

OTBA Minutes – March 13, 2013

Meeting began at 8:30 am

There were 29 people in attendance.

After introductions were made, the minutes from our last meeting on February 13 were approved by Kathleen Riley and seconded by Chris Finnie. Our minutes are posted on line at the OTBA website.

Nury Mena, OTBA treasurer gave the treasurer's report. Our ending balance in Fulton Bank as of February 28, 2013 is \$14,268.41. Nury also announced that the bill from the City for the Christmas lights was more than \$2,000. OTBA pays the City and then bills the members. There are still a few businesses that have not rejoined OTBA. The Guide to Shops and Services will go to print as planned. There are four new businesses in Old Town.

President Joanne Wunderly announced that on Monday, April 8 from 10 – 12 in the 2nd floor conference room of City Hall, there will be a marketing presentation by Manassas Observer, Discovery Publications, Spotlight Internet and Prince William today. Joanne urged the business owners present to mark calendars to attend. Marketing Manassas is such an expensive undertaking that we all benefit when the city is marketed . OTBA will kick in money as well.

HMI – Debbie Haight reported that the next upcoming event is Spring Cleaning Day. Debbie also urged that on Monday, March 18 at City Hall would be an opportunity for those to speak their thoughts about the City's proposed Capital Improvement Plan.

Manassas Museum – no report

Center for the Arts at the Candy Factory – no report

Harris Pavilion – Anna Marie Robinson reported that the ice skating season is over and was very successful. The pavilion is booked solidly for the warmer weather.

Manassas Art Guild –no report

Chamber of Commerce – no report

Welcome Center – Kathleen Reilly announced that Spring Break is here and that the center is busy directing visitors to interesting local attractions. Kathleen also had copies of the new Visitors Guide Magazine on the table for distribution.

Discover Prince William & Manassas (formally known as the CVB) – Wendy Vestfall mentioned that the website is up and handed out information as to how one could get their information posted. Wendy also announced that two travel writers will be in the area in April.

Manassas City Police – Chief Doug Keane thanked HMI for their support of the Officer of the Month, a program that awards the chosen officer dinner on the town. Chief Keane also reminded us that recently two police officers were shot – one in Alexandria (which is normally not a high crime/violence area) and a Virginia State Trooper was killed during an attempt to approach what looked like a motorist in trouble. It was a solemn reminder that our police are always on the front line. More foot patrols have been slated for Old Town, particularly on Thursday, Friday and Saturday in response to public drunkenness and drug arrests. This will continue during the warmer weather. Chief Keane encouraged businesses to take advantage of the security survey and the personal protection programs offered at no charge.

Joanne Wunderly added that OTBA would be happy to co-opt with HMI to support the Officer of the Month program.

Manassas Fire & Rescue – no report.

City of Manassas Council member, Jonathan Way was our speaker for this month and he informed us about the Council of Governments (COG) which is comprised of 300 elected officials from 22 political jurisdictions around the Washington Metropolitan area. The COG is non profit and supported by member dues. Manassas is a dues paying member (\$35,000). The primary focus is to tackle short term and long term issues such as traffic, economic development, environmental issues, quality of life issues that affect the region. Mr. Way is on four committees: Region Forward, CEECP, Transportation Planning Board and the Board of Directors.

The Region Forward Committee meets quarterly and its primary focus is the long term economic prosperity of the area. This includes such things as seeing that areas are ADA compliant, bike trails are present, encourage sustainable green initiatives.

The CEECP Committee meets quarterly and its short term focus is on greenhouse gas reductions and for future buildings to be certified green.

The Transportation Planning Board meets monthly and looks at the congestion in the region and how to best contain and control it. The Bi/Tri-County Parkway which has been in the planning stages for years. The recently completed Wellington overpass is an example of Federal monies helping a local transportation project. The Feds contributed half of the 50 million dollar expense.

The Board of Directors has 34 directors from the 22 political jurisdictions in the metro region. Currently the BOD is focused on gun control and the 911 system that failed during the recent Duracho storm that took the area by surprise this past year.

Debbie Haight mentioned that the Virginia Main Street communities benefit from the federal Transportation monies.

Bob Chase added that for Manassas to receive 25 million dollars in Federal funds when the dues contribution for Manassas is 35 thousand dollars was a good investment

Business announcements: What's New?

Katy Campbell of the **Hylton Performing Arts Center** was overlooked in the reports part of the program announced that the Hylton has a new daytime activity, Matinee Idols, that has appeal for the retirees. The event includes lunch, a performance and coffee and dessert following the performance. The first Matinee Idol event was catered by Carmello's and the upcoming one will be catered by Vint Hill. The Arts Alive Family Fest will be April 13 and is free to the public and features local performing arts groups in an all day affair at the Hylton.

Chip Rohr announced that the recent Ducks Unlimited gala held at the Portuguese Club was a huge success. It was the 35th annual gala.

Marcie Settle of the **Center for the Arts at the Candy Factory** announced that the Bootleggers Ball held on Saturday night was successful and that she was still recuperating from the gala.

Bob Chase said that the Freedom Museum that is at the Manassas Regional Airport will need to find a new home and that their upcoming Hangar Dance fundraiser on April 20th will be a 1940's themed event complete with swing music of the era.

Shirley Guy said that the Manassas Museum's new activities coordinator first event – a walking tour of Wellington is upcoming.

Alan Guy announced that the water tower needs repainting and that there is discussion to make it interesting – either with the 150th logo he designed for the sesquicentennial or another design that would speak to the character of Manassas.

Chief Keane encouraged people interested in the budget for the city to make themselves heard either by attending council sessions or emailing your councilmen. "The squeaky wheel gets noticed".

There was general discussion about the misrepresentation of the amount of tax increase. Concern that repetitive mention of the inflated figure would become "real" to those who are less informed.

Mary McGlone mentioned that Dublin of Old Town will be closed for renovations.

Nancy Ingram encouraged all to use the brand of **Old Town** and not Olde Towne. When branding the city, it should be consistent. The Van Meter project and the Sports

Pub both use Olde Towne and the hope is that they can be persuaded to fall in line with the rest of the businesses. On all publications, Old Town Manassas should be used and not just Manassas.

There was \$22. Collected for the 50/50 and Janet from Fulton Bank had the winning ticket and she donated it to OTBA.

The meeting ended at 9:35 am.