

Old Town Business Association

Minutes from our Winter Breakfast meeting on January 21, 2022

President Joanne Wunderly called the meeting to order at 8:35 am. There were 19 people in attendance. The City of Manassas was represented by Mayor Michele Davis-Younger, Council members Tom Osina and Lynn Forkell Green, and Economic Development Director Patrick Small.

After introductions were made, Joanne made a few brief remarks:

Joanne thanked Chip Rohr who has gone door to door to contact all businesses to participate in "Christmas Lights in Manassas", the program that has the tops of buildings lit for the holiday season. The cost to each business is \$20, \$30 or \$40 depending on the size of your building. OTBA reimburses the City and we bill each business. We bill in arrears which means that we are still collecting monies owed from 2020!

The Guide to Shops and Services is in the final stage . Many volunteer hours have gone into making the Guide as up to date as possible and correct. It is our plan to have it out to all businesses soon. The first printing of the guide will include all businesses in Old Town. Subsequent printings will include only members of OTBA.

Joanne thanked City Tavern for having breakfast each meeting.

Joanne mentioned that dues were not charged or collected last year since we were still in a holding pattern due to Covid restrictions and did not hold our meetings. The membership did vote, once meetings resumed, to increase the membership dues to \$150 per year. We have had the same dues for at least 15 years.

We did not have an official Treasurer's report, but it was noted that we have about \$10,000 in the treasury.

Joanne mentioned that our VP Darlene Renaldue has resigned . Duties of the VP include sending out the meeting notices each month. Joanne also asked for volunteers to handle the 50/50 drawing each month. Proceeds from the 50/50 help to defray the cost of breakfast which has doubled in cost. Virginia Martinez of Old Towne Veterinary Clinic has answered the call.

There were no official reports as this breakfast meeting is always more of a "get together" and socialize. Instead, Joanne asked OTBA members what went well for them during the very difficult year of Covid.

Billy Wiseman of 3 Monkeys said that his business became more involved in community events and raising money and awareness for local charities. He also said that the business was involved in doing smaller events.

Virginia Martinez of Old Towne Veterinary Clinic said that she discovered that Google Maps has a section where one can promote their businesses with an offer. Her involvement was successful. They also offered an on line pharmacy for pet owners.

Council Member Tom Osina said that he shopped Old Town businesses and made good use of the discount card from Historic Manassas Inc. membership perks.

Tom also shared that the meetings and seminars held at Centerfuse were geared to and for entrepreneurs. 1 Million Cups meetings are held each Wednesday from 9 - 10 am and participation is voluntary. Generally, there are about 25 people in attendance and problems and issues are discussed. The collective experience of those present is a helpful and safe forum to discuss issues.

Also at Centerfuse, held on a quarterly basis on a Thursday evening from 6 - 8 pm is the Elevated Entrepreneur. It features seminars by professionals in several fields and is free. It is primarily for the small business to be able to gain knowledge and guidance.

Our speaker this morning was our Mayor, Michelle Davis-Younger who spoke about her first year in office and the challenges she faced. She said that her goal is to be a "relationship Mayor" and to that end, she has worked to build better working relationships with Prince William County, the city of Manassas Park and with the School Board in Manassas.

Mayor Davis-Younger also has made being visible and involved in the community as much as possible another goal. She can be seen at the Farmers' Market each Saturday talking to residents and promoting Manassas as well as attending the many meetings and public events in Manassas..

Mayor Davis-Younger acknowledged and thanked our City Council and city staff for the work that they do to make Manassas a desirable place to live and work.

The 50/50 collected \$40 and the winner, Jan Alten donated her winnings to OTBA.

**Our Next Meeting will be February 9th and a return to our regular schedule
of meeting the second Wednesday of each month**

Jan Alten
Secretary