**Beautification/Tourism Commission Minutes**

June 18, 2020 by Zoom (Submitted by Brenda Owen in Cynthia’s absence)

**Members Present**: Jo Ann Simmons, Linda Radar, Bobbi Junkin, Brenda Owen, Mary Ann Heberlie, Melisa Gross, Linda Sympson. Tony West was also in attendance.

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting**: Minutes of the February 20, 2020 meeting were reviewed. Linda Sympson moved to approve the minutes as presented. Jo Ann Simmons seconded the motion and the motion passed.

**Treasurer’s Report**: Linda Rader’s report was presented. The Commission’s balance is $30, 019.00 The non-tax balance is $25,522.98. The Stone Cottage fund is $737.17. The report will be filed for audit.

**Standing Committee Reports**:

Anti-Litter: No report.

Banners/Christmas lights: No report.

Planters: The City Council hired Tony West as plant caretaker at their meeting on March 16. Plants at the recommended greenhouse had been sold out on Tony’s second visit even though he had arranged for the plants at a prior greenhouse visit. He was able to purchase replacement plants, plant them in the pots and work out details for watering. A few plants were missed originally, and he plans to plant them. Tony would like to move the small pots at the gazebo to Memorial Park where they will be watered by the sprinklers as they are small and don’t hold water as well as the larger pots. He would like to replace these with planters. Linda indicated that nothing had been planted or tended at the Welcome Center. Tony and Brenda will visit the Welcome Center to check this out.

Riverboat/Tour Programming: In Patti’s absence, Brenda shared that boat companies were delaying the cruise season.

Take-Pride Award: Linda and Jo Ann announced that the Sprengels on Allendale and the Bickets on Buena Vista received the award and were highlighted on the City and Commission’s Facebook pages.

Historic Preservation: Brenda reported the action on the Lewis and Clark Trail Project where a number of Chester and local sites have been featured. (<https://lewisandclark.travel/>) Brenda also explained the resurgence of the Mythic Mississippi Project with U of I professors which will focus on Chester as the gateway to French Colonial Illinois. She encouraged the Chamber of Commerce to check the website and nominate other business that may be of interest to tourists.

**Special Committee Reports:**

Riverfront Improvements**:**  No report.

Popeye Character Self-Guided tour: All is complete except installation of plaques on the statues. Brenda plans to do this with her husband Bob.

Potential park at corner of Swanwick and State streets: No report.

**Committee Function Reports**:

Public Relations: No report.

City Council Update: No report.

Welcome Center Update: The Welcome Center is maintaining minimal hours as the result of COVID-19 and needs direction to consider reopening.

Randolph County Tourism: There will be no July 4th program on Kaskaskia Island as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Old Business**:

Tourist Brochures: Work is being done on a gaming brochure.

Advertising signage on I55: In Shane’s absence there was no report.

**New Business:**

Melissa Gross motioned that the commission purchase planters for the gazebo at a cost not to exceed $500. Linda Radar seconded the motion. All present voted yes, and the motion passed. Brenda and Tony will research appropriate planters and make the purchase.

Tom Sauer has resigned from the Commission effective the end of June. Members were asked to consider who might be interested in serving on the commission since July 1 we will have 3 vacant seats.

Commission restructuring will be accomplished at the July meeting. Brenda distributed an organizational flow chart for members to consider where and how they would best like to participate.

Chester will celebrate its 200th birthday in 2029. We likely should begin thinking about how to honor this event. Also, Chester will be a site of totality during the April 8, 2024 solar eclipse.

Next Meeting: July 16, 2020 at City Hall. 6:30PM.

The zoom meeting ended at 7:10 PM.