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**WEST READING MAIN STREET JOINT BOARDS
AUTHORITY & FOUNDATION**

**MINUTES
MAY 5, 2008**

Call to Order

Shane J. Keller, MSA Chairman and MSF President, called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

Foundation Board of Directors Members Present

Shane J. Keller (Mayor of West Reading), President; Deborah Hutcheson (Charles Hutcheson Fine Jewelry), Vice President; Dr. Mark G. Dougherty (Penn Avenue Dental), Secretary- *arrived 6:45PM*; Lynda Kuhn (West Reading Resident), Member; Rebecca Simmons (Firefly on Penn), Member. A quorum was present.

Foundation Board of Directors Members Absent

Michael Morrill (West Reading Borough Council), Treasurer; Kevin M. Conrad (West Reading Borough Council), Member; George I. Tindall (West Reading Borough Manager), Member. One vacant board seat.

Authority Board of Director Present

Shane J. Keller (Mayor of West Reading), Chairman; John C. Woodward (Third and Spruce Café), Vice Chairman; Caitlin Degler (Berkshire Bank), Treasurer.

Authority Board of Directors Absent

Carol Wells (Sweet Surprises), Secretary; Kevin Conrad (West Reading Borough Council), Member. A quorum was present.

Staff Present

Nevin Hollinger, Main Street Executive Director; Melanie B. Weidner, Administrative Assistant and Dan Becker (Kozloff Stoudt), Solicitor.

Public Comments

There were no public comments

Approval of April 2008 Minutes

Due to lack of quorum, approval was delayed.

Treasurer's Report

Copies of the April Authority and Foundation Balance Sheets were included in member's packets. Caitlin Degler, Authority Treasurer, provided a 2007 unaudited Authority Report reflecting a net loss of just under \$4,000. Elm Street showed a net gain of \$12,000.

Ms. Degler provided a month's end report for the time period January 2008 – April 2008 that included the following:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Account</u>	<u>Net Income</u>
December 2008	Authority	\$3,920.39
	Elm Street	\$11,937.62
January 2008	Authority	\$10,834.78
	Elm Street	\$11,002.55
February 2008	Authority	\$10,075.10
	Elm Street	\$54,902.39
March 2008	Authority	\$14,201.49
	Elm Street	\$51,159.63
April 2008	Authority	\$3,765.26
	Elm Street	\$48,175.91

Motion: Approve the Treasure's report for the Authority that includes Year end 2007 - April 2008. Motion made by Mr. Woodward and seconded by Ms. Degler. Motion passed (3-0)

Executive Directors Report

Mr. Hollinger referenced his report that was distributed prior to the meeting. He highlighted a number of items:

1. He began his visitations to businesses on the Avenue within the 100, 200 and 300 blocks. Cindy Lightner, Block Captain for that area, accompanied Mr. Hollinger and introduced him to the business owners. The meetings have been good in terms of not only the introductions, but some of the suggestions that have been proposed.
2. Pending final approval of (3) grant proposals. (a) PA Department of Agriculture Marketing and Promotions allocation to be applied to the Farmers Market, amounting to \$7,000. (b) PA Department of Community and Economic Development (PCED) for Façade Improvements amounting to \$30,000. Mr. Hollinger noted that the effective date on the grant approval was defined as July 1, 2007. Since approximately \$15,000 of anticipated grant money for businesses had been expended prior to that date, he has requested special consideration be provided, that would allow reimbursement be made to those businesses. (c) Streetscape IV and V will be advertised for bid.
3. The Pennsylvania Downtown Center Annual Conference will be held in Gettysburg June 8 – June 11, 2008. A special session pertaining to Board leadership, issue updates, volunteer development and organizational governance that will be focused directly to Board members will be held on June 8, 2008. PDC has strongly encouraged Board Member participation in this session, if there has not been participation in any of the other Board directed sessions throughout this past year.
4. The audit for program year 2007 is currently being conducted by Reinsel, Kuntz, Leshner. This is the first year that audit criteria established through Sarbaines/Oxley will be utilized and therefore the audit will be focused on a number of more detailed procedural issues than have been applied in the past.
5. Main Street has initiated an intern program with Penn State Berks campus and is currently seeking to fill a position that would provide for the update of businesses and business/real estate on the Avenue. The update would include a records update within the data base. This is extremely important information that requires must be both current and accurate for information and reporting purposes.
6. Focus through the next month: (a) continue with visitations; (b) draft a number of procedural related items that appear to be non existent, including operational and financial related policies.; (c) planning for Art on the Avenue – June 21, 2008; (d) Farmers Market opening – June 1, 2008; (e) Phase VI Streetscape – plans for landscaping the large hill/bank on the 100 block of Penn Avenue; (f) future meeting with Geoff Brace, PDC staff.

Questions:

Share recent conversation with Todd Auman. A suggested use of the area located behind the Hard Bean Café was presented. It was noted that the person interested in this specific project was Joe Branford. (Following the meeting, it was learned that this discussion did not involve Mr. Auman). There was a brief discussion regarding Mr. Branford's proposal. There was positive support for the development of the site, although with the proposed use, a special codes exemption would have to be provided.

Dr. Dougherty entered the meeting and Mr. Keller stated that a quorum was present.

Motion: Approve the April 7, 2008 Joint Boards Meeting Minutes. Motion made by Deborah Hutcheson and seconded by Dr. Mark Dougherty. Motion passed (7-0)

Economic Development Team Report (Authority)

Mr. Hollinger reported that the meeting was not held due to lack of attendance. It was reported that two new businesses would be moving onto Penn Avenue. – Winedown Café & Wine bar in the 600 block and a bakery in the 500 block.

Business Association Steering Committee (Authority)

Mr. Hollinger reminded the members that the Pig Roast will be held on June 29, 2008 at Cacoosing Park. Tickets are available.

Design & Rehabilitation Team Report (Foundation)

No report

Promotion and Marketing Team Report (Foundation)

1. Penn Corridor: Deborah Hutcheson reported on the increasing Penn Corridor activities and interest. She noted the increase in the number of Reading businesses participating in June. Members were reminded of the shuttle that provides transportation through the three communities on the Corridor during the 1st Thursday of the month. Beginning in July, VF will designate a special shuttle that will continue to provide the service. Discussion is currently taking place regarding ways in which the June 5 Bike Race activities can be linked to 1st Thursday. An observation was made that there has been increasing participation among West Reading businesses, especially those located in the 500 block of Penn Avenue.
2. Cherry Blossom Festival. Ms. Hutcheson reported the program went well.

She was especially happy with the participation of Sacred Heart School and their involvement with the clothes line art. There was an overall increase in activities, including those supported by Reading along the river, as well as special events at the Reading Public Museum.

3. Art on the Avenue: Planning is currently underway. Looking for some unique ways to provide some art related activity the Friday evening before Art on the Avenue begins on Saturday.

The Exhibitor information has been sent out and there has been a good response from both artisans, as well as persons interested in entertaining.

Dan Bowers is going to be asked to help with selecting and scheduling the bands. The entertainment stage will be set up in the 600 block. Will make contacts with the businesses in that block, with the hope that they will support the use of the stage for bands.

A request to the PA Liquor Control Board for a Special Occasions permit to serve beer will be applied for within the next few days.

Event sponsors are being sought. A number of banks were suggested for sponsorship consideration.

Tent rental was discussed. It was suggested that purchasing a tent may be a more feasible option because it would then be available for future use. This option will be pursued.

4. West Reading Night at the Reading Phillies, Rebecca Simmons reported that the event is scheduled for Monday, August 4, 2008. Possible event sponsors are presently being approached.

Elm Street Program and NAC Activites (Authority)

Dean Rorhbach, Elm Street Manager was not present and a report was not provided.

Old & New Business

Giggle Works: Mr. Keller reported that he had attended an Open House at the newly proposed Giggle Works. He noted that a number of plans were being developed for the facility museum, which were presented at the Open House. A partial opening is projected for December 2008. The project will be financed through a combination of both public and private revenue. During the time of the Open House a number of pledges were made to the local match.

It was the feeling of the Board, that although the facility is not located along Main Street, Giggle Works can only help to improve the visitation and consumer spending on the Avenue.

Summer Board Meeting Schedule: There was a discussion regarding altering the meeting months during the summer.

Motion: Conduct the regularly scheduled meeting on June 2, 2008, cancel the July meeting and rescheduled the August meeting to be held August 5, 2008. Motion made by Deborah Hutcheson and seconded by Dr. Mark Dougherty. Motion passes (7-0)

The revised meeting schedule and remaining meetings for the year will be advertised.

It was reported that Ms. Marge Bligh was approved by the West Reading Borough Council to serve on the Foundation Board.

Participation of Elm Street residents in the Farmers Market. The Board encouraged Elm Street participation in the selling of produce raised in the garden area during the summer. A brief update was provided on the status of the garden plot.

Adjourn

Motion: There being no additional business to conduct, the meeting is adjourned. Motion made by Lynda Kuhn, seconded by Dr. Mark Dougherty. Motion passed (7-0)