

HIGHLAND MAIN STREET MEETING
Highland Town Hall- Highland, Indiana 46322
February 6, 2020 MINUTES

Call to Order

At 6:32 PM, the Highland Main Street (HMS) meeting was called to order by President Dawn Diamantopoulos at Highland Town Hall, 3333 Ridge Road in Highland, Indiana.

Roll Call:

The following were present: Board Members Dawn Diamantopoulos, Lola McKay, Renee Reinhart, Teri Yovkovich, Mary Wells, Kellie Shelton, Kali Rasala, Redevelopment Director Kathy DeGuilio-Fox, Town Council Liaison Roger Sheeman and Redevelopment Assistant Lance Ryskamp. Board Member Doug Van Ramshorst arrived during Item #7 (Discussion) on the agenda. Board Members Emily Foreit, Marie Russo, Aubrey Velasquez, Julie Larson, and Mary Ellis were absent. Also present was Michael Blejski, who arrived during Item #3A (Community Garden) of the agenda.

Minutes:

Lola McKay made a motion, seconded by Teri Yovkovich, to approve minutes from January 9, 2020 meeting. The motion passed on a voice vote 7-0.

Community Garden Committee

The Board reviewed the Community Garden Committee meeting minutes of January 28th, provided by Michael Blejski. Dawn Diamantopoulos advised the Board that two additional beds will be created across the back (north) side of lot, and, with permission of the neighboring property to the east, beans will be planted along the east side of the site. Renee Reinhart advised that both Zandstra's Greenhouse and Scheeringa's have agreed to allow customers to purchase plants in order to donate them to the Community Garden. She also advised that she and Michael Blejski will be meeting soon with Purdue Extension, in order to enlist their assistance. She also said that Tri-Creek Lumber would be willing to provide wood for the new bed.

Kali Rasala indicated that she would speak with Mont Handley, of Purdue Northwest, to see if he possibly would donate pit moss for the garden. She explained that pit moss was more environmentally friendly than peat moss and it has no spores(?) which makes it a better alternative. The Redevelopment Assistant updated the Board that an additional appropriation in the amount of the remaining unspent donations from 2019 was approved, but indicated that the Town was awaiting approval from the State that would be needed to access those funds for 2020. He said he would advise the committee when the State approval took place.

Councilman Sheeman asked about distribution of the produce in 2019. Dawn Diamantopoulos said that no produce was thrown out and with the exception of some items given for the demonstration class by Mrs. Dornberg's Culinary Experience, food was distributed to families identified through the Highland school system. Renee Reinhart said that this year Purdue Extension could help in identifying distribution needs. Councilman Sheeman indicated that St. James Church holds a food bank every Friday, which might benefit from access to the garden produce. Director DeGuilio-Fox advised the Board that she had spoken to Highland Police Chief Pete Hojnicki and that the garden could help in "Shop With A Cop" program that Highland participates in.

Teri Yovkovich asked Michael Blejski for clarification as to the what type of assistance the committee was seeking from Sip Coffee House 2 for the proposed Mother's Day event. He indicated containers of tea, and Teri Yovkovich said that Sip would assist. Dawn Diamantopoulos advised the Board that all of the possible events listed in the Committee's meeting minutes were just ideas and that nothing was finalized.

Events Committee

Car Cruise

The Board reviewed the Redevelopment Assistant's report as to action items taken on the 2020 Car Cruise to date. He advised the Board that he had confirmed that the insurance costs for this year's event would be the same as in 2019. The Board reviewed the draft sponsorship letter and the changes made from the 2019 version. The consensus of the Board was that the application was fine as presented and the Redevelopment Assistant said he would begin sending them to past and prospective new sponsors in the coming days.

Last Call For Summer

The Board reviewed the Redevelopment Assistant's report as to action items taken on the 2020 event to date. The Board then discussed a proposal to have Duke Tumatote perform a 90-minute set at a cost of \$2000, as the event's headliner. Councilman Sheeman indicated that the Council of Community Events had been considering having Duke Tumatote perform at the 4th of July Festival and possible seeking sponsorships for their events. Following discussion on the issue, Kellie Shelton made a motion to have Duke Tumatote perform at the 2020 Last Call For Summer. Lola McKay seconded the motion, which passed on a voice vote 7-0.

Festival of the Trail

Dawn Diamantopoulos reported on the rebranding of the Festival of the Trail, including a name change to Makers' Market, an extension of hours, a revised list of proposed types of vendors, maintaining 2019 booth fee prices, and adoption of an event logo created by artist Jessica Pignotti. A discussion ensued on the exact wording and punctuation of the event name, and Mary Wells indicated that she would talk to Ms. Pignotti about creating a color version of logo, as well as a design of "I'm a Vendor At" logo for publicity purposes. Teri Yovkovich made a motion to change the event date to September 26th and incorporate changes (name, hours, vendor types, logo and fees) proposed by the Event Committee. The motion was seconded by Kali Rasala and passed on a voice vote 7-0. The Redevelopment Assistant asked the Board whether they wished to find out whether Zandstra's Farm and Greenhouse would be willing to once again serve as the alternate site, in the event of bad weather. The consensus of the Board was that they wanted to use Zandstra's again, if they were willing.

Art Committee

Director DeGuilio-Fox said she would like to develop a self-guided art and sculpture through downtown. A discussion ensued about working with a marketing consultant that is currently doing work for the Redevelopment Department and the possibility that such a brochure could be distributed at the South Shore CVA Welcome Center on Kennedy Avenue. Dawn Diamantopoulos said that the Art Committee would meet soon to begin to discuss what type of information needs to be compiled for the various murals. Director DeGuilio-Fox noted that a photograph of the Jewett Street Mural Alcove was currently being used on the State of Indiana's website on one of the pages used by the state's Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA).

Downtown Promotions Committee

There was an update about the Redevelopment Department's ongoing downtown banner program. It was reported that the banners were now up and in place. Councilman Sheeman said that discussions are ongoing at the Town Council on developing a banner policy for downtown and sites along Kennedy Avenue. A discussion ensued as to how long business banners would be up and the possible uses of poles along Kennedy Avenue and around the Highland High School campus, if new banner brackets were to be purchased.

Design/ Aesthetics & Historic Preservation Committee

No report.

Discussion

Councilman Sheeman discussed with the Board a street art project that he had seen in a recent conference presentation and the possibility of replicating something similar to it in Highland. The project, which originated in Germany several years ago, involved the creation and placement of sets of eyeballs fixed in various locations. He suggested that this type of project could be developed and perhaps tied to some type of marketing theme for the town. The Redevelopment Commission Assistant indicated that he had researched the art project and could provide the Board with a link to the online article that he found.

Doug Van Ramshorst re-introduced the issue of hiring Duke Tumatoe for the Last Call For Summer event. A lengthy discussion ensued between Board members, Redevelopment Director DeGuilio-Fox and Councilman Sheeman on several topics, including whether to move forward with the hire; other possible alternatives and the costs associated; the merits of original music versus cover songs; and, whether the Board members should come to the March meeting with lists of possible performers and re-visit the matter. During the discussion, Board member Doug Van Ramshorst left the meeting. Director DeGuilio-Fox stressed that the event needs to draw more people and Councilman Sheeman said the event needed to be improved and everyone should work together. Dawn Diamantopoulos stated that the Board does do post-event reviews, in order to find areas to improve. At the end of the discussion, the consensus of the Board was to re-visit the issue at the March meeting, with members bringing ideas and specific performers for consideration. No further action was to be taken on hiring Duke Tumatoe at this time.

Dawn Diamantopoulos stated that she wanted to work on a draft letter for distribution to downtown restaurants to begin work on the new restaurant event included in the 2020 Action Plan. She added that, when completed, she would forward the draft to Director DeGuilio-Fox.

Councilman Sheeman stated that he would like to reach out to all downtown business owners in order to attract future Main Street Board members, as well as to encourage their support, either in-kind or with monetary donations, to assist Highland Main Street's efforts.

Adjournment

With no further business, Lola McKay made a motion, seconded by Renee Reinhart, to adjourn. It passed on a voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM.