

HIGHLAND MAIN STREET MEETING
Town of Highland 3333 Ridge Road Highland, Indiana 46322
February 6, 2014 MINUTES

Call to Order

At 7:35 PM, the Highland Main Street (HMS) meeting was called to order by President Bridget DeYoung in the Upper Conference Room of the Highland Municipal building located at 3333 Ridge Road.

Roll Call:

The following members of the 2013 Highland Main Street Board were present: Bridget DeYoung, Carole Kutcka, Shirley Frankiewicz, Tom Frankiewicz, Dan Dunn, Tracy Oprea, Kim Grasz, Dawn Diamantopoulos, Darlene Barron, and Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro. Members Dan Vassar, Robert Breitweiser, George VandeWerken, Vickie Rust, Cindy Rivera, Allencia Ballard, Sean Kingston, were absent. Others present included Mario DeGeorge, Kathy Grimler, Kathy Sudac, and Ula Davitt.

HMS

Bridget reviewed the mission of Highland Main Street because of the number of new volunteers that attended. She gave a brief background of the organization and welcomed all. She asked each person to introduce themselves, talk about how they came to attend the HMS meeting, and what their interests or passions were for the town.

Minutes:

HMS minutes from May 2, 2013, June 6, 2013, July 11, 2013, August 1, 2013, September 5, 2013, October 10, 2013, November 7, 2013, December 5, 2013 and January 9, 2014 were reviewed. Shirley made a motion to approve all of the minutes from May 2, 2013 to January 9, 2014. Dan seconded the motion. By a voice vote, minutes were approved.

Façade Improvement Grant Program

No other projects are proposed at this time although a number of property owners have expressed interest in the program.

Festival of the Trail

At the December meeting, Bridget stated that she would like to set up a planning meeting for 2014's Festival of the Trail. Dawn, Carol, Mario, Tracy, Kim, and Kathy Sudac expressed interest in planning the Festival this year. Bridget will send out some dates and times for a meeting and ask each person to respond. She will set up a date and time the majority can attend.

Art in the Downtown

Bridget would like more ideas about how to bring art into the downtown. She will be looking for ideas from Dawn, Kathy Grimler, Ula, and Carol Kutcka. Dawn is the Art Curator for Highland Main Street and is the chair of the Art Committee. Again, Bridget will send out some dates and times for a meeting and ask each to respond.

Town Theatre

Cecile provided an update on the theatre building. Because of the numerous non-ADA compliant issues, the Commission is studying the possibility of acquiring the two buildings North of the Town Theatre. Appraisals are currently being performed. Another issue that has arisen is asbestos. Until the architect is able to expose the area above the ceiling, it is unknown whether or not there is asbestos. If it is found, it could be an additional costly expense.

Bridget reported that an artist, Robert Brasher, has volunteered to provide the group with a limited amount of prints of the theatre for members to sell as a fund raiser. She will let the group know when they will become available with a size and price list.

Dan provided the group with a history of what has been accomplished so far with the goals. He talked about the theatre as a cultural center for the town that will create partnerships with businesses for an economic and cultural win-win situation. He also stated that it is important for the town to retain ownership of the building to ensure the sustainability of the building, as well as for operations. He asked the members to review the list of Non-Recurring Expenses that have been updated from the last meeting he attended. Additions suggested included asbestos testing and removal, if necessary, lead remediation, if necessary, and a fire protection system (sprinkler system). Under the non-construction expenses, costs include an IT system, marketing for fundraising, stage lighting system, sound system (including an acoustic system), a curtain system, and stage rails.

Members talked about the sustainability, not only of the building, but of the operations. At the April 2014 meeting of HMS, Dan will explore the items that will need some review and discussion by the group including 1) how to sustain the program so that it doesn't create a deficit in the town's budget and 2) how to create revenue on an on-going basis for the theatre.

Cecile also mentioned that the group needs to formulate a fundraising committee for the theatre to plan for present and future programming, and for future maintenance of the building. Dan will also explore those ideas with the members at the April 2014 HMS meeting.

Members raised questions regarding programming, events, and seating.

Winter Art Display (formerly a Fall Art Display)

Joanna Smith is having a problem finding enough children drawings to place in the windows of downtown businesses. Dawn offered to contact Joanna with suggestions.

Holiday Decorating Committee

Tom and Shirley reported that they would like to have three new areas to decorate for the 2014 holiday season: 1) the little gazebo area on Kennedy Avenue, 2) evergreen trees across from the bike trail on Highway Avenue, and 3) near the gateway sign on North Indianapolis Boulevard, which will be completed in the Spring. They have investigated the prices for strings of lights and believe that they can provide enough lighting for all three projects for around \$6,000.00. Ula suggested lighting on the Ridge Road overpass on Kennedy Avenue. She will draw some concepts for the group to review.

Nature Committee

Darlene and Carole stated that they are working with a member of the Highland Community Foundation to write a grant from Legacy Foundation to acquire a bench, binoculars (ADA accessible), signage, and brochures for the levee at the Rookery. She reported that the Park Department has in its new five year plan, two trails meeting at the Rookery area. Cecile will contact NIPSCO and the Little Calumet River Commission representatives for a meeting to update them on the grant and to encourage their participation in providing adequate access. Darlene also mentioned an area near the Rookery has gates and could provide access for those with physical challenges, if the gates were removed. Cecile will talk to the Public Works Director and the Park Superintendent regarding that access point.

Fitness Committee

Due to family illness, Sean could not be at the meeting. An update will be presented at the next meeting.

Car Cruise

Mario stated that he and Cecile met with John Golfis, the new owner of Blue Top Restaurant and are planning a car cruise for May 30, 2014. Cecile mentioned that another group is interested in having a car show on May 1, 2014 and that both groups should meet to see if there is any way to combine the two events. She will contact both groups to set up a time to meet.

Goals for 2014

Due to time constraints, members did not review the goals at the meeting. They were asked to review the goals, and let Cecile or Bridget know if they would like to add to the goals, especially if they have an interest in a particular area.

Adjournment

Dan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Shirley seconded the motion. Motion passed by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:55PM.