



DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT BOARD

July 15, 2014

A regular meeting of the City of Petoskey Downtown Management Board was held in the City Hall Community Room, Petoskey, Michigan, on Tuesday, July 15, 2014. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M., and the following were

Present: Lawrence Rochon, Chairperson
David Carlson
William J. Fraser, Mayor
Jessilynn Norcross
James M. Reid, Jr., Vice Chairperson
Jennifer Shorter
S. Reginald Smith

Absent: Liz Ahrens and Jason Keiswetter

Also in attendance was the Downtown Director Becky Goodman.

Approve Consent Agenda Items Downtown Management Board members discussed the first item of routine business, the May 27, 2014 and June 17, 2014 regular session meeting minutes; acknowledgement of bills since May 27, 2014; and acceptance of the May and June expense and income reports as prepared by the Downtown Director.

Board members inquired on a line item from May bills for \$1,349.50 concerning Gruler's/Pro mix soil for flowers and that it seemed excessive and what had been accounted for towards the \$4,000 budgeted for Sidewalk Sales. The Downtown Director responded that the soil was for the tree wells downtown and that there were additional ones this year since flowers were planted around Sunset Square; and that as of May there had not been any charges for Sidewalk Sales, but would see some at the next meeting.

Upon motions made and supported the May 27, 2014 and June 17, 2014 regular meeting minutes; acknowledgement of bills since May 27, 2014; and acceptance of the May and June expense and income reports were approved. Said motions were unanimously approved as submitted.

Hear Committee Reports The Downtown Director reported on behalf of Petoskey Rocks and the Event Committee and reviewed that the buskers before the July 4 parade was a nice addition; that the Movie in the Park drew a very large crowd last Friday night; that approximately half of the stores were open on Friday night; that there continues to be a struggle to get merchant participation and scheduling committee meetings.

On behalf of the Events Committee, the Downtown Director reported that staff was ahead of schedule promoting and planning Sidewalk Sales; that new this year will be a sign at the Fairgrounds; that there has been encouragement for non-profits and service businesses to take space on the street with carnival games; that there is a Touch a Truck exhibit scheduled for upper Mitchell; that there is a big emphasis on next year's 50th anniversary and plans to bring back the original carnival theme; and that there will be a free parking and a shuttle running from Winter Sports Park to downtown for Sidewalk Sales.

The Downtown Director reported on behalf of the Marketing Committee and that Gallery Walk was a successful event with 406 participants and that no wrap-up meeting had been done yet; that the bag stuffer was distributed; that shopping maps are in demand from outlying hotels; that parking lot maps are being constructed; that Native Eyewear would be in the area the week of August 11 to film the commercial that Petoskey won as part of their Facebook campaign and that they will be using the parking spaces in front of the Sunglass Shoppe from 4:00 to 8:00 P.M.

In parking, the Downtown Director reported the continued follow up on projects discussed at the April parking meeting and that:

- Partnerships with Emmet County and other privately owned lots – Marty Krupa was appointed County Controller and staff will begin plans and discussions with County to review options. Staff contacted News-Review regarding shared use of parking space and will be meeting tomorrow concerning this matter.
- Begin Work on the Rail Corridor – Prior to the City Manager's departure, he indicated an estimated cost of \$250,000 to fund this project and that there would not be money in the City budget anytime soon for this project. The Downtown Director reported that MEDC and Patronicity.com announced a new project that allows communities to crowdfund for public projects. For example, the DMB would provide an initial cash match of \$50,000, crowdfund for \$100,000 and if goal was met then Patronicity and MEDC would kick in \$50,000 each towards the project. The Downtown Director reviewed that the project would need to be accepted and approved; is pre-mature in nature, but if interested would need to act on quickly; that Michigan is the first state to crowdfund for municipalities; and that she would research more, talk to the Director of Parks and Recreation and possibly bring application and proposal to the next meeting.
- Create Bike Corrals – The new proposal from Cycle Safe has not arrived.
- Develop the Darling Parking Lot – Bids were received from Walker Parking and financial consultants and a formal proposal will be presented at next month's meeting.
- Tiered Parking Permits – The Parking Committee reviewed draft proposal and more study is needed.
- Elimination of all free parking – Concept was discussed at length and will be further considered for a comprehensive review of parking management.
- Partnering with Petoskey Plastics is yet to occur for potential additional parking options in the Saville Lot.
- Sunset Square – The Downtown Director met with Elias Amash and he hopes to have his team assembled in the next two months with the understanding that parking is a primary issue.

The Downtown Director also reported on behalf of the Design Committee that the permit from MDOT to refurbish and relocate the entry way sign was received and committee is reviewing last minute changes in paint color and then project would begin; that research was done for possible poles for the additional signage opportunity at the corner of Lake and the path that crosses the park and that DPW did not have any extra in stock and quote would be presented at next month's meeting; and that the bike rack was ordered for the northwest corner of Petoskey and Lake but is taking longer than expected due to special order of Petoskey green paint.

The Downtown Director reported that Gail DeMayer was present to report on behalf of Crooked Tree Arts Center and public art plan. Ms. DeMayer reviewed that inventory was in process of public art in the downtown area; that a first public forum was held on June 25 and a second one is scheduled for September 23; reviewed goals; that data collected will be presented in December; concerns that not enough people knew about public meetings; that a map will be created to look at advancement for art; that the definition of art is broad and working on it; and reviewed how art would be maintained.

The Downtown Director commented that the map will be a huge resource to citizens and visitors to Petoskey.

Chairperson Rochon asked for public comments and heard that City Council was discussing the restrictions of murals and that DMB should give direction to Council concerning the limitations; inquiries on how many people attended the public meeting; and heard concerns with public meeting times and suggested times be changed.

The Downtown Director also reported that the trolley had some minor issues and that a new ignition was installed; that there are approximately 30-100 riders per day; that the new parking ambassador left and that the trolley driver, Charlie Fossmo, was interested in the job and will be working in both capacities; that City Council approved a resolution opposing the widening of US-31 and was sent to MDOT, and that it would be helpful if DMB gave direction as well; and reported that the Board gave City Manager Dan Ralley a departing gift of Petoskey stone book ends and business card holder and read aloud his sincere thank you note.

Board members inquired on the importance of the rail corridor and trolley; and the Downtown Director responded that the trolley would provide additional parking; that not only would it move people, but would be a fun attraction; that the City owns trolley already and has been in the Master Plan for 20 years.

There were public comments if grant money was being considered to fund this interest; and that the trolley could be used for other ventures and decorated at different times of the year for events.

Hear City Staff Report

The Mayor gave an update on the US-31/Mitchell Street work and that the planters and islands were progressing with an anticipated completion date of July 31; that the Arlington Avenue/Greenway Corridor project is proceeding with anticipated completion by Labor Day; that mill and fill would occur at the Jennings Avenue project once infrastructure was completed and that the mill was waiting to arrive from Wisconsin; and reviewed that plans and brochures from the architect concerning the proposed Bay Harbor theater project.

There was a public comment inquiring what was going to be in the planters and islands; and the Mayor responded that it was not clear yet, but that it would be something that would survive winter conditions.

Miscellaneous Public Comments

Chairperson Rochon asked for public comments and heard several concerns that Petoskey is still missing a signature event compared to other local communities; and heard an inquiry on when the Board would be addressing Merchant Group's response/questions publically at a meeting.

Board members commented and reviewed that it is difficult as a Board to come up with a signature event when some downtown businesses are opposed to big events in town; that Festival on the Bay was supposed to be the big draw to Petoskey as described in HyettPalma; that Christmas Open House is typically the largest and most successful event; and that Petoskey is consistent with visitors returning, but that downtown is separated from the water by the highway.

Ms. Shorter commented that the view of the water from downtown is diminishing and would like to see trees trimmed.

There being no further business to come before the Downtown Management Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 P.M.