

Smithfield 2020 Notes from project team meeting of August 6th, 2014

Present

Jim Abicht	John Edwards	Randy Pack
Priscilla Barbour	Sheila Gwaltney	Russell Parrish
Rick Bodson	Trey Gwaltney	Peter Stephenson
Lee Duncan	Mark Hall	Judy Winslow

Admin

Rick noted that Amy Ring, Acting Economic Development Director, has replaced Lisa Perry as the County's representative to the Smithfield 2020 team.

Current funds balance is \$20,520.29; it reflects a July net payment of \$2,530 for the banner project's digitization of original art submissions. The project is forecast to be completed within its approved \$8,000 budget. There are no other outstanding commitment of funds.

Project and initiative updates

Rick reported that he represented 2020 at the August 5th Town Council public hearing in support of a change of ownership / land swap between the Town and Smithfield Foods. The proposal was approved by Council; Joyner field is now owned by the Town and several parcels in the Smithfield Center / SLT campus are now owned by Foods and are expected to be used for additional parking.

Sheila reported that a proof of a selected banner was approved and the production of 44 banners (4 copies each of the 11 selections) is underway. Mapping of banners to lamp posts with Town staff is complete and installation by Town staff will be requested this month.

Judy requested that a detailed discussion of the state's Tourism District designation be deferred pending research of Waynesboro's implementation of the program.

New initiatives

A review of recent team projects and initiatives being pushed by 2020, e.g., branding, vs. being pulled by Historic District merchants, e.g., parking on Wharf Hill, led to several initiatives:

> HAMBASSADOR Program: Targeted to familiarize merchants and staff about the Historic District, highlighting how to enhance visitors' experience in Genuine Smithfield. The program includes a four-hour familiarization tour, an online tutorial and a requirement to visit and critique three venues. The latter is intended to sensitize participants to customer service as perceived by a visitor or local shopper in other venues in the Historic Districts.

A motion to allocate economic vitality funds for an incentive program to encourage participation in the HAMBASSADOR program was approved by a vote of 10-1. Program

parameters include: Hourly staff and business owners are eligible; business owners, who are required to pay their staff for the four hour familiarization tour, will be reimbursed \$25 for every employee who completes the program; the program will be offered until October 1 or when its budget is exhausted. 2020 will announce the program and direct participants to Tourism for enrollment, Tourism will validate program completion by participants and 2020 will reimburse business owners. Rick and Terry Rhinier will work through the program logistics.

> 2020 “update social”: Patterned after the well-attended Carlton Abbott study presentation. Late afternoon, one-hour agenda discussing four relevant topics – information sharing on Point of Sale technology, update on the lamp post flower baskets initiative, idea sharing on using the Genuine brand and details on the Hambassador program. Rick and Mark will work through the agenda, venue and schedule (target: before end of August).

> Wharf Hill parking: A working group of Lee, John, Randy, Peter and Rick will review options and limitations to maximize capacity, identify the top two ranked options and agree on how to present them to the Public Works Committee at its August 26th meeting. Rick will coordinate project team logistics.

Organization updates / announcements

Historic Smithfield: A fundraising effort is underway to affect critical repairs to the 1750 Courthouse. Project launch is forecast to be November 1st.

Arts League: The Hayden’s Lane sculpture garden proposal will be presented to the Woman’s Club in an effort to recruit a project team to fully define the scope and logistics of the initiative. Cil will update as progress evolves.

Tourism: The team is re-working the Passport to Savings program (a discount card offered to visitors and honored by many Historic District businesses) and the Hospitality Hero program (recognition of superior customer service).

Next meeting: Wednesday, September 3rd, 8:30 am, Arts Center @ 319 classroom.

October meeting: Re-scheduled for the second Monday, October 8th.

These meeting notes submitted by Rick Bodson.