

Downtown Committee

Meeting Minutes 1.3.2023

Present: Mr. Kevin Dumas, Town Manager, Chair, Ms. Eileen Cusack, Mr. Jack Cooney, Mr. Neil Rhein and Mr. George Pantos. Mr. Chris Jackson arrived at 6:36pm

Not present: Ms. Martha O'Connell

Guests: Mr. Josh Reinke, DPW Director and Mr. Chris McDermott, Economic Development Director, Ms. Beth Ashman Collins

Minutes: Sharon Varricchione

1. **Call to Order:** The Downtown Committee was called to order at 6:35PM by Mr. Dumas. Mr. Dumas wished everyone a Happy New Year!
2. **Acceptance of Minutes from October 4, 2022:**
Motion: To adopt the meeting minutes of October 4, 2022.
Passes 5:0 (Pantos/Cooney)
3. **Downtown Projects:**

a. **Harry Chase Place Update:**

Mr. Dumas mentioned that he is reviewing the Harry Chase Place designs and would share them with the Mansfield Historical Society and the Downtown Committee. He also discussed how they are working on construction bids and is hoping to have construction start this Summer.

b. **Cigarette receptacle containers:**

Mr. Reinke told the Committee that two cigarette receptacles had been installed, one in the Harry Chase Place area and one in the Savannah nails area. Mr. Dumas mentioned that Ms. Martha O'Connell and Mr. Reinke should meet with Savannah nails to make them aware. Mr. Cooney asked when they were installed and Mr. Reinke stated last November, 2022.

Additional ideas/efforts

a. **Traffic Box Locations:**

Mr. Dumas started the discussion by saying that they need to find artists interested in doing the artwork for the traffic box wraps. Mr. Dumas suggested that Ms. Cusack reach out to Mim Brooks Fawcett, the Executive Director and Chief Curator from the Attleboro Arts Museum to find out how they found their artists and the company they used to wrap the traffic boxes. Ms. Cusack stated she would also reach out

to the High School too. The Committee discussed starting off with wrapping one to two traffic boxes first. Mr. Dumas stated to start off with the Chauncy Street @ North Main Street/Thomas Street location, and then the North/South Main Street @ West/East St. location. Ms. Collins suggested we have a template that the artists could use which would also explain the connection to the art. Mr. Cooney asked about cost and Mr. Dumas thought that it was no too expensive. The wrapping of the art would be paid but the artist would not. Ms. Cusack stated that the artists could have bragging rights and perhaps could also be hung up in the Mansfield Arts Center Gallery. Mr. Dumas said we can also recognize the artists at a Select Board meeting. Mr. Rhein stated that a 250th theme could be used for the Common.

b. Seasonal Events:

Mr. Dumas spoke about having a smaller event over the Summer where you would block off the street but not as big as the Fall Festival. Mr. Pantos offered that we should do something like bingo for the elderly. Mr. Dumas said it could be a free night for the elderly and Mr. Pantos said maybe it could be held in the High School gym. Mr. Cooney inquired about the COA and perhaps they could use the Library open room for bingo night with a nice dinner. Mr. Rhein talked about his past events project sheet and then also inquired about an integrated electric events calendar that would show all the fun events that are happening in town. Mr. Dumas said we should talk about how that would work.

Mr. Rhein then mentioned the "Main streets" organization and Small-Town Business Association or maybe a more robust organization to help recruit businesses and events. Mr. Dumas mentioned that Family Fun Night is run by Caitlin Barrows and is quite a bit of work so the Town had been a little more involved with supporting this event like supplying the porter potties. Mr. Pantos offered that he used to be involved with the Downtown Associations but he hasn't gotten any emails or notifications regarding anything in the last few years.

Mr. Dumas then talked about possible wooden planters and the Committee mentioned there's a gardening group too that may handle that. Mr. Dumas then mentioned that there were more opportunities for signage that they had not finished before Mr. Reinke came. Mr. Reinke will look into Lee's emails/files to see if he can locate this list.

Mr. Rhein suggested to do more events. Mr. Dumas spoke about how we currently have movie and band nights every other Wednesday in the Summer and then talked about using the Town paddle boats too. Mr. Rhein and Mr. Jackson shared that they thought the paddle boats would be a great idea. Mr. Reinke added that they could set up the water fire stations too at Fulton's Pond. Mr. Dumas reiterated that these types of events are time consuming and stated how the bigger Fall Festival event was intense and takes a lot of time and effort to pull it off. Mr. Cooney said the event was really well received. Ms. Cusack asked if we picked a date for this year's Fall Festival. Mr. Dumas suggested September 30th and will look into seeing if that dates possible. Mr. Dumas added that he still wanted to keep it free for the families and that Mr. McDermott the Economic Development Director would still work on sponsorships this year.

Mr. Pantos suggested to do a 5k and Mr. Rhein suggested that Parks and Red could manage smaller events like that. Mr. Dumas explained that they are understaffed and it's even hard for Park and Rec to get help for their Summer camp. He then suggested that maybe he could work with Ms. Gurnon for a Summer activity for one night. It would be one of those events that we do quietly where we don't go over the top and where we don't annoy the neighbors. Mr. Rhein suggested games for adults and children and possible acoustic music.

4. New Business: None

5. **Next Meeting Date:** February 7th at 6:30pm, future dates below

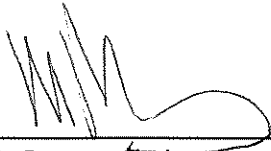
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6. **Any items not known 48 hours prior:** None

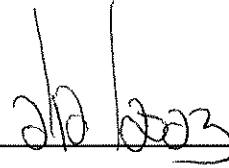
7. **Adjournment:**

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:40 PM.

Passes 6:0 (Cusack/Pantos)



Kevin Dumas, Chair



Date