

**Old Town Business Association
General Meeting**

May 9, 2019

The meeting was called to order by President, Joanne Wunderly at 8:55 am.

There were 23 people in attendance.

After introductions were made, the approval of the April minutes was the next order of business. The minutes are one line. Chip Rohr made to motion to approve and Ann Hempen seconded. The motion passed.

Our Treasurer Nury Mena was out of town on business. Joanne announced that we currently have \$10,411.20 in our treasury as of 4/30/2019. We have not paid the Christmas Light bill. We plan to use some of the money for the printing of the Guide to Shops and Services.

Before the Guide is printed, participating businesses will be contacted to review their listing to include: name of the business, address, telephone number, website and a brief description. After this information is received, there will be a proof reading before printing. The plan is to print in smaller numbers so that changes can be made in a more timely manner as businesses either come to Manassas or close.

The membership of OTBA has indicated that there is a need for help in marketing our businesses and we have some money that can be used for that effort.

Economic Director, Patrick Small shared information that at CenterFuse, on going one on one counseling is available for business consultation about individual concerns. The City is paying for this service and it is free.

Historic Manassas - Rebekah Raze spoke about:

The upcoming Annual Railroad Festival will be held on June 1st.

The ever popular Jazz Festival will again be held on the Museum Lawn on June 15. The VIP ten where there is seating, food and a tented shelter is available for ticket purchase.

May First Friday event theme is "Historic Downtown Derby" held with stick pony races was a success and enjoyable.

A Battle of the Bands event will be held with judging.

The Farmers' Saturday Market cannot accept any more vendors.

Manassas Museum/Harris Pavilion - no report

Welcome Center on I 66 - Kathleen Riley had available Evacuation Guides for members. Kathleen also said that this year marks the 50th anniversary of the "Virginia is for Lovers" tourism campaign. The iconic slogan was inducted into the Advertising Hall of Fame. Kathleen also invited businesses to come to the center on Route 66 to talk about their business and have a demonstration. All you need do is to contact Kathleen to be put on the schedule.

Hylton Performing Arts Center - Carol Devany had brochures for the new season at the Hylton. She announced that the Hylton was now in 'summer mode' with activities for children and a lighter schedule. Once again, the Technical Boot Camp will be held for ages 15 and up June 15 - 19 from 9 am to 4 pm.

Manassas Police -Officer Chris standing in for Lance Rust said that almost every weekend is an event in Manassas. if one has questions about the events, you can contact the police at 703-257-8017.

Manassas City - Council members, Michelle Davis Younger, Teresa Coates-Ellis and Ian Lovejoy were in attendance and spoke about the fact that the city was busy with the budget cycle.

Patty Prince said that if one wanted to be included in the City's notification of events to go to [www.mamassascity.org/notify me](http://www.mamassascity.org/notifyme).

Center for the Arts - Jordan Exum announced that the Pied Piper production of "Annie" would be at the Hylton on Mother's Day. On May 16th, a new exhibit, "Array of Light" with works by the CFA instructors will open. The reception for the exhibit will be May 25 from 6 - 8 pm.

Guest Speakers -Commissioner of the Revenue, Doug Waldron shared figures for the fourth quarter 2016. The fourth quarter saw an increase of 10.1% Doug noted that for the year to year comparison (2017 -2018) there was a 3% increase in taxes collected. Retail was down from the previous year 5.8% while meals and lodging taxes collected were up 2.5% and 3.6% respectively.

Doug also said that there is a concern about the number of delinquent taxes owed by business in the city and that the city is aggressively pursuing collections. If one is delinquent, not only does the delinquent tax have to be paid but there is also a collection fee

Economic Director Patrick Small shared highlights of the report he was to give at the Business Appreciation Breakfast the next day.

It was a very good year for Manassas. Micron's decision to enlarge the facilities in Manassas was the largest ever capital investment in Virginia, bringing to Manassas a 3 billion dollar investment and an estimated 1,000 jobs once completed. During the construction phase, over 1,000 workers will be needed.

Additionally, other companies in the area are growing and hiring workers. Aurora Flight Services is expected to hire about 1,000. 130 people have been hired to date.

Office and retail vacancy rates are at 4% city wide with \$19 per square foot rental an average.

Industrial vacancy rates hover around 2% with an average of \$12 per square foot rental.

Other good news for Manassas as it currently ranks in the state: we have the 12th highest average wage earned, 4th highest professional salary, 8th highest health care salary, and the 16th per capita income

What's New in Your Business?

Chip Rohr said that the Spanish television channel, Telemundo, would be at the Harris Pavilion covering local soccer. The owners of that entity were here for First Friday and were very impressed.

The 50/50 raffle was won by Jan Alten who donated her winnings back to OTBA..

The meeting adjourned at 9:49 am.

Our next meeting will be June 12 th.

Jan Alten
Secretary