called to order: 12:04

Board Members/Administration in Attendance: Carrie Hulbert, Jen Lawson, Sheila Cloney, Olivia Brown Latham, Ricky Bobadilla, Connie Zuck Watkins, Liz Morgan, Brandon McKerney, Jen Cullen(phone), Beth Sanger

City of Edmonds Representative in Attendance: Todd Tatum

Guests:

Purpose of Meeting and Report from Sheila: Sheila planned the meeting for the Board to discuss and document the process of the possible reworking of Ed! We will be presenting to City Council on September 16, 2025. The next 2 Ed! Board meetings will present the work plan to the board and vote on next steps. Uncommon Bridges submitted to council a road map to a work plan but not the work plan itself. The Ed! Board is working to establish a work plan or a recommended path forward.

Does the Board have the bandwidth to carry out a work plan? We would like to establish that during this meeting. Sheila reached out to all Council members and there was a significant amount of support for Ed!

BACKGROUND

Council and Mayor Outreach Summary

It's important that we get our suggested work plan to council sooner rather than later given the November election.

Comments/thoughts from council:

- Strong support for Ed
- Shared strategic vision
- We need a realistic plan
- Cliques and feelings of exclusion within the community
- Tourism is top priority
- Do no damage the work done by Ed!

Additional notes from Sheila regarding her conversations with council member:

- Several have an interest in having Hwy 99 understand what we do
- They are committed to supporting Ed.
- Several interested in Main Street and an Executive Dir.

Work plan due by July 2024 and should include:

- Procedural steps for reestablishing the BID
- A Sunset clause
- Proposed method for obtaining ratification from members of the BID
- New Fee Structure

REVIEW THE ISSUES

Sheila's Recommendation: Give council 3 -5 year work plan

1. Outreach and Inclusiveness vs. ratification from members of the BID (remodel vs. tear down)
 - Establish comm zones
 - Gradually introduce more complex comms
 - Expand comm channels
 - Establish a. Feedback loop
 - Monthly board member reports
 - Sheila believes outreach is critical to insulate the BID. Must be able to reach out to people quickly. Establishing zones and zone leaders is one way to do this. Relationship building.
 - Liz spoke about establishing happy hours, Beth would love to see a progressive planned.
 - Sheila proposes that the outreach committee needs to put together a work plan and present it to the board.
2. Sunset Clause
 - Clear consensus during the resolution discussion that the BID should include a sunset clause
 - Requires a periodic re-evaluation of the BID's terms and continued existence.
 - A robust outreach program is critical
 - City Attorney's opinion is that the dissolution of the BID is already established. Todd says that Sunset Clause makes sense. Ed! Is the 2nd lowest funded BID in the state.
3. Unpaid Assessments
 - The city has broad authority to collect unpaid assessments. They code provides for discretion rather than a mandate to collect unpaid assessments.
 - A conversation with the Economic Development or the Finance Director would be the most appropriate next step.
 - Carrie - her understanding is that the city did send businesses to collections. There doesn't appear to be a lot of enforcement. Need to validate if business are being sent to collections.
 - Todd - If the BID is not perceived as a legitimate organization, then going to collections is off the table. City has not been doing collections to his understanding.
 - Sheila - regardless of if we were formed legitimately we are in the position we are to make a recommendation and do the work
4. Assessment Rate Changes
 - Public Hearing is required to change rates
 - Council passes Resolution of Intension
 - If the majority of the businesses protest the change, the process is terminated.
 - Another reason for robust outreach to our neighbors

- Clarifying question asked to city attorney about difference between this approach and R-1543.
- 5. Boundary Expansion/Voluntary Opt-In Contracts
 - Add Businesses to BID Assessment Roll
 - * Resolution of Intention, Notice of Public Hearing
 - * Must be contiguous to the BID
 - * Assessment Cap

OR

- Voluntary arrangements, rather than formal assessments
- Utilize 501c3 for entering into service agreements with outside businesses

Discussion:

- We have approached the businesses at Salish Crossing because it was not unanimous, Ed! Dropped this.
- Fundraising and Grants
 - If Ed! We're to apply for grants, it would in fact be the city of Edmonds applying - on behalf of Ed!
 - Work with Economic Development Director on this issue
 - If the goal is for independent fundraising or broader grant eligibility consider using or partner with a legally separate nonprofit.

City Staff Prioritization

- Limited resources - city is very lean at the moment.
- Major cuts in services

Main Street Affiliate Status

- Edmonds already has an affiliate Main Street Status, just not a Community Status.
- No Council action required to transfer Main Street Affiliate status to a 501c3
- Sheila - Main Street is a great organization and many cities in the state of Washington are Main Street members. Move from affiliate to community. Many cities have both a BID and Main Street Community. This is an option for us. Attorney is willing to transfer the Main Street status over to a 501c3.

Main Street Community Status

- 3-5 year goal
- requires grassroots support
- 501c3
- City of Edmonds would like Hwy 99 to shadow work
- Funding for Executive Director

Affiliate Status Provides:

- Affiliate program provides you with resources from Main Street but no money.

- Slack Channel
- Gig Harbor is where annual conference is.

Discussion:

- Sheila - If we look at Main Street Community as an option, we would want to continue to have a BID as well.
- Olivia - a certain number of buildings in the zone of the Main Street Community, needs to be historical.
- Sheila - Main Streets approach is preserving historical downtown districts.
- If we did Main Street, we would need more resources to help because there is heavy lifting.

501c3 Discussion

- Sheila - 501c3 Established in 2016 under the same name as our BID
- "Ed2" is legally distinct from the City of Edmonds
- Was not created by the city
- The city will not provide advice on this matter as has no formal legal role with respect to its governance, operations, or liability
- Someone affiliated with Ed established this. Ed2 was created and has no affiliation with the city and the city attorney will not provide any advice or comment on the matter.
- Carrie - it was actually established in 2013 and she has been filing annual reports each year.
- The board members were the same as the members that were on the Ed! Board.
- It really hasn't been activated, it lapsed at one point and it had to be reinstated.
- Beresford Booth files annual reports on Ed2's behalf.

NEW QUESTIONS FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION

Capacity

- Do current board members realistically have the capacity to take on more work
- Is the board willing to approve a 3 -5 year work plan on top of exiting committee work
- Without sustained engagement, execution of any plan is at risk - what the board approves needs to be achievable
- We don't have a VP, Incoming President for next year, etc. Do we have a board that is able to put in the hours and work to reestablish the BID?

Todd - it's important that there be support for scrappy entrepreneurs by the city. How does the city support you and invest in this organization and downtown.

Carrie - some vocal support from leaders and the city would go a long way.

Sheila - Is this work the work of the BID or should this fall on the city or city attorney to clean up. If we have a 501c3 then we can just contract with the city. Sheila recommends hiring Carrie to lead us through this work.

Board Recommended Approach in Response to Resolution 1543

- We do not feel we require a reestablishment of the BID based on the fact that the city Attorney has confirmed that we were legally established.
- We do agree there are areas that need to be established, optimized and improved.
- Adopt 3- 5 year work plan to address issues and hire a project manager to manage the work due to capacity.
 - Outreach & Inclusiveness work
 - Establish a Sunset Clause based on general consensus
 - Review possible increase in assessments and collection of outstanding assessments (CPI)
 - Partner with an established Main Street Community
 - Explore Boundary Expansion
- We ask for Council's full support and that they will not pursue disbandment of the BID.
- If the above is not approved by council, we will disband the BID
- Important that we establish with Council our value as well as the impact that negativity and added work has on our board and our members.

We need to look at our budget to see if we can reallocate funds to increase project manager work.

Meeting Adjourned: 3:45