

OTBA Minutes – May 14, 2014

Meeting began at 8:38 am

There were 25 people in attendance.

After introductions were made, the minutes from our last meeting on April 9 were approved by Allan Guy and seconded by Bob Chase. Our minutes are posted on line at the OTBA website.

Nury Mena, OTBA treasurer, reported that as of April 30th, our balance at Fulton Bank was \$ 10,490.99.

Joanne Wunderly announced that there are many events and activities coming up. For the first Friday event in June, Center Street will be closed from Grant to Main Streets. HMI and OTBA are splitting the cost of the police that will be needed for the street closure. Tables and chairs will be set out on the street so that visitors to Old Town can sit and enjoy the musicians, Manassas Chorale or perhaps enjoy a take- out dinner from one of our many restaurants while the activities are going on. Other locales have developed their First Friday nights into a real event that is well attended. It is not enough just to be open and offer refreshments.

OTBA also purchased one of the hanging flower baskets that adorn the lamp posts throughout Old Town. Last year, the hanging baskets really added to the welcoming look that Old Town is known for.

At last month's meeting, there was much discussion about the parking issues that many feel are affecting business negatively. At that meeting, Mayor Parrish, and City Manager, Pat Pate, heard our frustration and thankfully, acted promptly. Patty Prince from the City handed out a post card that clearly states parking availability in the parking garage. A BIG THANK YOU to the City for acting promptly. In a nutshell, anyone may park in the garage after 10 am for free in any available space.

Old Town was well represented in the Virginia Living Magazine "Best of Northern Virginia" recent edition.

HMI – Anne Blewett announced many events that are coming up:

1. On May 22, Christina Skokum from HMI will be leading a FAM Tour (Familiarization Tour) for motel and hospitality businesses to acquaint them with all the Old town has to offer.
2. The Welcome Bags that Christina gives to new residents were well stuffed and enthusiastically received. She gave out 25 last month.
3. Railway Festival on June 7 posters were given out.

4. On the train rides from Manassas to Clifton that will be on the day of the Railway Festival will feature a 'princess'. Tickets are available at HMI and several businesses in Old Town.
5. The Manassas Wine and Jazz Festival will be on Father's Day, June 15th. Tickets may be purchase online.
6. National Night Out, August 5th, a Tuesday, is a city wide event in front of the Museum. The event is from 6 - 9 pm and is free. The event is to involve citizens and first responders into an event that emphasizes that we are all in it together to prevent crime.

Manassas Museum - Doug Horhota spoke about the exhibits at the museum and announced that weather permitting, the 'Movie on the Lawn' will be on Friday, May 16th. Also depending on the weather, the Cemetery Tour will take place on Friday. Beginning the 24th, there will be walking costumed tours of Old Town. On May 18th, there is a book talk, with author, Chris Makowski, on **The Last Days of Stonewall Jackson**. This summer, an exhibit of Civil War art by Robert Sneed is on loan to the museum. The museum is also hosting a program for the Miss Prince William contestants on the history of Prince William County. This is in preparation for the Miss Virginia pageant this summer..

Center for the Arts at the Candy Factory - Sally Lay stated Pied Piper Theater production of Peter Pan will be held at Garfield High School on May 17 & 18. Schedules for the Summer Sounds Concert Series and the Summer Camp programs are available at the Center for the Arts.

Harris Pavilion - no report but Joanne stated that Anna Marie Robinson said that this will be the busiest summer ever.

Manassas Art Guild -no report

Chamber of Commerce - no report

Welcome Center - Phyllis Harrison was the representative from the Welcome Center this month. Phyllis said that anyone wanting to do a 'blitz' session at the Welcome Center could contact Kathleen Riley to schedule. Fridays are especially busy times and 10 - 2 is the usual time frame.

Hylton Performing Arts Center -no report

Restaurant Alliance - Debbie Haight announced that the Taste of Old Town is schedule for June 1 st. Participants can purchase a book of 'tastings' for the event on line from HMI.

Manassas City Police -Sgt. Hilton announced that there will be increased foot patrols in Old Town this summer.

Manassas Fire & Rescue – no report.

City of Manassas – Patty Prince spoke on behalf of the fire department's program SAM (Safety Around Manassas) and the contest to design a character or logo to brand the contest. All interested, please send your logo ideas to Patty.

Discover Prince William/Manassas – Ann Marie Maher of Discover Prince William/Manassas spoke to us about the opportunities that the tourism industry offers local communities. In the almost four years that Ann Marie has been here, she has seen major changes in what Discover Prince William has been able to accomplish. Their recently re-designed website (discoverpwm.com) has seen 1000% increase in traffic in addition to receiving awards. Eighty-five percent of people who travel book travel options on line and the new website has many ideas for people to see and do. It is constantly updated with photos and events to entice visitors to come, stay and play in our area.

Ann Marie also spoke about these upcoming events:

1. FAM Tours (Familiarization Tours) in July.
2. The World Police and Fire Games to be held at the end of June and into July at which The Battlefield, the prince William Ice Center and Quantico will host activities of the games. Thousands of participants and their families are expected from all over the world.
3. 2015 National PGA Tournament to be held at the Robert Trent Jones course in Prince William
4. 2015 Sports Tourism BMX Tournament that runs from April – October.

What's New in your Business?

Creative Brush Studio is featuring a special exhibit to commemorate D-Day . It is called 'Canvassing the 1940's'. Artists Mary Reilly, Christine Raymond, Lu Harris and other local artists have contributed to this exhibition which will run June 6 thru July 19.

Bob Chase spoke about the garage parking changes that will help all of us and our customers..

Fulton Bank has a Home Equity Line of credit with interest as low as 1.9% for a limited period of time.

Ricky Simpson announced that she has a new therapist that is versed in sign language.

Also in a general discussion, inquiries about the status of: the closed Nu-Method Dry Cleaners that is for sale and most likely will need an environmental study and clean-up of the site, a new veterinary clinic being built out in the block next to the Prince

William Hospital Thrift Shop, the status of the Man Cave (which is stalled at the moment), restaurants to open – The Bone, Zandra’s and a new “island themed” restaurant to go in where the Subway was, and outdoor seating for El Cactus.

Mary Reilly asked about the need for a traffic light at the corner of Center and West Streets and whether or not the Van Metre Company is providing for a traffic light at the intersection of Zebedee and Center Streets.

There was \$34. Collected for the 50/50 and Ann Marie Maher drew the winning ticket. Nury Mena from Fulton Bank had the winning ticket

The meeting ended at 9:34 am.