

Minutes
Organization & Finance Committee
May 19, 2010, 7:00 p.m. (City Hall)

I. Call to Order

Call to order at 7:02 p.m.

II. Attendance

Jim, Joel, Julie, Paige, Bill, Georgie, Patrick

Visitor: Audrey VanSlambrouck

Excused: Clayton

III. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Joel, second by Paige, to approve the March meeting minutes. All in favor.

IV. Director's Report

Patrick reported that the Block Party went very well—approximately 1,000 people attended, and over 200 classic cars were in the downtown. He has heard nothing but positive feedback. Joel noted that the Ionia Sentinel Standard ran a nice article on the event—he circulated a copy with the committee.

Patrick reported that Portland Pay Day coming up – 18 businesses have signed up so far; some from last year are not taking part, but others have added.

Patrick reported that he is working with Bernie Pelc to apply for CDBG funds for the opera house facade; because Bernie is doing a great deal of internal work, this will count as the match. Kelly Larson has prepared designs, which Patrick will submit to MEDC tomorrow. Jim asked if Bernie plans to apply for the DDA façade grant (3 storefronts at \$5,000 each). The committee discussed the fact that CDBG funds are based on job creation, but this shouldn't be a problem because Bernie plans to create the jobs. Jim asked about tax credits for historic restoration—Patrick didn't have the precise numbers, but Kelly and Bernie are aware of this and are making sure they're doing all that's necessary.

V. Work Plan Review & Update

a. Objective 1 – Conduct PR

Project 1 – Press releases

Julie reported that she has not heard whether Tom Thelen will run the series in the R&O. Patrick will ask him if he'll consider running it.

Project 2 – Website

Patrick has updated the site as suggested at our last meeting; he has updated the meeting schedules and added slide show from the Block Party. We've had thousands of hits—probably because of the Block Party, based on the pattern he saw. He has included all known downtown events on the website calendar and will add the Memorial Day parade, as well.

Project 3 – Facebook, etc.

Paige circulated her calendar for June. She reported we're up by 20 more people; 15 added the page right around the time of the block party. This brings us to 245 fans, so the January 2011 goal of 300 looks attainable. She will start promoting the farmers'

market, Thursdays on the Grand, the Cruise-a-Thong, Third Fridays, Portland Pay Day, and the Memorial Day parade—anything that potentially brings people downtown.

Project 4 – On the Street

Julie discussed the extra charges with Tom Dempsey and was assured that we have not been charged extra in May. She reported that the newsletter was two pages in some early months, so this may explain why the figures that Patrick circulated last month showed an extra charge—those figures were from several years ago. In light of this information, Julie submitted a May newsletter.

Joel will be selling ads on Friday; he doesn't see any problem selling the ads.

Bill did not get a chance to look at Constant Contact.

Project 5 – Main Street Gab

Julie plans to distribute the Gab in June. She asked for submissions as soon as possible.

Project 6 – Manager Articles

Patrick will have another to Julie on Monday—the power of volunteering in a Main Street community. Julie asked about data comparing cities our size with respect to economic growth. Jim suggested looking at façade programs and checking with MSHDA and legislators about money distributed to cities this size.

Project 7 – N/A

b. Objective 2 – Develop a funding plan

Project 1 – Funding plan

Julie and Georgie have not been able to make much progress on this but will try to make progress by next month.

Project 2 – Oktoberfest

Joel reported that his committee was waiting until the Block Party was over to move forward (so they wouldn't interfere with those efforts). James Espinoza is interested in helping with this. They are looking at ways to do a car show, although the Portland Cruisers won't come out at that time of year because of the chance of rain.

Project 3 – Tag Sale

c. Objective 3 – Volunteer recruitment & retention

Project 1 – Annual Event

The annual event will be held on July 29, at 6:00 pm, at the band shell at Two Rivers Park. The committee discussed the following:

Julie distributed an invitation. Suggestions were discussed; Julie will modify the design and distribute via the committee chairs.

Paige contacted Frosty Boy about a door prize donation and has asked an acquaintance about using a tent.

Georgie will take care of the food.

The committee discussed a number of possible speakers: Georgie suggested Kelly Larson or Stacy Krause; Jim suggested Joe Borstrom; Joel suggested Brian Calley; Julie will check with Cooley because they have a strong volunteerism program; Julie suggested

Jamie Shriner-Hooper. The committee will think about it for two more weeks and will get ideas to Julie; then a decision will be made and speakers contacted for availability.

Patrick reported that he would like to add a Manager's Award – he will take care of the certificate and award himself.

Project 2 – Recruitment and Retention Manual

This project is still on hold, pending receipt of Todd Barman's report. Julie has distributed her notes from Todd's verbal report. Patrick talked to him twice in Oklahoma City. Julie suggested that Patrick send her report to Todd. This may save him some time.

Project 3 - Training

Julie will follow up with Clayton—he's putting story board together.

VI. 2010-2011 Work Plan

No report.

VII. Member Comments

a. Volunteer hours

Joel –5; Jim – 2 ; Julie –6; Georgie – 3; Bill – 1; Paige – 3

Other comments - None

VIII. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on June 16, 2010, 7:00 p.m., City Hall

IX. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.