

**Old Town Business Association
General Meeting**

November 13, 2019

The meeting was called to order by President, Joanne Wunderly at 8:41 am.

There were 30 people in attendance. City Council Vice Mayor Pam Sebesky, Council Member Ian Lovejoy, Commissioner of Revenue Doug Waldron and Economic Development director Patrick Small were in attendance.

After introductions were made, Nury Mena gave the Treasurer's Report. As of October 31, we have \$ 10,650.81 in our treasury.

Approval of the September minutes was the next order of business. The minutes are on line. Ann Hempen from Manassas Junction B & B made to motion to approve and Bennett Whitlock of Whitlock Wealth Management and CenterFuse seconded. The motion passed.

Joanne made a few opening remarks:

The Guide to Shops and Service is now in the proofreading stage. Once complete, it will go to print. Initial printing will be small and as new members join or information changes, the Guide can be reprinted.

On December 15 th, Liberia Mansion will be open with the Museum Associates hosting an 'informational' event where businesses can have on display objects and information about their business. This is not a 'sales event' but an opportunity to showcase your business and create interest.

We will not have a meeting in December. Our January meeting is our Annual Breakfast Meeting which is a social meeting and will be held on January 22nd. Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be February 12th.

Joanne mentioned that we have not raised dues in many years and suggested that dues be raised \$25 to \$150 per year. The increase would help to cover the Christmas Light bill from the City that OTBA volunteers spend countless hours trying to collect from participating businesses.

Invited Speakers : Monica Bohringer and VetPar

City of Manassas Trash and Recycling - Monica Boehinger , Director of Solid Waste and Recycling for the City spoke about the dramatic increase by Americans of more than 25% (or 25 million tons) in trash generated in November thru December. Monica had a pamphlet, "Keep Manassas Beautiful Holiday Guide" which was distributed with many practical ideas on giving, decorating and entertaining that will lessen the impact of generated trash. The pamphlet came from an idea suggested by Ann Hempen.

There is an ongoing discussion about trash generated by businesses in Old Town and how best to recycle and minimize trash generated by businesses. Your thoughts and suggestions are welcomed!

The City is still recycling glass though many other jurisdictions have ceased doing so. The nearest place for glass to be treated for recycling is in Fairfax

VetPar - Jerry Martin and Jay Wilson spoke on behalf of VetPar which sponsors and puts on the Veterans Day Parade. The 11th Annual Northern Virginia Veterans Parade was held on Saturday, November 2. Manassas has a long history of military veterans going back to the Civil war, when many veterans of both sides decided to settle here.

The parade which had 60 units is the largest Veterans' parade in the area. Manassas had the first parade twelve years ago and began honoring vets beginning with WWII. Each year, a different group of vets are honored.

Most of the monies raised for the parade are from the sale of advertisements and memorial ads in the program magazine. Other money is through the generous sponsorship of: Tital Erosion Control, Old Towne Sports Pub, American Legion Post 10, City of Manassas, ID Technologies, Knights of Columbus, WMAL AM630, 105.9FM, WMZQ 98.7FM, Battlefield Wealth Planning, Chick-fil-a at Signal Hill, Mission BBQ Gainesville and Navy Federal Credit Union. Thank You!

It was felt that attendance, while good, was down due to the Nationals' Parade in Washington on the same day to celebrate their World Series win.

Jerry and Jay thanked the businesses of Old Town for their continuing and generous support. VetPar is a 501c3 charity and is staffed by volunteers

Historic Manassas - David Rhodes, Event Coordinator, spoke about the ever popular Gingerbread House Contest. Businesses that would like to have one of the gingerbread houses in house can contact David.

Rebekah Raze, Event Coordinator, spoke about:

Shop Small/Small Business Saturday promotion that was started several years ago by American Express will be on November 30th. HMI and OTBA have partnered to make this Shop Small more interesting by offering a \$25 gift card to shoppers in Old Town that spend \$100 total in the shops (not including restaurants) during 11/30 - 12/12. Simply bring your receipts to the Train Depot to collect your gift card. Purchases can be from multiple stores.

First Friday in December theme will be the "Jolly Old Confections". Santa also lights up Manassas on that night.

Holiday Market will be on the Museum lawn again this year on December 14th.

The Santa Train will be on November 25th and tickets can be purchased on line.

Manassas Parks and Recreation - Museum/Harris Pavilion -Kiesha Wilson-Sogunro said that the Museum is now fully staffed with the addition of Rachel Goldberg and Denae Lewis who were introduced to the membership.

The Museum is hosting a luncheon for businesses on Monday, December 16th from 11:30 to 1 pm at the Museum.

The skating season will soon begin as Ice is being made at the Harris Pavilion.

Center for the Arts - Beverly Hess reported:

More than 750 people attended the production of "Alice in Wonderland" at Metz Middle School.

“Elf, the Musical” will run for 8 shows beginning Thanksgiving weekend. Friday, Saturday nights and Sunday matinees through December 15th will give plenty of opportunities to see this holiday production.

The current exhibit in the Gallery is the art work of The Urban Sketchers on display through December 9th. On December 6th, there will be artist demonstrations and the closing reception. Several pieces have sold.

Creative classes focusing on Art for the Holidays will teach how to make a centerpiece for your holiday table or mantle, gingerbread house construction for the whole family.

The ever popular Model Train exhibit will again return to the Center for the Arts on December 16th. The show is put on by the National Trackers and features multiple displays of model trains.

In January, Pied Piper Theatre will perform “The Hunchback of Notre Dame” at the Hylton. This production features older members (ages 13 - 18) of the theatre troupe and is a musical focusing on the struggles in our lives.

Welcome Center on 66 - Phyllis Harrison mentioned that the center has a display depicting Manassas.

The film “Harriet” will be shown at Regal Cinemas and was filmed mostly in Virginia.

Hylton Performing Arts Center -Tionge Johnson mentioned that the Hylton performances upcoming are:“Taj Express”, a Bollywood musical, Aquila Theatre production of the “Odyssey”, Chanticleer mens’ performance of Gregorian chants, Celtic Music and The American Festival Pops Orchestra Christmas performance.

The ribbon cotton of the Educational Wing will be on December 3rd at 5:30 pm..

Manassas Police - Captain Tine Laguna said that the homicide that happened in Manassas was solved within a week and a half.

Captain Laguna said than on multi event weekends, it is better to keep the affected roads closed rather than close and re-open them only to close them again. Part of the issue is manpower needed to facilitate the closures.

Beverly Hess thanked officer Chris Shields for his help with closure of Main and Battle Streets for last month’s events. Street closures adversely affected the Centers’ parking lot.

Manassas City - .Commissioner of Revenue, Doug Waldron spoke about the economic trend report for the period of April through June. The good news is that Old Town as a whole is up 13.7% over the same period last year. Specifically,Retail is up by 30.4%, Lodging is up by 2.9% and Meals is up by 13.3%. Doug did explain that the figures are sent from the Commonwealth of Virginia and lag in reporting by several months.

What’s New?

Jackson Miller noted that his business Crossroads Realty has moved to Lee Avenue. His former location has been rented to a retail business.

There was no 50/50 raffle today.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 am.

We do not have a meeting in December

Our Winter Breakfast will be January 22, 2020

Jan Alten
Secretary