

Attendees: Lauri Bridgeforth (Chair), Terry Bohan, Beau Correll, Scott Dawson, Cory Garman, Mark Lore, Rick McClendon, Andrea Smith, Susan Touchette, Downtown Manager: Jennifer Bell. Assistant City Manager: Doug Hewett Absent: Marilyn Finnemore and Melinda Kramer
(Notes taken by Sarah Acuff Chapman)

- **Call to Order**
 - Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – approved unanimously.
 - Expenditures Report – no comments.

- **Chair Updates – Lauri Bridgeforth**
 - National Avenue Gateway Improvements Project – City Council has approved the Roundabout option. Does the OTDB have any recommendations for a display in the center of the roundabout?
 - Signage with Old Town’s new brand. Would be inexpensive and easy to maintain.
 - **Refer this issue to Design Committee to discuss.**
 - Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum – City Council Work Session has already nixed the dinosaur outside. City Council has recommended vacating the Indian Alley property to the museum. Does the OTDB have any recommendations for the design of that property?
 - Who is going to maintain that property? All liability transfers to SVDM. If at some point that museum no longer wants the property, it will go back to the City.
 - **Would like to see the new design proposal when submitted.**
 - Special Events Calendar and Budget
 - Cross out Salute to Our Troops. 2013 event being replaced by KidzFest. This is in response to businesses’ requests to have more events like Main Street Ag Day.
 - Dario is much farther along with sponsorships this year than he was at this time last year. Make up the financial shortfall in current budget.
 - Working with Shenandoah Arts Council and trying to have a Friday Night Live Art Market.
 - \$93,400 pledged so far for 2014 events. 30% over last year’s final of \$71,300.
 - 15 groups signed up so far for KidzFest with more on the way.
 - Contract question about sponsorship and revenue. Sponsorships are included in the projected revenue. Other revenue comes from vendor fees and ticket sales.
 - If short, where does money for the retainer come from? From the OTW budget (special assessment tax). Event costs come from special appropriation funds.
 - Current budget shows \$20,000 in the red. How will the shortfall be made up?
 - Concern that October Fest is expected to cover all surplus. Putting all our eggs in one basket.
 - \$19,400 offset portion of retainer. As long as City Council approves the OTW budget, that money is already budgeted for.
 - **Motion to recommend the budget as presented. 4 opposed. 5 in favor. Motion passed.**
 - **Motion to approve the calendar. 9 in favor. Motion passed.**
 - Concern that there should be a way to block times when events can be. There could be other events planned on the same day. That is a Police Dept. decision. Still would like exclusivity of dates. Suggestion that the Special Event’s Policy could include recommendation.
 - Council Liaison to the OTDB
 - City Council is in the process of an ordinance change. A Councilor will no longer have to come to all meetings. The Staff Liaison will bring issues to Council.

- There was a question of the reasoning since Councilors' stipends are being raised.
 - Assistant City Manager – Councilors already have 3 monthly meetings. One councilor is often a liaison to several boards. Goal is to prepare a staff liaison report to Council monthly /quarterly. Council acts as a body to hear issues. Once or twice a year, staff will report to Council in person. Currently, the liaison report comes after the press has heard issues at a meeting. In the future, reports will be given directly to Council.
- VA Main Street Grant
 - Received a \$20,000 matching grant for façade improvements.
 - Individual grants will be awarded up to \$5,000 each.
 - **Motion for the OTDB to approve publicizing the downtown improvement grant once the contract is signed.** Discussion – marketing directly to owners? Will be issuing a press notice and reaching out. Matching funds do not come from OTW budget. **9 in favor. No opposed Motion passed.**
- Branding
 - Concept is a consistent typeface with color variations. Participation and buy-in all along from committee. Need a motion to move forward and present to City Council. Arnett Muldrow will come to the April 22 City Council meeting to present. Once approved, the firm will provide design guidelines for public use.
 - **Motion to recommend Old Town Branding Campaign to City Council.** Discussion – Design Committee met with Christine from the OTWBA and Marilyn from the Branding Task Force. OTWBA response was positive. Design Chair had concern over the font and asked the firm to consider an alternate font. (Firm later provided a sample and it was not well received.) Chair felt the slogan was vague but the committee felt it reached out to attract others. Ultimately, no changes were made. The flexibility of the slogan works to benefit. Need to get the community to embrace it. Creative type people like options when designing. This package provides options. One part of the package that could use revision is the narrative. Heavy handed with history. It can be tweaked along the way. It's been a lengthy process to get to this stage. Many stakeholders were involved in the ID Statement. The brand package captures with essence of Old Town and provided flexibility to stakeholders. **9 in favor. No opposed No abstentions Motion passed.**
- **Committee/ Work Plan Updates**
 - Design – Cory
 - Downtown Improvement Grant. OTDB has ultimate approval. BAR approval required as part of the process.
 - Promotions – Mark
 - Finding the best time to meet. Updating the OT Guide is on hold pending branding. First Friday Egg Hunt – downtown manager will explain.
 - Economic Restructuring – Scott
 - Nothing to report.
 - Organization – Rick
 - Special Event Policy has been split into 2 documents; 1 for the City, 1 for Old Town Guidelines. Asking to allow staff to review the documents and provide feedback. Concern was raised regarding insurance requirements and free speech. Would like to have an exemption for town square style gatherings. A gathering becomes an event if it is scheduled in advance and promoted. Can a recommendation be made for an insurance waiver in certain circumstances. Staff will review for legality. **Proposed language: Insurance shall not be required for events that a) have less than 50 anticipated attendees and b) use non-commercial free speech.** Could define special events in first paragraph of Special Events Policy.
 - **Motion to refer all issues relating to the Special Events Policy and Guidelines to staff with a question regarding the legality of an exception to insurance as proposed. 9 in favor. Motion passed.**

- **Downtown Manager's Updates** – Jennifer
 - Welcome Center: over 900 visitors to date. 4-5 people interested in being Welcome Center Volunteers. During the winter some museums are closed and places closed on Mondays. The Parking Authority asked us to ask visitors where they are parking. Overwhelmingly the response has been on the street and not in garages.
 - VA Milestones Award. Received for 35,000 volunteer hours. Offered to send a representative to the May 8 meeting. The rep. is willing to meet with anyone with questions, committee chairs etc.
 - Newsletter – First Friday Trivia Egg Hunt designed to get people in businesses' doors.
 - 2000 eggs donated to the OTWBA for the annual egg hunt from Old Town.
 - Business Captains – Sarah will email out the list.
 - Façade program, Apple Blossom, brand postcard before April 22.
 - Parking Survey in the newsletter and separate email. Over 20 responses so far.
- **OTWBA** – Christine Patrick, President
 - 3600 eggs have been donated so far for the Easter egg hunt. The eggs will be spread out along the mall and have separate age areas.
 - Rally in the Alley is April 13 from 1-6 p.m.
 - Encourage businesses to be open for Apple Blossom.
 - Do not want metered parking on Saturdays.
 - Proposed city ordinance change – zoning ordinance section 18-7-1.7 – change patio seating fencing from 15 to 17 feet. Planters at 17ft and do not impede the fire lane. Some are currently at 17ft. Would have to reduce the size. At least 5 restaurants gave input. Susan suggested that the city measure each restaurant. Depends on where measured from. Scott asked if there was a procedure to override guidelines. The OTDB design guidelines do not mention anything about size. The City zoning ordinance does. The purpose of the guidelines is to provide uniformity.
 - Motion for the planning commission to consider amending the ordinance 18-7-1.7 to allow existing businesses the placement of fencing and planters approximately 17ft from structure, but not impeding the fire lane. businesses... Motion to refer to planning commission.
 - The OTDB recommends, with approval of the fire marshal, it is in the best interest to not restrict.
 - Will Moore – Planning Staff. 15ft is a random number. The zoning ordinance was rewritten and by the time it got to design guidelines, all the fences were put away. A few businesses were asked and 15ft was the consensus. This was before the redesign of the fire lane. Amount of public space is measured from the property line. In no case can an enclosure impede the fire lane.
 - Move to amend the motion to remove “existing”
 - Planning Staff position – advocate changing the number to apply to all.
 - **Motion “to recommend that the planning commission consider amending Winchester Zoning Ordinance section 18-7-1.7 to allow the placement of fencing and planters approximately 17 ft from structure, but not impeding the fire lane.” 9 in favor. Motion passed.**
- **Public Comments** – Andrea Smith thanked OTDB Members and Jennifer Bell for their support and involvement in SU Community Day.
- **Adjournment at 7:07 p.m.** Next meeting –**Thursday, May 8** at 5:30 p.m., Rouss City Hall, 4th Floor Exhibit Hall