

Members: Holly Redding (Chair), Greeley Myers (Vice-Chair), Lanita Byrne, Charlie Fish, Elizabeth Minor and Nate Crandell (ex-officio OTWBA).

Also Attending: Shirley Dodson, Business and Community Development Manager; Alex Flanigan, Community Arts & Vitality Manager, Sarah Acuff Chapman, Development Services Assistant

➤ **Call to Order**

- Quorum confirmed

➤ **Approval of Minutes**

- Approval of January meeting minutes. *Unanimously approved 4/0.*

➤ **Officers' Reports**

- Chairperson's Report – Holly Redding
 - Expenditures Report – reviewed February expenditures. No questions.

[Greeley Myers arrived 5:31 p.m.]

- OTWBA Update. Nate shared that OTWBA will still hold the Easter Egg Hunt. First Fridays is going well with new punch cards.
- Vice Chairperson's Report - Greeley Myers
 - No report

➤ **Standing Committee Reports**

- Design – Liz
 - Held a meeting. New street banners look really nice. Discussed ArtScape and the number of banner spaces available. Need to clean out Braddock storage area. No date yet, need to coordinate with Public Works. Discussed renting the LOVE sign from VA Tourism for the Love Our Locals event. Will use some of the funds allocated for downtown decorations to cover the cost. Next committee meeting March 16.
- Economic Vitality – Nate Crandell
 - Met on Tuesday. The majority of the information has been received for the new welcome packet. Working on a rough draft of the layout. Committee will now start to focus on the business ambassadors program. Hope to grow into a peer-to-peer network.
- Organization – Greeley Myers
 - Met today and three new members attended (not yet officially approved). Greeley distributed a draft white page document about what the Old Town Advancement Commission is to the OTAC members. Greeley asked members to review and give feedback. Committee discussed the Love Our Locals stakeholder/community event. Looking to hold on Saturday, May 9, 12-3 p.m. Still working on locations. Idea to have a white board/chalk board station for people to write down what they love about Winchester and Old Town. Also get ideas on if Winchester got LOVE letters, what would they look like. Would like OTAC members to be present at event, possibly in shifts. Nate noted that the white page should list the OTWBA liaison as ex-officio so that it's clear it is non-voting. Shirley also asked members if they were ok with having their contact information listed by their name, and all agreed.
- Promotion – Charlie Fish
 - Held a meeting. Working on Random Acts of Kindness. Windependent! one sheet and stickers have been distributed to 90% of the mall businesses. Charlie will visit the ones that were missed next week. Freemont Street Nursery was chosen as the non-profit recipient for March 20-23 ROAK program. Alex has developed a graphic to use on social media and will email it out to everyone. Working with Andy Gail to promote. Met with Ryan Hall regarding the Makers Market.

➤ **Staff Updates**

- Shirley and Alex are working on the 2020 Workplan as well as the OTAC Vision and Mission statements. Planning to have Jessica from Virginia Main Street to attend the April OTAC meeting to assist with a

visioning exercise. Really need about a six-word sentence that we can all buy into, remember, and repeat.

- Alex and Shirley travelled to Manassas to discuss the Town Center legislation with the Main Street Director and get firsthand feedback from businesses. All feedback was positive.
- Alex is in the process of revamping the OTW Social Media Strategy and will have more active promotion of businesses and events.
- Alex and Charlie have been in committee meetings about a Holiday Market. Still a lot of unknowns. Would like to be a 2-3 day Kris Kringle type market, but at least expand upon Holly Jolly market.
- Arts update: There will be spring outdoor Shakespeare events at the Taylor Pavilion. 90 minute Romeo & Juliet on April 24 and 26. Same day as AB Wine Fest, but not same location. OTAC asked if ok to endorse and members agreed.
- Current discussion with Alex and Winchester Main Street Foundation to put a temporary lease on the former Dollar General space for creating a Community Art Space. Many discussions have already taken place, but will still need to figure out liability and staffing. Will need to go to City Council for a vote with OTAC support. Will bring up in New Business.
- St. Paddy's Celtic Fest coming up on March 7, noon-9 p.m. There will be indoor music and entertainment, as well as on the courthouse lawn. Businesses were invited to share promotional information which was compiled into a flyer posted on website and Facebook.
- Shopping & Dining Guide update requests were emailed to listed businesses. May not get new guides out before Apple Blossom.
- Youth Art Month Artists' Reception tomorrow, 5-7 p.m., at the Welcome Center.
- 2020 Event Season Press Conference was held Feb. 12 and new Event Rack Cards are available at the Welcome Center.
- Farmers & Makers Market has a new logo and vendor applications are now being accepted. Encouraging more makers to apply to the market. Will work on recruiting vendors. Will be held at the Taylor Pavilion and have a weekly "Veggie Patch" children's area and weekly music/performances. Opening Day is May 9th, same day as Love Our Locals.

➤ Old Business

- OTWBA Egg Hunt Requests. Purchase of 2000 eggs was agreed to. *Holly requested a motion to say that OTAC endorses the event and will use the City's insurance to cover the egg hunt. Greeley Myers so moved. Seconded. No discussion. Unanimously approved 5/0.*
- Creative Communities Partnership Grant Applications. Holly led the discussion indicating that there is \$9500 available and 6 applicants, some of which are new and some are long-standing. OTAC needs to decide how to allocate the funds. Several options were provided via email. A goal of OTAC is to promote diversity. The grant should not be something depended upon year after year. Holly recommended Option 2 which prioritized new applicants and proceeded to provide a brief background on applicants and programs.

[Holly Redding left 6:07 p.m. Greeley Myers assumed Chair responsibilities for the duration of the meeting.]

OTAC discussed the projects and considered free to the public vs. not free, new program vs. recurring. A suggestion was made to give a small amount to First Night Winchester to be able to maintain the partnership and resources. The following structure was proposed and discussed. \$500 to FNW, \$2000 to 1455, Inc. (fully fund request), \$3500 to YDC (fully fund request), and \$3500 to Skyline Indie Film Fest. Will not fund Shenandoah Arts Council or Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum. One member noted that they would like to give something to everyone. *Greeley requested a motion based on the proposed recommendation of YDC \$3500, First Night Winchester \$500, 1455 \$2000, Skyline \$3500. Liz Minor so moved. Seconded. No further discussion. Unanimously approved 4/0.*

➤ New Business

- OTAC By-laws Amendment to update staff titles, fix typos, some language changes from the City Attorney, some changes to meeting order. Changes will then go to City Council. *Greeley asked for a motion to approve as submitted with an amendment of a minimum of two stakeholder meetings per year. Charlie Fish so moved. Seconded. No discussion. Unanimously approved 4/0.*
- Revisit the Art Space conversation. Seeking a positive recommendation from OTAC to City Council regarding the former Dollar General space. Alex briefly reviewed the proposed project and discussion was held regarding scope of use, cost of utilities, staffing. *Greeley asked for a motion for a positive*

recommendation of this idea. Charlie Fish so moved. Seconded. No discussion. Unanimously approved 4/0.

➤ **Public Comments**

- None.

Motion to adjourn. Seconded. Unanimously approved 4/0. Adjournment 6:37 p.m.

The next OTAC meeting will be on **Thursday, April 2, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. in Rouss City Hall.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Sarah Acuff Chapman, Development Services Assistant