

OTBA Minutes – JULY 9, 2014

Meeting began at 8:40 am

There were 28 people in attendance.

After introductions were made, the minutes from our last meeting on May 14 were approved by Bob Chase and seconded by Anne Hempen. Our minutes and treasurers report are posted on line at the OTBA website.

OTBA treasurer Nury Mena was reported that as of June 30th, our balance at Fulton Bank was \$ 8,685.04.

Joanne Wunderly announced that the July First Friday was on the 4th and that record numbers of people were in town for the event. Joanne also reminded us that we need to continue to send letters and/or emails to the City about the continuing problem of the depot parking lot closure. Not being able to park there is affecting our businesses as reflected in the first quarter report on the businesses of Old Town.

HMI – Anne Blewett announced that the First Friday in August theme is Sun, Sea & Sand and that HMI is working to have street closures on Main and Center Streets. Anne also mentioned that one should have received a survey via e-mail and that it could be filled out on line.

Manassas Museum – Doug Horhota stated that the Civil War Weekend schedule will continue to be printed as up-dates occur. The weekend events will be August 22 – 24. There is going to be a 2nd National Night Out on Tuesday, August 5 to be held at the intersection of Prince William and Battle Streets from 6 – 9 pm. The main focus of the event is Crime Prevention with the many interactive events, speakers and activities for households with and without children/

Harris Pavilion – no report

Welcome Center – Kathleen Reilly said that the Welcome Center on 66 was the scene of a 'Tourism Blitz' by HMI. Taylor Lenz gave out popcorn to visitors of the center. An intern from the Manassas Museum is in costume every Friday evening to give out information about Manassas and her presence has been quite a hit with center visitors.

Hylton Performing Arts Center – Susan Landis announced that Katy Campbell has moved to Staunton and that she will be the interim replacement for Katy's position.

The Castleton Festival Orchestra with Maestro Lorin Maazel and Mezzo-Soprano, Denyce Graves, will be at the Hylton on Thursday, July 9th for a performance of "Music, Theater, Opera".

There are two children's programs on the schedule this summer– Classical Hip-Hop with Grammy-nominated Hip-Hop artist, Christylez Bacon and classical musician, Wytold and the Music Box presented by the Synetic Theater. Both performances will be held at 11 am on Wednesdays, July 23rd and August 6th respectively.

Susan also made a pitch for businesses to become a Friend of the Hylton. Membership as a Friend includes advance notice for Hylton Extras (name performers who are in the area and are available, but not on the schedule of performances). More than 24,000 saw performances at the Hylton last year.

Center for the Arts at the Candy Factory – Candace Penders, Education Director, spoke about the summer classes that will be held at the Center. Upcoming are two classes that for adults as well as teens – Intermediate Photography Workshop and Jewelry Making (on two consecutive Saturdays). The Sunday dance session will be from 3:30 – 4 for lessons and open dance from 4 – 6.

Restaurant Alliance – no report

Discover Prince William/Manassas – Wendie Vestfall said that 4 Canadian travel writers were in town on June 26th for lunch and shopping and were impressed with Old Town.

Discover Prince William/Manassas has engaged a yearlong research project with E-Brains and Texas A & M University to determine the effectiveness of the Prince William and Manassas databases and analyze the data regarding tourism, dollars spent, length of stay and other facets of travel.

Wendie will also attend a meeting on July 21st with 20 of the Top Travel Bloggers one on one to promote Prince William and Manassas.

Manassas City Police – Very few incidences requiring police action took place on the 4th celebration. Most complaints were due to traffic flow. Officer Neely will be our new police contact person.

Manassas Fire & Rescue – Brett Bowman said that the Freshmen Fire & Rescue camp held at Osbourn High School has 16 very enthusiastic students. The campers from last year have requested another camp session geared toward them and what they learned in the first session. The Washington Post is to do a story on the camp and Fox 5 will film on Tuesday

City of Manassas – City Manager, Pat Pate spoke briefly about the number of events that take place in the city. There is always something to do in Manassas!

Delegate Jackson Miller was recognized and reported that the General Assembly had finally passed a budget for the Commonwealth, averting a shutdown of state government. The not so good news is that state tax revenues are much lower than thought and there will have to be cuts to services to bridge the gap.

Guest Speaker – Councilman, Ian Lovejoy, was our speaker for the meeting. He spoke about two projects that he has been working on. The first project is the newsletter that he sends out quarterly to constituents. Ian requested that any item you want included, to please e-mail him with the header “Constituent Services. The second program than he spoke about is the I-phone app for the city. It is easily downloaded to I-phones and one can address any number of issues, report on problems and the comment/complaint will go to city staff in real time. Anne Hempen asked what would happen if the response got too big. The reply is that it most likely won’t. At present, it is only available for I-phones.

General Discussion –

Nancy Ingram thanked the city for all that it has done and continues to do – as a long– time resident of Manassas, Nancy has seen first– hand the improvements that the city has made to enhance the lives of its citizens. Nancy also said that it is a shame that Manassas Patch only focuses on the negative and also alludes to events that do not happen in Manassas as having done so.

Ann Hempen noted that she and her husband enjoyed a meal at Monza’s on Monday night and that there were numbers of diners in Old Town. She opined that if shops were open in the evening, they would have a captive audience.

Kathleen Reilly praised the fireworks display.

Chip Rohr voiced concerns about the conditions of the Old Town Post Office building which is now for sale again. There are tripping hazards with the steps, the pot holes in the parking lot and the general unkempt state of the building.

Nancy Ingram stated that she had written to the Postmaster General about the Post Office being closed on Saturdays and for one hour each business day. It is not convenient for residents of Old Town to use the Post Office on Sudley Road as it is too crowded and has limited parking on Saturdays.

Bob Chase said that the fireworks were the “best ever” but that the clean up afterward was unacceptable. City Manager Pat Pate also expressed regrets over the trash that remained afterwards and that it would not happen again.

Jackson Miller reported that traffic leaving the city was particularly heavy and suggested that traffic lights be timed better to allow for a better flow. City Manager Pat Pate acknowledged the problems and a possible solution is to ask for help from the State Police next year to assist the City Police who are busy with the crowds in Old Town.

There was \$51 collected for the 50/50 and Chip Rohr won the pot.

THERE WILL BE NO OTBA MEETING IN AUGUST. Our next meeting will be September 10th.

The meeting ended at 9:35 am.