**CHESTER BEAUTIFICATION/TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES**

March 17, 2022

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**  Brenda Owen, Bob Lockhart, Melissa Gross, Linda Schaefer, Linda Rader, JoAnn Simmons, Carla Draves, Donella Butler

Also attending, Bob Buckham, Alderman Liaison

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Members stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** Motion to approve was made by Linda Rader, seconded by Donella Butler. Motion carried.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:**  Balance on hand $29,412.60, non-tax income $26,313.50, 2020 hotel/motel tax income $6,387.10, 2021 hotel/motel tax income $5,975.64, 2022 hotel/motel tax income $2,276.98. Stone Cottage $737.17. The report will be set aside for audit.

**PUBLIC PETITIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE:** No report.

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Hometown Proud:** No report.

**Take Pride Award:** The award will resume in May. There was discussion regarding businesses being eligible for the award. It was decided that businesses could also be considered.

**Planters:** Tony West has requested the purchase of two additional planters, to replace two that have gone missing. Planters are $300.00 apiece. The purchase of one planter was approved. Members of the Commission have removed the Christmas decorations from the planters. They have been bagged, tagged and stored at the swimming pool for use next year.

**Riverboat/Tour Programming:** Brenda distributed the 2022 riverboat docking schedule. Linda Schaefer will reach out to Patti Carter for a training schedule.

**Tourism:** The two most recent Popeye character statues, Tor and Ham Gravy, now have QR codes which will be installed soon. There was discussion regarding the placement of a change machine at the Welcome Center to aid those who want to use the Penny Machine. Discussion was tabled and will be revisited at the April meeting. Melissa will explore the possibility of finding a used change machine. For now, whoever is manning the Welcome Center when the boats dock, will keep change available.

**Historic Preservation:** Nathan Cooper, UIS master’s degree student, is now working on getting the County Museum on the Register. Even though it has been moved, he believes that it will qualify. He has also indicated that he is willing to do freelance work for the Commission after his graduation.

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Riverfront Improvement:** JoAnn reported that the stones for the riverfront project have been delivered and hopes the project will start in April.

**State and Swanwick Green Space:** At this time, a possible option is a couple of muralists from Steeleville. Also Melissa is aware of an artist, Carol Heiser. She will try to find contact information for her. Funding was discussed, it would fall under special projects.

**COMMISSION FUNCTION REPORTS**

**Public Relations:** The Chester ad is in the current edition of Tourism South Visitor Guide. It was discussed and agreed that information on the Muni Band will be submitted. The Tourism Times has a package deal ad. Brenda will discuss with Patti Carter the possibility of sharing the cost.

**City Council Update:** No report.

**Welcome Center Update:** Bob reported that the observation deck repair project is still stalled. Also, the Welcome Center needs volunteers. Loren Mott’s office is now located in the Welcome Center.

**Randolph County Tourism:** No report

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Commission Openings:** Three openings still remain.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Planters.**  Regarding the previous discussion of the purchase of one planter, Bob made and Linda seconded a motion to make the purchase. Motion carried.

**2024 Eclipse.** Members were asked to start thinking about how we will contribute to the planning and execution of the festivities. There will be programs for awareness prior to the eclipse.

**ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING:**

Melissa made and Carla seconded a motion to adjourn.

The next meeting is Thursday, April 21, 2022, 6:30 pm.