

**Better Hometown Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
July 21, 2010**

Directors Present: Cullen Chambers, Stephen Palmer, Monty Parks, Mayor Pro Tem Shirley Sessions, Dick Smith, Peggy Stone, Patricia Miller Wann

Directors Absent: Judy Malins, John Yarbrough

Guests Present: Martha Reimann

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 pm by Cullen Chambers.

Welcome

Chantel welcomed everyone.

Guests

Martha Reimann presented the official Better Hometown Certification Plaque to the Board of Directors. She said the Department of Community Affairs was delighted to have us in the program. She said she was very proud of what we have been doing and we have been operating like a Better Hometown for nearly a year. She commented that late September is the date for the GA Downtown Conference. Cullen acknowledged Chantel for her efforts, which without this would not have happened and also Dick Smith as a former City Council member who saved the budget and saved the program. Chantel said it takes a team and now the hard work begins.

Approval of Minutes

Monty approved the May 19, 2010 and the June 16, 2010 Better Hometown Board of Director meeting minutes. Peggy seconded the motion. Judy and Stephen emailed their approval of the minutes in lieu of their anticipated absence. All Directors present approved the motion to approve the May 19, 2010 and the June 16, 2010 minutes.

Committee Work Plans/Updates

Design

Cullen reported for the design committee. We have a missing-in-action garbage can and Cullen is trading phone calls with the vendor, who says he can do a much better price than the City's current vendor. The partition by Docs will be installed tomorrow. Cullen said Peggy requested the partition have an access area for cats. He has made this adjustment.

The Info Hut, which is the one of the unused parking kiosks by the Police Station, was permitted by the City to be moved near the Pier and Pavilion by the Roundabout. This location was recommended by the City Manager at a Parking Committee meeting. The intent is to have an air conditioned area for Information Providers to take a break during their shift. Chantel met with Jane Coslik about the design of the Info Hut. Jane is happy to be helping and is looking at art deco concepts. She will get something to Chantel next week and will look for donations to cover expenses. Craig Harrison is working on the design of the message center for the Park of Seven Flags. He will do it either before or after he goes to California. BHT will maintain it and manage the information that is displayed in the windows.

Carbo House is now on the Historic Register for Historic Places which gives Eldo more options. BHT will present him with a bronze plaque and do a ribbon cutting to recognize his efforts. Cullen and Bob are going to work on a Preservation Plan for him. A preservation plan will keep the revitalization of the Carbo House on track. This will address the shrimp boat and other acquisitions he has acquired.

Economic Restructuring

The Committee met last month and is moving forward with the Buy Local program. Chantel gave Monty information about a similar program in California.

Chantel is working with the Tourism Council on the next Market Study. This second phase will help better identify overnight visitors with more participation from the lodging establishments.

Chantel has called the interim branch manager of Savannah Bank. The company is currently evaluating the branches and the manager will call her once decisions are made.

Chantel sent Tybee Times a questionnaire to publish for locals to fill out. The questionnaire is intended to obtain more information about where they shop, what are they looking and more, which will be useful for economic development. She will also post the survey using survey monkey once the new edition of Tybee Times comes out.

Organization

Chantel reviewed the Tybee Island Information Providers program. Five (5) people have expressed interest thus far. She met with two interested volunteers and they gave her additional information to include in the documents the T. I. I. P. carry with them while they are answering questions about dining, shopping, parking, etc. They will be wearing straw hats with badges. Notice about the program seeking volunteers will be posted on channel 7. More volunteers are needed, but it will take time. Cullen said he would volunteer. Martha said St. Mary's has a program where volunteers use golf carts and provide tours. Chantel said an orientation will be held for volunteers prior to beginning. Shirley said City Council approved a Volunteer policy. Chantel asked if the volunteers would have to do a background check. Shirley confirmed that if their policy applies, volunteers should adhere. They will be representing BHT and also representing the City. Shirley said this will be good for tracking volunteer hours and Martha concurred especially when applying for grants.

Promotions

The Lights on for Tybee and the Holiday parade will be the first weekend of December. The volunteer who wanted to design www.tybeefortheholidays.com has not sent anything yet. Chantel and John will discuss. Dicky Trotter has offered to be in charge of the parade applicants. Peggy asked who would be singing at Lights on for Tybee now that St. Michael's School is closed. She said she would be willing to work on securing a choir. Dick suggested talking with the Methodist Church for involvement. Shirley asked about the YMCA involvement. Chantel said Hillary and the Y will have their post parade activities downtown after pictures with Santa by the tree.

The Board discussed Third Thursdays on Tybee. The winter months will be hard due to the cold air. Cullen said he might be able to make the lighthouse grounds available and Tourism may need to get involved.

Stephen talked about the Tybee Tree and 31328 logo design. He said Tybee's zip code is exclusive and his concept is about representing all of Tybee. He expressed his enjoyment of Tybee this year and the beaches seem to be cleaner. He would like to see more in season events while people are already here because it would give them more to do. He has seen more business due to the events in the Gulf.

Martha said Bruce Green with the Department of Economic Development will roll out a campaign featuring audio/visual on Main Streets / BHT at Visitor Centers and Welcome Centers. The footage will be compiled and short films will help brand the communities. Chantel mentioned the Tybee Treasures Video, which is currently showing at Tybee's Visitor Center and on Channel 7. Martha said it would be great to look at what is available. Chantel will talk to Sandy Majors.

Extreme Makeover – Main Street Style

Chantel reviewed the information she emailed to the Board about the Main Street Style Extreme Makeover that Kim Carter sent to all managers. Cullen stated it bears pursuing, but is concerned about the parameters. There are a couple of businesses that are stand alone candidates. We have been

trying to educate businesses about what remains of the art deco structures and the benefits of removing the 60s, 70s and 80s improvements. He would like to know more. Chantel reiterated that the deadline is Friday. Shirley inquired if downtown would qualify. Cullen said they are looking for properties that need a facelift. Stephen said typical Extreme Makeover shows also look for energy efficient ways to cut energy bills. Peggy expressed concern that the buildings would look beautiful and there could be a chance her rent and others would go even higher. Cullen said the Carbo House may be the best applicant. Chantel explained they are looking for at least a two block area and there is opportunity here. Cullen suggested waiting for the next opportunity, if there is one, because we need more time. Stephen and Dick mentioned considering areas on Butler, near McKenzie, and / or Lazzaretto Creek. Martha mentioned the pluses of focusing on public art or something that has not been done before. Cullen explained the Turtle artwork, which gave Tybee added identity over the years. Martha described a sculpture art project Columbus did which had at least one piece that sold for \$80,000. Chantel reviewed the webinar she recently participated in. The webinar was hosted by an Arts Council in California and highlighted mural art projects that have helped beautify areas of towns successfully. Patricia spoke about the Colquitt mural project. She said she had seen the murals when she was there to do a site visit for the Georgia Council for the Arts. Patricia said that each mural is based on a story that is part of the Swamp Gravy Folk Like Play. Colquitt has become an international model for cultural based tourism. Martha said they won the Mural International Conference.

Friends of BHT

Chantel stated she had been approached by Jonathan about paid membership for BHT. Some BHT / Main Street communities do memberships or Friends of Better Hometown / Main Street. Businesses and / or individuals join and the money goes right back into the community to help with projects for the community. She requested the Board discuss the concept. Chantel shared an article about Woodstock which has is a 501(c)6 and requires members. Rehoboth Beach has a membership and has been very successful. Others do not have a membership format because they are offering a service to the community. Shirley expressed concern with setting up a 501(C)6 so early in the program and what people would actually get from their contributions. Martha mentioned having people contribute to small projects. Shirley confirmed projects like the trash cans. Cullen explained the current concept of Buy Local. Chantel said this is an example of something that helps over the years. Those types of funds would go to pay for ongoing projects and members / Friends they would get special recognition for contributing. As BHT, we do not exclude anyone or their business. Cullen explained his concern about the Chamber and the perceptions of others about their membership. Chantel discussed Beaufort's membership guidelines and benefits. Martha said this could have a marketing angle such as people contribute and that is all they are asked for all year. Chantel agreed that would keep it cost efficient. Cullen recommended holding off due to the complexity and competition with other fund raising efforts among organizations.

Other Business

Chantel reminded the Board that Martha will be officially presenting the designation plaque to the City at the City Council Meeting on July 22 at 7:00pm and requested the Board be present. Chantel will take a picture of the presentation at City Council and put it in the newsletter.

Adjourn

Monty made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:02pm. Dick seconded the motion. All were in favor.