**CHESTER BEAUTIFICATION/TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES**

May 15, 2024

Call to order: 6:30 P.M.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**  Jay Cooper, Carla Draves, Barry Harle, Mary Ann Heberlie, Cynthia Lawder, Bob Lockhart, Brenda Owen, Linda Schafer, and JoAnn Simmons.

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

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** Motion to approve was made by Cynthia Lawder and seconded by Jay Cooper. Motion carried. In Melissa’s absence, Linda Schafer took notes.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:** Brenda gave the Treasurer’s report in Linda Rader’s absence.The balance on hand is $21,729.52. The Stone Cottage fund $870.47. The Penny Machine fund has $3,822.63. Brenda completed a physical inventory of eclipse items remaining and prepared a report that was sent to Bethany for determining Beautification/Tourism income from eclipse merchandise sales. Eclipse merchandise receipts to date are $2058.00. Discussion was held regarding possibly selling remaining soda at the music fest in July. A motion to accept the treasurer’s report was made by Bob Lockhart and seconded by Carla Draves. The motion carried and the report will be set aside for audit.

**PUBLIC PETITIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE: none**

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Take Pride Award:** May awards went to Jim and Darlene Young at 905 Lehman Dr. and Ren and Cassie Helmers at 1602 High Street. Please continue to make referrals of appropriate properties to Linda R. and JoAnn.

**Planters:** The plants are doing well and Scott has taken over watering duties.

**Riverboat/Tour Programming:** There are no riverboat tours scheduled.

**Tourism:** Brenda Owen again asked commission members to think about ideas for the celebration of Popeye’s 100th birthday in 2029. Bob and Mary Ann indicated one activity might involve “finding” the Popeye character inspiration individual’s graves in Evergreen Cemetery.

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Riverfront Improvement:** Jo Ann reported that 2 planters had been stolen from the riverfront, leaving 5 remaining. With the water at flood stage, work is at a standstill. The group saw photos of the signs that would be attached to the water intake building marking the year the river was at various heights.

**Fairground Place:** Cynthia reported that the conduit may have been installed.

**COMMISSION FUNCTION REPORTS:**

**Public Relations:** No update.

**City Council Update:**  No alderperson has been appointed as a liaison to our Commission.

**Welcome Center Update:** Bob Lockhart reported that 20 motorcyclists from France had stopped at the Welcome Center when he was there as well as a bicyclist from Virginia Beach heading to Oregon. Bob continues to sell postcards at the Welcome Center when he is there.

**Randolph County Tourism:** No report.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Laser projector for use on water tower–** Jay presented information about several options for a display on the water tower. Members were asked to review the materials in preparation for discussion at the next meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Bridge Demolishing event –** “Well Blow Me Down”. One idea discussed was a fund-raiser to determine a “Queen of Destruction” who would lead the countdown to demolition. Another idea was for T-shirts with Bridge photos. Many questions remain including the distance and viewing will be from the bridge and other logistics.

**Commission Membership—**Jodi Moreno has resigned her position because of work conflicts. Brenda will contact Scott Marcinkowska to see if he is interested in an appointment to the Commission.

**Any other business that may come before the commission:** The July music fest—River City Rock Out—will be held in Cole Park on July 27 from 11 AM to midnight. Discussion was held regarding putting specially postmarked postcards on ebay and listing the eclipse soda on Facebook marketplace.

**ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING:** Cynthia Lawder moved to adjourn; JoAnn Simmons seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 P.M.

The next meeting is June 20, 2024 at 6:30 PM, City Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Owen, Chair