

Minutes

Downtown Great Barrington Cultural District Steering Committee August 8, 2019

Committee Members Present:

Ed Abrahams, Tate Coleman, Jeff Gagnon, Julie Hannum, Barbara Watkins, Karin Watkins

Not Present: Betsy Andrus, Seth Keyes, Talya Leodari, Casey McShain

Others Present: Chris Rembold

Call to Order, Introductions: Karin called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Minutes of 7/11/19 meeting. Karin made a few small corrections. Ed moved to approve as amended, Barbara seconded, and all were in favor

Treasurer's Report:

Barbara reported that since the spending approved at the last meeting for chamber memberships and up to \$2,000 for Silo Media for the website, there is a grant balance of \$586. She said that MCC may have another \$5,000 grant round later this year.

Steering Committee Membership:

Karin reported that the Memorandum of Understanding for Year 2 is completed and almost everybody has signed.

The Committee agreed to invite both the Farmer's Market and the Arts Market onto the Steering Committee. Ed will follow up with both.

Subcommittee Reports:

Special Events and Festivals:

1. Karin said the Special Events committee met with Lilliana and the Festival Latino people last week. Karin will send those meeting notes out the Committee. The event is September 28.

She said the festival organizers will need help with publicity and volunteers. We can promote the event through our email blasts, Instagram and Facebook posts.

Julie asked if other Cultural Districts might help with promotion too. She mentioned BCC could as well.

2. Dance Party: Seth and Ken Roht are trying to organize a downtown dance party, perhaps for the Columbus Day weekend.
3. Car Show: while we missed the chance to promote the August 1 car show, there are few things that could be improved: (1) Barbara suggested alternate parking places and a parking plan can be developed. The car show closes the street early and people going to stores can't find places to park. Ed offered to meet businesses who want discuss this. (2) Tate said BRTA busses could not get through and the traffic delays and rerouting led to some difficulties. Maybe next year BRTA busses could be allowed through, like tractor trailers are allowed to do.
4. Parking: Karin said people who come for special events get parking tickets. The Committee discussed parking enforcement. It was noted the Selectboard could discuss waiving enforcement for some events. It was suggested that the Selectboard allow the Town Manager to make these decisions. It would be faster and potentially less political.

Tate mentioned that BRTA now has evening express service to 10 PM and we can encourage transit use.

Partnerships:

The **Annual Meeting** is meeting on September 17 at Saint James Place at 9:00 AM to accomplishments of year 1 and our plans for the coming year.

Laura will work on email blasts, Facebook, and email invitations to partners.

Barbara will contact places for food. Chris will let her know how many people we might expect.

We hope to be able to show a mock-up of our new webpage by then.

Marketing & Communications

Karin reported progress is likely with the Berkshire Edge calendar.

Karin said the contract with Silo Media has been signed and we'll send a retainer check.

The Committee discussed social media and the need for a social media strategy and the need for content.

Fundraising and Development:

Chris said we hope to have another grant later this year.

Upcoming Meetings:

The next meeting will be the September 17 at 9:00 event / district meeting at Saint James Place.

The Committee agreed to try to have a joint meeting with the Cultural Council. The date is still to be determined (Tate will coordinate) but is likely to be early October and a 5:00 or 5:30 start time.

Following the October joint meeting, we'll try to move regular Steering Committee meetings to Tuesday s at 9:00.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 10:05 AM.

Minutes prepared by: 