



September Board Meeting Minutes | 9/17/2019, 8AM

Present: Jen Usher, Steve Peters, Nikki Hindman, Betsy Franzoni, Janelle Howard, Bill Gillam, Jim Sabataseo, Hilary McCoy, Katy Mungler, Tammy Landon, Shannon Poole

Absent: Rebecca Bounadonna, John Zawistoski, Michelle Delpha, Eddie Ryan

Meeting was called to order by President Elect Shannon Poole at 8:10 am.

A motion was made to approve the August meeting minutes by Jim Sabataseo . Motion was seconded by Betsy Franzoni. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report:

Treasurer Eddie Ryan was absent so reports for August were postponed until September.

Committee Reports:

Streetscape:

- Mural updates:
 - Kathryn added two giraffes on the corner of Merchants Row and West Street
 - We've reached out to Mark Foley to see when he is getting a lift to touch up the batman mural so Oliver can fix the West Street mural.
- Arthur is coordinating getting the hanging baskets down and get the corn stalks up on the light poles for fall.
- Bump outs are nearly complete on West Street.
- Old bump outs are still a mess - we offered to take care of at least one of the bump outs in hopes that other organizations will volunteer.

Marketing: Nikki

- VPR offered to come on as a Silver Sponsor (\$2,500) and is putting together a package.
- Put out trash can ads and digital ads for the Sip + Shop.
- Garden Club rack card is in progress.

Events: Nikki & Steve

- Fall Sip + Shop is Thursday, October 3rd. Sent out vendor and merchant invites.
- Street Party feedback
 - We plan to send out a follow up survey this month.
 - Seems to be increasingly more difficult for our businesses to set up at these events, which causes us to have to bring in more games, vendors, etc. to fill the street. We did decided the event is worthwhile to keep because of the draw of people into downtown, especially onto Merchants Row.
 - Reaching out to more businesses in Rutland County in the future.

Business Development: Steve and Tammy

- The Curiosity Shop revoked their application.
- Lori LaPenna, owner of Downtown Gentlemen's Salon, is moving and expanding into a new space on Merchants Row. She's renovating the building and putting new windows in the front, new flooring, framing, etc. Lori applied for \$2,000 to help with the cost of \$11,000 for new windows in the front of the building.
 - Motion to approve: Betsy, Second: Katye. Motion passes.
- Jo Muscatello, owner of Pip's and Modern Cleaner's, applied for a grant to recoup costs for repainting the facade of the building, which looks much better. Requested \$2,000.
 - Motion to approve: Jim Sabatano, Second: Jen Usher. Motion passes.
- We paid out the grants to Pyramid Holistic Wellness Center and True Yoga this month, which both made facade improvements over the past two weeks.

Executive Director Update:

- Mike Gauthier resigned from the RRA Board and will no longer be our liaison.
- Steve attended the Downtown Retreat in Grand Isle last week. Several downtowns are in the middle of construction, seem to be having trouble with panhandling. There's a new downtown toolbox with resources for all the designated districts to use.
- Last week Steve went with Brennan to the mall to recruit businesses to move downtown because the mall is closing.
 - Mountain Man Jewelry is moving downtown, Rutland Collectibles seemed interested. Shoe Department seemed possibly interested. Christopher Banks is moving across the street. Old Navy didn't seem interested, and The Draught Room wasn't sure they were going to continue to be in business.
 - VT Digger ran an interesting piece on the mall closure, which Steve is quoted in.
- Steve is still continuing to review market study proposals and narrowed down the list to 4 possibilities - the committee will be making a final decision on Friday.

Old Business: None**New Business:**

- Jen Usher (Make it Sew) is doing a cross promotion with Phoenix Books for Book Month in October. People can take a photo of the window and take it to Phoenix to enter a contest to win an illustrated copy of the book.

BOA Update: Bill Gillam

- Opportunity for city to lease CSJ auditorium and fields.
- Crosswalks were discussed, it's going to the traffic safety committee meeting on Friday.
- Planning Commission is looking to steer downtown property owners to develop more housing in the area.

Meeting adjourned at: 8:53. Next meeting is 10/15/19 at 8am.