**CHESTER BEAUTIFICATION/TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES**

February 16, 2023

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**  Barry Harle, Linda Rader, Mary Ann Heberlie, Cynthia Lawder, JoAnn Simmons, Bob Lockhart, Linda Schafer, and Melissa Gross. Jay Cooper was also in attendance.

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

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes from the previous meeting were presented and discussed. Motion to approve was made by JoAnn Simmons and seconded by Linda Schafer. Motion carried.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:** Linda Rader presented the Treasurer’s report**.** Our balance on hand was $24,812.43. The Stone Cottage balance is $847.17. The Penny Machine fund has $1,854.38. Mural donations total $2,775.00 to date. Cynthia Lauder moved to accept the Treasurer’s Report and Bob Lockhart seconded. The report will be set aside for audit.

**PUBLIC PETITIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE:** The Commission received word that the Mayor’s Secretary, Teri Crum will be retiring effective March 17th. Her replacement will be Dani Valleroy. A new email address for the mayor is chestermayor@chesterill.com

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Take Pride Award:** The award will begin again in the spring most likely in May.

**Planters:**  The scheduling for the removal of the greenery will be done on March 10th weather permitting.

**Riverboat/Tour Programming:** The American Queen has not paid their bill from last October yet. Patti reported to Linda that an agreement has been reached with the American Queen riverboat.

**Tourism:**

Update Chester brochure/map: ongoing. The map that they are currently using is not meeting the needs. There is a “senior” version of the map that Debbie Brooks uses at the Popeye Museum. Need to check status of the map updating.

Brenda was approached by Nancy at the post office regarding a special cancellation stamp for the 2024 eclipse. Brenda will follow up with Patti. Brenda has contacted Mike McClure and Tammy Grah regarding adding information about Oscar to the Library website and will create a QR code and order the plaque as this process progresses.

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Riverfront Improvement:** The Riverfront Committee consists of Cynthia, Patty, Bob, Carla and Jo Ann. Another idea was presented concerning the cutting of barrels in half and using them as planters against the poles along the riverfront side – still a plan in progress. JoAnn reported that she planted some maiden grass along with some daffodils. She is going to meet with Jay Allison about moving some rocks around. There was a discussion about watering the planters at the river front. Last summer JoAnn did the watering for the two planters. If we place another 5 planters in the area it will take too much for them to do by carrying the water. Suggested that we ask Tony if this could possible be worked into his schedule. If he cannot do the watering along the river front and at the Welcome Center then we will have to look at possibly taking turns to do the watering. Discussed the issue of mulch and dirt. Mary Ann reported that she would donate the mulch and we figured about $200.00 for the other supplies for the planters. More discussion at the next meeting.

**State and Swanwick Green Space:** Cynthia Lawder reported that the mural should be finished on Saturday, weather permitting. The total cost for the mural was $5,800.00. The Thank you notes have been sent out. The need for lights was discussed. Barry explained that he rents his floodlights from Ameren at the cost of about $10.00 per month. He explained that the pole from Ameren is already at the site and would only need to have one light. Cynthia Lawder will follow up with Ameren about the renting of the flood light. Cynthia Lawder would like to have some informational signage similar to that at the riverfront. She will check with John Reith about some photography to use for publicity.

**Eclipse 2024:** April 8, 2024 a total solar eclipse will take place. It will be the last visible one from the United States until 2045. More than 31 million people across 13 states – including Illinois – live in the “path of totality” for the event – meaning those places will see 100 percent totality. The state of totality will begin on April 8, 2024 at 1:58 p.m. and end at 2:06 p.m. The committee met on February 15, 2023. The plans are moving ahead for camp, food trucks, ordering of T-shirts, glasses, etc. The Street department has the banners. Brenda Owen sent the contact information to Patti for David Linton, the professor from Eastern Illinois University who gave a number of presentations in Chester and attended the eclipse here. More information to come.

**COMMISSION FUNCTION REPORTS:**

**Public Relations:** No report.

 **City Council Update:** No report.

**Welcome Center Update:** Bob Lockhartreported it was a slow month. He still has $45.00 more to deposit.

**Randolph County Tourism:** No report.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Christmas Snowflake purchase:** Brenda contacted Bethany after the poll (9 voted yes; 4 no response) and Bethany will order the snowflakes.

**Commission Openings:** Wendy Lochhead has been appointed to the commission with her first meeting in March. Jay Cooper attended the meeting and indicated that he is interested in joining the commission.

**Plant hanger fundraiser:**  Melissa Gross reported that she contacted Rich Inman about the metal works from Triple R Metal Works. He is checking on the price of the steel. He said it was coming down. He wanted to know how many we want to order. Melissa told him we were thinking about a possibility of 15-25. Melissa will check with Brenda as to how many were ordered last time. Melissa is waiting for Rich to get back on the price. She will continue to stay in contact with him.

**Evergreen Cemetery Comes Alive:** Brenda Owen asked Mary Ann Heberlie to chair this committee. Brenda has the information from Sandra Starr and her own file from previous iterations of this event. Mary Ann said she will Co-chair this event.

**Pens:** Brenda Owen reported that there was an offer from the pen company for ordering 1000 at 0.69 each.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None

**ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING:**

Linda Schafer moved to adjourn; Mary Ann Heberlie seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:14 P.M.

 The next meeting is March 16th at 6:30 p.m. in City Hall.