

**Better Hometown Board Meeting Minutes**  
**March 16, 2010**

**Directors Present:** Cullen Chambers, Judy, Malins, Stephen Palmer, Shirley Sessions, Patricia Miller Wann, John Yarbrough

**Directors Absent:** Monty Parks, Dick Smith, Peggy Stone, John Yarbrough

**Guests Present:** See below.

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 9:08am.

**Welcome**

Chantel welcomed everyone and reminded everyone about the upcoming Conference in St. Marys. Shirley will ride with Patricia and Stephen will pick up Cullen. Chantel will meet everyone in St. Marys. We need to leave at 5:30am in order to arrive for registration.

Chantel explained meeting time conflicts have been expressed by Monty and Peggy due to their careers. Cullen asked if the Board meetings should change to the early evenings. Meeting either on Tuesdays or Wednesdays at 6pm was suggested. Chantel will email the board for input.

**Dicky Trotter, Trotter Productions**

Dicky Trotter was scheduled to attend the Board meeting as a guest, but is under the weather and unable to attend. He is very supportive of the Better Hometown Initiative and wants to talk about membership and other ways to get the word out about BHT, specifically through social media.

**Public Forum / Visioning Workshop Preparation**

The next Visioning Workshop is scheduled for April 7<sup>th</sup> from 5 - 7pm in the Auditorium. This workshop is required annually so the Board can determine what BHT will work on within the coming year with regards to the 4 Points. The last workshop was July 27, 2009 and was attended by more than 30 people. DCA was pleased at the turnout. We will lay out what has been worked on and accomplished over the previous year. Cullen said that a lot has been worked on and highlighting these items is crucial and we need to be really prepared. Patricia suggested that we have a rehearsal before the Workshop. Cullen said that we need to have forward movement beyond talking about issues. It was decided that we would have a rehearsal on April 7 and the Workshop will be on the 14 from 5-6pm with a Board workshop from 6-7pm.

Cullen said that the number of meetings on Tybee is a big concern. He said that people don't mind going to meetings if they see outcomes. Everyone's time is valuable and BHT doesn't want to waste anyone's time.

Questions need to be anticipated for accurate and meaningful answers. He asked Shirley if anything is going to be done about the restrooms in the foreseeable future. Shirley said that it depends on the SPLOST funding and that she didn't know if anything could be done soon.

Restrooms have been an important issue expressed by some businesses and answers need to be given. Chantel mentioned a resident has been in constant contact with the City Manager about issues with the visibility of the South End portable restrooms from his home. Alternate locations have been considered, but the infrastructure is only there. DPW is putting in foliage to block the view. Shirley said that people don't want the bathrooms in their backyards.

Shirley understands the importance of answers and will find out about the bathrooms on the North end. Cullen commented that it is a staffing issue within the City and we keep taking a hit on it. He asked if we have a number posted in the bathrooms is there a person who will respond. Shirley volunteered to be the "bathroom person." We need to assure people that the bathrooms are on a cleaning schedule with a cleaning schedule posted that is signed off with a phone number to call if they are not clean. Cullen said someone is needed at each bathroom and calls need to be answered. Shirley said we certainly need someone at the Marine Science Center. Chantel added that there is a need at 14<sup>th</sup> Street too. Stephen asked about the three portable bathrooms at 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. Shirley said she would find out if they are rented. Stephen mentioned the bathrooms at the Pavilion and said that Dean takes care of them. Chantel said that Dean is responsible and when the bathrooms are cleaned, they have to be closed for 45 minutes for the floors to dry. Shirley said that people are changing clothes and bathing in those bathrooms and that Dean does a good job. Cullen asked if there was a company that could be hired. Judy said that there are companies that do this. She said she thought it was critical to have a person who was responsible. Cullen asked if the City had looked into that. Shirley said not to her knowledge. She said that the City is looking for a part time attendant, but doesn't know if the City can afford it. Council knows that this is important. DPW is stressed during the high season and they have problems getting the equipment through the crowds on the beach.

Stephen commented that the middle of the Island is also a problem. Memorial Park and Jaycee Park have been improved with SPLOST money. He said the North Beach parking lot is a huge issue. Cullen said that there are FEMA requirements and that the city receives money for beach renourishment, but nothing goes to bathroom maintenance. Shirley asked if we could get a business to sponsor a bathroom. Cullen responded that if he knew the costs, he could look into it and see if the Historical Society might be able to do that.

There should be one contact person for bathrooms and one person for trash.

Chantel said that Wind Rose has noticed issues with the Atlantic Ave. compactor and has called DPW in the past without response. Wind Rose owners are very diligent in calling her when they see problems and she documents it and lets the City Manager know. Chantel said that we need a phone number on the dumpsters too. Cullen said that we have to have actual follow-up. Shirley said that some people just seem to be destructive.

Chantel said that she had sent Diane several e-mails. She said that last season a gentleman was paid to pick up trash on the South End, but didn't carry a bag to put it in. She is asking if we will have a person this season and if he will have bags. She said she has sent about five e-mails and is waiting for responses.

Stephen asked about the 14<sup>th</sup> Street crossover. He mentioned "Tim's Beachgear" and said that a big trailer is parked in front of Ocean Plaza. He asked if that was a rented spot. Chantel said that similar issues have come up at the Parking Committee meetings and Jonathon and Diane are

working on a parking plan.

Patricia asked if we could get “before” and “after” pictures to use at the Workshop. Chantel said she had done that with previous presentations. Shirley said that visuals are important. Shirley said that too much detail can be overwhelming. We need to keep it simple. Stephen said that we need to be prepared for anything. He suggested that we brainstorm while we are driving back and forth to St. Marys. Chantel said she would e-mail the work plan to the Board again. Stephen said we could use it to show results since the last Workshop. Cullen said that is what we are talking about. Chantel said there are tangible things we can show. Shirley said that we can show what we have accomplished and have handouts for people. Chantel said that we need to reiterate that these are big issues that the Island has been working on for years and years. She reminded everyone to note April 7 is the rehearsal and April 14 from 5-6pm is the Workshop with a Board meeting from 6-7pm.

Stephen said that we can give the audience information and an open floor and that will help residents and businesses get more involved.

### **Design** - Cullen

Discussions were held within Visioning Workshop presentation discussion.

### **Promotions** - Stephen / Chantel

Tybee for the Holidays – Stephen updated the Board about the last Committee meeting. He suggested that everything take place on one weekend. He said we need to look at what is disposable. We need a backup plan and know what is important. He suggested that we have Santa Claus and lose the parade if necessary. Keep it all one weekend and have a better tree and better decorations. Cullen said that one packed weekend would be better and could become a signature event. Stephen said that we could have the “WOW” factor by syncing the music and lights. Patricia said the lights could look a lot better. She said that half the lights were out. Chantel said that they had been purchased “used” and that there were different stories about whether that was the problem or if there was a problem with the electric poles. She said we need to make sure that the Christmas tree remains lit throughout the month. One suggestion made at the committee meeting is to have kids come out and help businesses decorate on “Decorating Day” the Saturday after Thanksgiving. She said that TBA has been judging commercial decorations and has asked BHT to get more involved. Cullen asked if the lights had outlived their lifespan. Chantel said that some have. Cullen asked if we had to have them. He suggested that we rethink the decorations and do something nice and simple. Chantel said that would have to go through DPW and that some neighborhood associations had purchased some of the lights. Stephen said he would love to have a snow machine. Chantel commented that the past two years there have been small snow machines which John at Spanky’s paid to rent.

Third Thursdays on Tybee – Patricia said that the first concert had been very successful. She reminded everyone that Lauren Lapointe would be singing at the second concert at Tybee Oaks. Stephen said that we should to be prepared for questions because the first concert was held inside the rain location even though the sun was shining. Patricia and Chantel confirmed the Trio had to perform inside due to the low temperature and alternate locations are listed on the posters.

Stephen said that “Bike to Work Week” is May 10 – 14 and will be promoted.

### **Economic Restructuring Committee** - Chantel

Connie with SBDC has agreed to present a “Keeping Your Customers” seminar in the Auditorium on March 24 at 8:30am for Island businesses. She said that about ten people had already signed up. We are paying \$150 for the seminar and hope to have a good turnout.

### **BHT Budget**

Chantel said that each City Department had been asked to cut 10%. She said that she has taken out various subscriptions and bumped up Business Training and Opportunities. She said that without contributions, the program will not be a success. This is a show of the public partnership. Cullen said that the BHT Budget was already bare bones and that we cannot afford to keep taking hits from the City. He said the City can't keep cutting the budget. Shirley said that she thought that the majority of Council will support the Program. Cullen mentioned the Façade Grant and said that with economic situation, this is not the time. He said that there is no more room for grants and that does not think we needed to spend money on a Market Study.

### **Other Business**

Discussion continued among board members about trash issues, restroom clean up, and code enforcement.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05.