

**Minutes**  
**Organization & Finance Committee**  
**July 15, 2009, 7:00 p.m. (City Hall)**

**I. Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

**II. Attendance**

Julie, Jim, Joel, Lisa, Jamie Schriener-Hooper, Patrick  
Julie introduced our newest member, Lisa Zunk. Lisa will be working, initially, on our Facebook page.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

Joel moved w/ Jim's support to approve the June minutes; approved.

**IV. Report from Jamie Schriener-Hooper**

Jamie thanked the committee for having her and explained that she is attending O&F committee meetings for all Michigan Main Street communities. She reminded the committee that she is here as a resource for our committee and is happy to help out. Joel asked for Jamie's observations from other communities; she discussed a number of MS communities' summer festivals. She also reported that the program had 17 associate-level communities (a two-year program) last year. Two of those completed and achieved "Selected" level (Owosso and Mt. Pleasant) after one year. Seven more came on as Associate-level last year. Fifteen communities are now at Selected or Master level. Julie asked whether MSHDA is afraid of oversaturation, but Jamie explained that only four communities can enter the program at the Selected level each year, so this is not likely to become a problem for some time, if ever. Patrick repeated that he would like us to be the first Great American Main Street from Michigan.

**V. Director's Report**

Patrick congratulated the committee on its part in Portland achieving accreditation and discussed his goal of Portland becoming the first Great American Main Street. Patrick reported that we are getting excellent press in Portland on all of our events, activities, trainings, etc. We also now have a business listing on our website. We are already starting to apply what we learned in Calumet. Patrick will be attending training in Oakland County this Friday on "Place-Based Assets." Oktoberfest is coming along—Patrick reported that the VFW will be cooking on Saturday night. Jim suggested that Patrick stay in close touch with the Chamber of Commerce to ensure that they don't see us as any kind of competition. The committee discussed Riverfest and its effect on downtown businesses. A number of businesses felt that moving Riverfest to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend was a bad idea for a number of reasons, including (1) a limited number of residents stay in Portland that weekend, (2) many businesses have come to appreciate having a holiday off, and (3) this festival may interfere with long-established events in other area communities, creating a perception that Portland is interfering with (rather than supporting) its neighbors. Joel reported that he has talked with the Chamber president about their various requests for MS financial and volunteer-based support. He explained that the Chamber needs to submit these requests before the MS board retreat in November, so decisions can be made and workplans can be created accordingly for the upcoming year.

**VI. Work Plan Review & Update**

a. *Objective 1 - Conduct public relations for Main Street.*

Project 1 – We’re making excellent progress with **press releases**. We need to encourage committee chairs and members to write more press releases. Patrick is doing a great job of following policy by sending all releases to Julie for editing and documenting. The committee discussed the importance of getting back to the list of news releases and guest columns, to ensure ongoing media coverage.

Project 2 – Patrick reported that the most important things we need are pictures, descriptions, reciprocal links, and other tools that will raise our site on the search engines. Rush is working with Doug Snitgen on the Calumet training issues; Patrick, Rush, and Doug will work together on this, so our site is upgraded as Rush gets the PCAC site updated. The committee discussed a variety of resources that we will eventually have on the site. The committee determined that its ongoing focus satisfies our workplan quarterly evaluation.

Projects 3 – Lisa reported that she’s been looking at the differences between fan pages and group pages and asked why not have both? Jamie thought this might be a good idea—to overcome the weaknesses and take advantage of the strengths of each. Patrick will set up a Flickr account where we can upload our MS photos for Lisa, Doug, and others to use for marketing. Lisa suggested exploring Twitter. Jamie noted that Facebook and Twitter can be linked. Patrick suggested looking into blogspot. Lisa will make recommendations next month on the use of Twitter.

Projects 4&5 – **Newsletters** are on target. Main Street Gab is due this month. The committee discussed adding pages to the newsletter and starting to charge for ads or other mentions. Julie submitted figures for increasing the number of pages and adding advertising in “On the Street” (appended to these minutes); the committee agree to limit advertising to 25% of the newsletter. Focus will be the \$15 ads. Committee will study the numbers and make recommendations within the next couple of weeks. Jamie will gather other communities’ newsletters and forward them to Julie. The committee will also comment on what content we want to increase. Jim suggested exploring some contests (e.g., printing a few newsletters on different paper—the recipient wins a prize from a downtown business).

Project 6 – Patrick submitted the most recent Manager’s column this week. Julie suggested targeting the community more than the businesses with these articles and suggested printing some of the state’s blog entries (with Joe’s permission).

Project 7 – The event is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on August 27. Malcolm will be back in the states a few weeks before the event. The committee brainstormed on how to make this a volunteer-recruitment event. Patrick suggested take-aways; Jamie suggested setting up a tent/canopy for each committee w/ projects, photos, volunteer sign-up sheet, etc.; suggested having an entry form for a special prize drawing to be held at the Pay Day drawing event.

b. *Objective 2 – Main Street funding*

Project 1 – Julie and Malcolm will continue to work on this when Malcolm returns in August.

Project 2 – Joel reported that sponsorships are coming in. Don’t have the main sponsor yet, but they’re working on it. They are working with radio stations, etc. and have a media sponsor lined up. Licensing, insurance, etc. are in process. Patrick reported that

Duff and Chadwick are drink-ticket sponsors and that Fleis and VandenBrink are entrance-ticket sponsors. Lisa suggested shirt sponsors—their logo will be on the shirt. Patrick reported on the sponsorship levels for shirts. Joel discussed the 5K “Big Beer Run”—they’re still fine-tuning the route. Jamie suggested working with Playmakers in Lansing, who will help lay out the route, post it on their website, etc. Jamie urged the committee to get the beer supplier to do a sponsorship. Patrick noted that this was impossible in Iron Mountain, but Jamie reported that companies in this area commonly sponsor events like ours. Joel has been promised electricity and water at the event site.

c. *Objective 3 – Volunteer recruitment and training*

Project 1: No action at this time on the **annual volunteer recognition** event, but Julie and Malcolm are talking about next year’s event. The committee discussed changing this to the July quarterly forum. All agreed. April 2010 will, therefore, be a regular training, and the volunteer-recognition event will be our summer quarterly event.

Project 2: Jim and Julie will continue to work on the manual. The committee discussed the training held on June 23, at 6:00 p.m. with Janelle Hill. The concepts she discussed will be part of the recruitment manual.

Project 3: The committee discussed the quarterly forum plans and how to do a better job with this. Julie covered obstacles. Committee will get back with Julie within two weeks on how this should be revamped and possible dates for the Calumet training, which needs to be rescheduled. Days to avoid: Downtown conference on Sept 15/16. The next MS quarterly training is on December 8/9 in Manistee.

## VII. Member Comments

a. Volunteer hours

- i. Joel – 6
- ii. Jim – 4
- iii. Malcolm - 0
- iv. Julie – 15
- v. Mary Ellen – 2
- vi. Holly – 0
- vii. Aaron – 0
- viii. Rush – 0
- ix. Nikki Badgero – 4
- x. Lisa - 3

Total O&F: 34 hours

b. Other comments.

## VIII. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on August 19, 2009, 7:00 p.m., City Hall

## IX. Adjourned

Meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.