



DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT BOARD

August 15, 2017

A regular meeting of the City of Petoskey Downtown Management Board was held in the City Hall Community Room, Petoskey, Michigan, on Tuesday, August 15, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M., and the following were

Present: S. Reginald Smith, Vice Chairperson
Craig Bell
Doug Buck
Daniel Harris
Edward Karmann
John Murphy, Mayor

Absent: Lawrence Rochon, Chairperson, Robin Bennett and Jessica Stubbs

Also in attendance was the Downtown Director Becky Goodman and City Manager Robert Straebel.

Approve Consent Agenda Items Downtown Management Board members discussed the first item of routine business, the July 18, 2017 regular session meeting minutes; acknowledgement of bills since July 18, 2017; and acceptance of the July expense and income reports as prepared by the Downtown Director.

Upon motion made and seconded, the July 18, 2017 regular session meeting minutes were approved; acknowledgement of bills since July 18, 2017 that totaled \$45,316.58; and expense and income reports for July were approved. Said motion was unanimously approved as submitted.

Approve Hosting 2018 Back to Bricks Car Show The Downtown Director reported that the Back to Bricks Annual Promotional Tour again approached Petoskey to host a 2018 car show June 8-12. Three years ago the Board declined an invitation to participate as the consensus from the merchant community was that streets should not be closed and the opinion of staff was that the event did not seem well organized. Two years ago Petoskey was invited to apply to be a host city and the Board agreed that the time was right and that it was a good opportunity, however the application was not accepted.

Board members inquired what time the streets would be closed; if there were any bigger events scheduled for the same weekend; that ensuring 200 rooms is a lot to ask on a weekend, but may be feasible during the week; inquiries on what streets would be closed; that the Committee might not consider Petoskey if the Board approves a specific date; what the main objective in approving this event is other than generating more traffic downtown on non-busy days; heard from those in favor and opposed to the idea; that early June is kickoff of summer with strong business; how a car show will benefit Petoskey's image; that hosting a car show will be free advertising for Petoskey and bring different groups to the community; and that attendees of the focus groups want more events that involve closing streets, which gives a sense of community.

Vice Chairperson Smith asked for public comments and heard brief history on the Bay Harbor car show and that it is now locally driven; if this will be a one-time event or recurring; that car shows produce money for merchants, restaurants etc.; heard comments on who the event will benefit most; that early June is the kickoff weekend for summer customers and closing streets may hurt image; heard from those in favor of the event and that it will bring more people to downtown; that there are successful car shows in other Northern Michigan communities; that a brochure goes out to participants with a list of hotels; and that the event will be a promotional piece for Petoskey community as well as Back to Bricks organization.

Board members further discussed that it is worth hosting to see the failures and successes and that successes should be measured other than by the typical surveys to merchants.

Mr. Karmann moved that, seconded by Mr. Buck to accept and welcome Back to Bricks request to host a 2018 car show any day, but preference is Sunday, Monday or Tuesday.

Board members discussed which days were preferred and then Mr. Karmann revised the motion.

Mr. Karmann then moved that, seconded by Mr. Buck, to accept the Back to Bricks request to host a 2018 car show for any of the five days, June 8-12. Said motion was unanimously approved as submitted.

Discuss 2018 Downtown Programs & Services and Parking Fund Budgets

Board members then reviewed and discussed the proposed 2018 Downtown Programs and Services and Parking Fund budgets. Following the Downtown Management Board's routine procedure, the Downtown Director reviewed recommendations for the DMB's parking and programs-and-services budget for 2018, which would be included in the City's proposed 2018 Annual Budget to be presented to the City Council in November.

The Downtown Director reviewed that there was a revised format in an effort to make it as clear as possible that money is being earmarked for parking improvements; that \$150,000 is included as a placeholder for a parking deck engineering study for the proposed Division and Lake location; that study may not happen if County is not on board with project, but expenditure can always be carried ahead to 2019; and that another \$150,000 is included for the renovation of the downtown restrooms, and that the potential grant to help fund this project has not yet been received.

The City Manager reviewed that he contacted the State to see when the grant award would be forthcoming and they were unsure at this time. The Mayor also commented that he couldn't guarantee City Council will support the restroom project if City doesn't receive the grant.

Board members discussed parking deck engineering study and potential costs; if there are any other capital items not considered in the draft budget; that street meters may need to be changed due to mechanical issues, outdated and no credit card options; that overhead costs will be high if change out all street meters; inquiries on cost comparisons between a credit card meter vs. new mechanical meter; that \$10,000 be included in the budget for potential meter replacement or other possible purchases to give staff flexibility during the year; that snow removal be discussed on how to improve; that staff look at the RFP and consider increasing contractors responsibilities; and that the contracted services line item increase to \$100,000.

The Downtown Director responded that currently staff is testing out a part to fix meters, but that there are many mechanical issues due to age of meters and weather.

Vice Chairperson Smith asked for public comments and heard that the contractor clears downtown sidewalks and it is the intent for merchants to shovel in front of their businesses; that the 2018 net operating fund didn't carry over correctly affecting the overall ending reserve fund balance; and that the capital projects including the downtown restrooms and parking deck study is needed even if not accomplished in 2018.

Board members further discussed to keep the \$150,000 for potential parking deck engineering study; that snow removal needs to be improved and that staff should look into revising the RFP; and that contracted services budget be increased to \$100,000.

The Downtown Director then reviewed the Programs and Services Budget and that no amount is projected to be spent from carry over or reserve funds in 2018; that the draft budget does not include an increase in special assessments; reviewed expenditures for Spring Open House, Petoskey Rocks and Winter Carnival vs. the budget figure that shows the total amount being spent, which includes revenue raised; that Winter Carnival and Petoskey Rocks include revenue from a "Presenting Sponsor" which the Board should consider whether that sponsor could potentially be from outside of the downtown area; that no revenue from outside vendors was included for Sidewalk Sales, but the surveys showed that inviting others in to the event in order to fill the streets might be acceptable; and reviewed capital outlay items including the purchase of a tent for park events, the purchase of audio equipment that will be suitable for the higher quality of bands that are presenting, fall and winter lighting for lampposts and Tivoli style lights for the alleys.

Board members inquired what the \$5,000 included under the new marketing activities; that Petoskey Rocks is heavily reliant on sponsorships; why the image campaign budget is reduced by half compared to previous years; that blog expenditures are high and inquired if the Promotions Coordinator could write the weekly blogs; and that advertisement should be cut back on some events.

The Downtown Director responded that the new marketing activities is a creative way to balance the budget and a way for the Marketing Committee to fundraise and if monies aren't raised, then Committee has less to spend; that image campaign budget has decreased since ads have been removed from various outlets; and that staff is looking at advertising through different channels including social media.

Vice Chairperson Smith asked for public comments and heard an inquiry why Christmas Open House has the least amount of marketing monies to use when it is by far the best event; that Petoskey Rocks concerts are taking away from sidewalk sales; that the Board is spending a lot of money to get bands to perform and that music should be spread throughout downtown.

Vice Chairperson Smith reviewed that the draft 2018 budgets would be tabled and will be further discussed and approved at the next regular scheduled meeting.

Hear Committee Reports

The Downtown Director reported on behalf of the Parking Committee and that the Committee considered comments from a concerned merchant regarding use of meter bags in the Clifton Lot by construction companies and contractors; discussed user friendly office policy for developer and existing business needs; and that the office continues to have staffing issues.

The Downtown Director reported on behalf of the Events Committee and that Petoskey Rocks is over; that a couple movies and a performance were canceled due to weather; that an inappropriate word was used during the La La Land movie and a constituent voiced concerns; that Sidewalk Sales surveys indicated that food trucks are wanted; that vendors from outside of the district are welcome in order to fill up the streets; that the concert overlapped with Sidewalk Sales; and that ending times varied and are hotly debated.

The Downtown Director reported on behalf of the Marketing Committee and there were at least 125 Waldo entries, with a birthday party held on Saturday of Sidewalk Sales.

In beautification, the Downtown Director reported that staff will do a ride around tomorrow afternoon to look for potential projects; and that the Hemingway statue gets a lot of attention from visitors.

In economic enhancement, the Downtown Director reported that the work on the Ben Franklin building should be completed soon; that Dawn from Lake Street Design is opening a new studio in that space; that work has begun on the Gypsy Vodka business at the former Jespersen's location on Howard Street; and that the painting project at Toad Hall looks great.

The Downtown Director also reported that she received a draft report from Bob Gibbs and that the City Planner and herself will begin working on a draft plan to present in the next few months.

Board members commented that better advertising on movie ratings should be done ahead of time; that food trucks should be considered if merchants and the community want the option during Sidewalk Sales; and that parking during construction can be disruptive and that there should be stronger guidelines.

Hear City Staff Report

The City Manager reviewed infrastructure projects throughout the community and that Emmet Street Phase I was completed and approximate completion date of entire project is early to mid-September; and that there is a special joint City Council and Planning Commission meeting scheduled for Thursday to discuss hospital zoning districts in relation to McLaren Hospital's expansion project.

There being no further business to come before the Downtown Management Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 P.M.