**CHESTER BEAUTIFICATION/TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES**

April 21, 2021

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**  Linda Rader, Mary Ann Heberlie, Cynthia Lawder, JoAnn Simmons, Carla Draves, Bob Lockhart, Linda Schafer, Ray Allison, Tony West, Brenda Owen, and Melissa Gross.

Also attending: Jay Allison, Liaison to Parks, Bob Buckham, Alderman Liaison and Barry Harle, new owner of St. Ann’s property.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Members stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** Motion to approve was made by Melissa, seconded by Linda. Motion carried.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:** Balance on hand $24,449.87. Stone Cottage 737.17. The Temple Display, LTD expense was for the snowflakes and the expense to Raleigh Ready Mix, LLC was for the riverfront stones. Reimbursement to Brenda Owen was for garbage bags and glue for the QR code plaques. The Penny Machine fund now has $365.11. JoAnn moved to accept the Treasurer’s Report, Cynthia seconded. The report will be set aside for audit. Brenda sent the proposed budget to Bethany for consideration.

**PUBLIC PETITIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE:** Linda Rader introduced her cousin, Barry Harle, the new owner of the former St. Ann’s property. Mr. Harle distributed a 2022 Official Visitors Guide from Hocking Hills, Ohio, along with a trail map from the area. Mr. Harle worked with the tourism commission on developing this information. We welcome Barry to town and look forward to his improvements to the area. He is interested in joining the commission in the future.

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Hometown Proud:** No report.

**Take Pride Award:** Will begin next month.

**Planters:** Tomorrow the truck is expected to arrive, and the planting will commence. One of the 2 planters that was to be replaced was damaged in shipping. Looking forward to the new plantings.

**Riverboat/Tour Programming:** There is a tour guide class planned for Wednesday, May 4, 2022 at 10:00 at City Hall. Members were asked to check their personal calendars to volunteer for participating. At least one tour guide is necessary for each tour. Depending upon the cruise line, the number of Hop On-Hop Off tour guides varies.

**Tourism:**

Historic Preservation:Nathan Cooper from the University of Illinois at Springfield is finishing up his thesis to present. Once he has finished this, he will contact Brenda to finish the application. Following this, Brenda will accompany Nathan to Springfield to present the County Museum application to the preservation committee for approval.

Change machine: Melissa was not successful in locating a used change machine. However, there is a possibility of getting a change machine through Pepsi Mid America at no cost to us. Cynthia made the motion to place the change machine from Pepsi Mid America at the Welcome Center at no cost to the commission. Bob seconded the motion. Motion carried. Brenda will follow up. The commission will also leave some pennies at the Welcome Center until the change machine is in place.

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Riverfront Improvement:** The Riverfront Committee consists of Cynthia, Patty, Bob, Carla and Jo Ann. The parking lot at the boat ramp is completed. Across the road there will be ½ barrel planter on each side of the bench for now. The anchor will be on one side and the sign for Port of Chester will be on the other side. Need to get telephone poles to assist with the anchor. The anchor will be painted black. The committee would like two picnic tables. The picnic table that was damaged has been repaired. The stones are here and have not been scheduled yet for placement. Jay Allison reported that three fire pits have been budgeted for the riverfront. Jay Allison will be the liaison for the Riverfront Committee.

**State and Swanwick Green Space:** Cynthia reported that she has an artist that is getting preliminary designs together. The plans have been shown to Jeff Korando and they are moving forward. The mural will include the fairgrounds area. The arch into the former fairgrounds area now has a QR code attached. There will be more information at the next meeting.

**COMMISSION FUNCTION REPORTS:**

**Public Relations:** Brenda has asked Patti about getting the special packages for the publications that have widespread distribution. She reminded her that there is a deadline in early May for the Fall issue.

**City Council Update:** No report.

**Welcome Center Update:** It was noted that the observation deck remains closed. There was an additional $182.00 collected from the Penny machine.

**Randolph County Tourism:** No report

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Commission Openings:** There are still three openings. Please spread the word on this.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Refurbish Popeye murals at gazebo park:**  There was discussion about the murals on the others walls around the gazebo area. The license with Debbie Brooks is valid until 2025. Ted and Dianna Mueller are willing to touch up the mural once more. The City of Chester is responsible for the touchups. The City of Chester will need to get a bid on the cost and will discuss further. Brenda is working with Bethany Weber on a plan to pay for the painting. Debbie Brooks has the information on the smaller murals in the area.

**Create subcommittee for 2024 eclipse:** Cynthia will be the liaison and will contact Chris Martin who will be the County contact. The eclipse will be April 8, 2024 at about 1:00 PM

**Any other business that may come before the commission:** There was an 8-foot Popeye found in the barn at Kipps. The Art Guild is restoring it and it will be displayed at Roziers.

The Illinois Municipal League Review is a publication that is mailed to all aldermen in Chester. Linda Rader took pictures of our water tower and welcome signs and submitted to the publication in their call for these items. She will let us know if the pictures are published in this publication.

**ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING:**

Jo Ann moved to adjourn; Linda seconded. The motion passed.

The next meeting is May 19, 6:30 PM, City Hall.