
**West Reading Main Street
500 Chestnut Street
West Reading, PA 19611**

610-685-8854

Fax: 610-685-9061

**E-mail: info@westreadingmainstreet.org
www.westreadingmainstreet.org**



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

**MINUTES
APRIL 6, 2009**

Call to Order

The meeting was brought to order by Chairman/President Shane Keller at 6:00PM.

Foundation Board of Director 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; Michael Morrill (West Reading Borough Council), Treasurer; George I. Tindall (West Reading Borough Manager), Member; Lynda Kuhn (West Reading Resident), Member; Kevin Conrad (West Reading Borough Council), Member; Rebecca Simmons (Firefly on Penn), Member; Margaret Bligh (The Reading Hospital and Medical Center), Member. A quorum was present.

Foundation Board of Directors Members Absent

All members present.

Authority Board of Directors Present

Shane J. Keller (Mayor of West Reading), Chairman; John C. Woodward (Third and Spruce Café), Vice Chairman; Carol Wells (Sweet Surprises), Secretary; Caitlin Degler (Berkshire Bank), Treasurer; Kevin Conrad (West Reading Borough Council), Member. A quorum was present.

Authority Board of Directors Absent

All members present.

Staff Present

Nevin Hollinger, Main Street Executive Director; Melanie B. Weidner, Main Street Administrative Assistant; Joan London, (Kozloff Stoudt), Solicitor.

Staff Absent

Dean L. Rohrbach, Elm Street Manager.

Guests Present

Joseph Cacchione (Joseph Robert Clothier); Nancy Campbell (The Compleat Baldwin Brass Center); Eddie Daniels (Curious Consignments); Rita Ditsky (Seghetti's Italian Market); Donald Haines (Elm Street Volunteer); Nathalie Kulesa (Council President); Sandi McCarthy (Awards and More); John D. Pakradooni (Property Owner); Nancey Seghetti (The Mosaic Studio).

Public Comments

No comments from the public.

Approval of February 2009 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: to approve February 2009 Meeting Minutes. Motion by Mr. Conrad. Seconded by Mr. Woodward. Motion passed 12-0.

Approval of March 2009 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: to approve March 2009 Meeting Minutes. Motion by Mr. Conrad. Seconded by Dr. Dougherty. Motion passed 12-0.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Degler reported the Authority showed a loss of \$17,668.94 for 2008 year end. Elm Street showed a gain of \$2,118.15 for 2008 year end.

The Authority is showing a loss for January 2009 of \$2,623.96, a loss of \$1,725.71 for February 2009 and a loss of \$892.71 for March 2009 and currently has a negative balance in the general checking account.

Elm Street is showing a lost for January 2009 of \$4,359.58, a loss of \$5,989.12 for February 2009 and a loss of \$4,272.42 for March 2009 in the general fund but currently has \$17,385.88 in checking and savings.

Mr. Woodward questioned the prospects of future funding. Mr. Hollinger reported that the projected revenues are reflected in the current budget minus BID money. The project support revenue for Streetscape Enhancement approved and available. Operational support revenue is heavily dependant upon Borough funding.

MOTION: to approve Authority Treasurer's report. Motion by Ms. Wells. Seconded by Mr. Conrad. Motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Morrill reported that the Foundation's year to date income is \$2,945.71.

MOTION: to approve Foundation Treasurer's report. Motion by Ms. Hutcheson. Seconded by Dr. Dougherty. Motion passed 9-0.

Audit Proposals - Reinsel Kuntz Leshar (Ratification)

At the March 2009 meeting a recommendation was made to continue with Reinsel Kuntz and Leshar as auditors based on proposal responses. Two responses were obtained after sending out seven audit proposal requests. Reinsel Kuntz and Leshar came in \$200 lower than Herbien and Company.

MOTION: to obtain Reinsel Kuntz Leshar for 2008 audit. Motion by Mr. Morrill. Seconded by Ms. Kuhn. Motion passed 12-0.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Hollinger provided a copy of his report in the April 2009 board packets.

The Business Improvement District (BID) was rejected with 48% no votes. The vote shows that 52% of the property owners supported the continuation of the BID. Only 40% was required to reject the BID. As a result the maintenance contract on Penn Avenue will not be renewed. The portion of proceeds used to offset Streetscape Enhancement projects on Penn Avenue will no longer be available to the Borough.

Recent discussions with the Pennsylvania Downtown Center and the Department of Community and Economic Development have indicated that funding for both Main Street and Elm Street Programs for 2009 will continue. The department has received notice that their 2009 operating budget will be reduced by \$15 million. It is not anticipated that this will affect existing programs. It is felt that in the future, programs that receive favorable support must demonstrate a Main Street and Elm Street link. Priorities will include: bricks and mortar programs; those municipalities that look toward economic stimulus packages to generate funds; funded communities will be required to demonstrate local support and include a multi-year operating plan. These criteria place both Main Street and Elm Street in a more favorable funding setting.

West Reading had four businesses in the past four months close or announce they were closing; one new business has opened; three new businesses are pending.

Mr. Hollinger reported that the status of the Façade Grant Program money was still unknown. The application has been resubmitted in hopes of expediting the receipt of those funds. Action on the resubmitted application is being monitored regularly.

MOTION: to approve the Executive Director's report. Motion by Mr. Conrad. Seconded by Ms. Wells. Motion passed 12-0.

Streetscape Phases IV, V & VI

Phase IV has begun starting with tree removal and work on bike trail signage. It should be completed in July.

Phase V has begun and includes new pavements, infrastructure and street lighting on Fifth Avenue from the traffic circle to Cherry Street.

Phase VI includes refurbishing the hillside in the 300 block of Penn Avenue. Two issues that must be addressed are property ownership, including provision of longer term access to the property and the challenging design required for that site.

Promotion and Marketing

Mr. Hollinger reported that he was encouraged by the progress of Art on the Avenue thanks to three volunteers: Nancey Seghetti, Rita Ditsky and Nancy Campbell. Currently 75 artists have enrolled. Over \$15,000 in sponsorships have been received to date. Four frogs have been sponsored. Paint the Avenue is a program added to this year's event. Young artist will be provided a designated area on Penn Avenue to paint their original works.

A recommendation is required to close Penn Avenue in the 400, 500, 600 and 700 blocks.

MOTION: to recommend to Borough Council to close the 400, 500, 600 and 700 blocks of Penn Avenue for Art on the Avenue on Saturday, June 20, 2009. Motion by Mr. Woodward. Seconded by Mr. Conrad. Motion passed 5-0.

Taste of West Reading has been postponed for 2009. Contributions will be returned to contributors.

Elm Street Report

Mr. Keller reported the Elm Street manager is attending the Conservation District USDA Farm Service Agency annual banquet with Neighborhood Advisory Chair, David Weidenhammer. They are there to receive the Berks Country Conservation District Urban Conservation Award for 2008 for the Ten Points Community Garden.

April 18th is the Earth Day Clean Up event. Volunteers will be meeting at the community garden at 10AM. A number of local organizations have confirmed their participation. Donations have been received from Pepsi Cola and Third and Spruce Café. The purpose of this event is to clean up trash, replant gateway planters and build eight new beds in the community garden. Even with an additional eight beds there is still a waiting list for garden plots. Mr. Hollinger asked for Joint Board member participation.

Old & New Business

Borough Council has requested that Main Street, Code Enforcement and Police Department formulate a proposal to propose changes to the Sidewalk Café Ordinances. The Business Association will meet with business owners and put together a recommendation to present to the Main Street Authority board in May. At that time the Authority can either accept recommendations and pass it on to Borough Council or reject the recommendation and send it back the Business Association.

Ms. London reported that the Authority needed to approve an open records resolution policy.

MOTION: to approve Resolution 09-01 to establish the public policies to facilitate a request for public records. Motion by Mr. Woodward. Seconded by Ms. Degler. Motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Hollinger has been receiving proposals for business owners insurance as well as directors and officers coverage. Requests to bid went out to four organizations. The board asked Mr. Hollinger to shop around for lower prices and provide more information at the next board meeting.

The May 2009 Board of Director's meeting will be held Monday, May 11th instead of Monday, May 6th.

MOTION: to advertise the Monday, May 11, 2009 Joint Board of Director's Meeting. Motion by Mr. Conrad. Seconded by Ms. Wells. Motion passed 5-0.

Dr. Dougherty reported that volunteers were going to be rebuilding the playground at the school in West Reading.

Ms. Wells and Dr. Dougherty are currently working on scheduling an Atlantic City bus trip over the summer months since the Hollywood Casino trip was canceled.

Ms. Wells reported that the Cherry Blossom Festival activities on Penn Avenue would be held on April 25th. Students from Sacred Heart and St. Catherine will be doing clothesline art. It was determined that the Cherry Blossom Festival Banner was damaged and not safe to hang this year.

Adjourn: There being no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 PM.