**CHESTER BEAUTIFICATION/TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES**

September 21, 2023

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**  Carla Drives, Cynthia Lawder, Bryce Hill, Bob Lockhart, Brenda Owen, Linda Rader, Linda Schafer, JoAnn Simmons, Mary Ann Heberlie, Barry Harle and Melissa Gross.

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

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** Motion to approve was made by Cynthia Lauder, seconded by Mary Ann Heberlie. Motion carried.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:** Linda Rader presented the Treasurer’s report.The balance on hand $18,805.90. Stone Cottage 847.17. The Penny Machine fund has $2,956.63. Mural donations total $2,775.00 to date. The bill from last month that was questioned was from the Cohen House. We will be reimbursed for $120.99. Allison will be bringing a check by. JoAnn moved to accept the Treasurer’s Report, Cynthia seconded. The report will be set aside for audit.

**PUBLIC PETITIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE:**

The Commission received a thank you note from Linda Rader for the memorial bench in Russ’ honor.

Carolyn Schwent called Brenda and reported that one of the bridge workers is renting property from her. He is interested in the town and Carolyn has been showing him around. Brenda sent her the narration from previous tours. Carolyn suggested a “Welcome Packet.” The packets could be dropped off at the AIMS office – the office is in the former Saberliner building. Future idea for the commission is to develop a “Welcome Packet”.

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Take Pride Award:** The two recipients for the month of August were Susan Schram of 1011 Park Blvd and Shelley Cartwright of 711 Opdyke Street. Both winners of the Take Pride Award were very excited. The winners are listed on the City’s Facebook page and the website. If anyone has any recommendations, please send your information to the commission.

**Planters:** Tony will be staying with us for the time being. He will be planting in the spring and will water until school is out. We will work on the City of Chester taking

over the watering for the summer. He will work with JoAnn down at the riverfront also. He is ordering bulbs this fall to plant in the spring. We are requesting that the city workers that are part time and paid an hourly wage do the watering at the riverfront also. Tony would like to move the planter across from the old Carpenter’s Hall to near the Han Gravy statue so both that statue and Olive have 2 pots. The concrete block in front of the laundromat also needs to be leveled or removed. In November Tony will make the plans for the spring. We are going to decorate the pots for winter after Halloween – Thursday, November 9th. Melissa has the wreaths and Brenda wants 4 of them for Stone Cottage. Melissa will take the rest to Linda Schaffer at 206 E. Olde Plank Rd. Brenda expressed thanks to Linda Schaffer for presenting the plans for the decorative pots.

**Riverboat/Tour Programming:** There will be a riverboat visit on Saturday, September 23rd. Cynthia will be a tour guide. The Stone Cottage will also be open. No payments have been received from any of the boats that have come this year. No checks for the tour guides have been issued.

**Tourism:**

Brenda Owen is still working on the new brochure which will be helpful with the welcome packet. Brenda showed an example of a watercolor notecard of the townscape from Prattville, AL. She would like to ask Beth Stumpe Bell about making a series of watercolors of Chester landmarks to perhaps use as a fund-raiser. Melissa Gross reported that the Misselhorn Art Museum in Sparta had done something like this for the gallery. She will get the information for the next meeting.

The QR code is on Oscar at the park.

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Riverfront Improvement:** The Riverfront is at a stand still waiting for the rock to be moved for a painting of a riverboat. The painting will begin soon. Bob and JoAnn will meet and set this up.

**State and Swanwick Green Space:** The dedication of the mural will be on Saturday, October 21st at 2:00 PM. Cynthia and Melissa have the invitations sent to the Mayor, City council, and Korando’s. Melissa will put the invitation in the County Journal.

**Eclipse April 8, 2024:** The Eclipse is April 8, 2024, there will be food trucks and a reading of a special book on Friday evening.

The postmark is now the required size. Brenda sent the copy to Bryce for City Council approval and then it will be sent off for final approval. She believes there will be a quasi-post office at Cohen Field to use that day. They will postmark the envelopes.

**COMMISSION FUNCTION REPORTS:**

**Public Relations:** It is time to renew the ads for public relations. The bridge picture will be replaced with the Popeye/Chester sign and will add the golf course.

**City Council Update:** Had to table the postmark due to all details not being finalized by the last meeting. This will be approved by the City Council at the next meeting on October 2nd.

**Welcome Center Update:** Bob Lockhart reported that he has 2 new volunteers. The Penny machine keeps chugging along. Bob reported that there were international visitors as well as U.S. visitors.

**Randolph County Tourism:** No additional information was available.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Evergreen Cemetery Comes Alive:** October 22 from 2:30-4:30. Mary Ann gave a report on the program. At the time of the meeting, she only had 6 volunteers. She will work on getting more volunteers and getting the information out about the characters.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Ad package for next year’s Visitors guide and Tourism Times publications:** Brenda was not sure on the package amount yet. They print 70,000 copies of these publications yearly with 28,000 for the Spring/Summer and 28,000 for the Fall/Winter. 60% off the Visitor’s Guide yearly edition and 20% off the Tourism Times which is 2 editions. Cynthia moved to purchase the ads and JoAnn seconded. Motion carried.

**Mural request from Mr. Conder:** Mr. Conder was contacted when the mural was updated at the gazebo to see if he wanted the mural updated on his building. At the time he was not interested in this and reported that he had other plans for his building. Since then he received a quote from Ted Mueller to paint the building; it was $2,000.00. JoAnn moved that we contribute ½ of the amount not to exceed $1,000.00 toward the cost of the repainting the building with the Popeye Characters on the west side of Gazebo Park. Bob seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**UPDATE:** When Brenda went to City Hall to put this on the Council agenda, she was told Scott did not own the property. This issue has been referred to the City attorney.

**Any other business that may come before the Commission:** Brenda received a calendar as a promotional item and Cynthia won the calendar for next year.

**ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING:**

Melissa Gross moved to adjourn; Cynthia Lawder seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:46 P.M.

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