

Old Town Battle Ground Association
Minutes of the Regular Meeting, September 2, 2009

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In Attendance

Dan Mueller, President, OTBGA
Diane Harris, Vice President OTBGA
Nola Cross, Secretary, OTBGA
Judy Ost, Treasurer, OTBGA
Kara McGhee, Member, mural artist
Mike Ciraulo, *City of Battle Ground, Mayor*
Sam Emmett, *City of Battle Ground*
Donna Graham, *NW Accounting Professionals*
Todd McArthur, *Starting Grounds*
Jane Wulff, Member
Ray Zimmerman, Citizen
Buck Heidrick, Citizen

Treasurer's Report

Checking Balance: \$2,395.31
Savings Balance: \$922.17

Old Business:

Judy opened a discussion about funding the next stage of the mural project. We currently have \$1,500.00 to spare from the general fund, with no big expenses upcoming and 2010 dues soon to be collected. For that amount, Kara could do two additional panels. Officers will vote privately on spending that money. Nola will begin developing a design for donation jugs to be placed in BG businesses.

Dan introduced the idea again of updating and redesigning our web page, since it is an important ongoing membership perk to be listed on the site. DeFreece Group does web design and has offered some assistance. Dan will get additional details. Jane suggested we review the new library website for ideas.

We reviewed National Night Out, particularly the Passport to Safety game. It was once again wildly popular. Next year, we need to communicate better with interested businesses earlier, as we had a business that decided not to participate after the game cards were already printed. It was also suggested that we simplify the rules printed on the cards.

New Business:

Last night the City of BG hosted an Open House to gauge interest and solicit input in the Old Town Revitalization project. It was considered a success; there appears to be significant interest. The next step is to summarize the input before the City Council and recommend that the project be pursued. Following that, resources would need to be found for hiring of a consultant and/or forming of a committee of stakeholders. Today's meeting attendees gave feedback to Sam Emmett about last night's Open House: the questionnaire did not leave room for thoughtful answers, more discussion was needed, a Town Hall format might have worked better. Some issues brought up today included the possibility of a one-way traffic grid with diagonal parking ("outdoor mall" approach), the reworking of the Grace Avenue intersection, and the idea of traveling to other towns to see design solutions. Mayor Mike offered his hope that the revitalization would be so comprehensive that if he were to go away for five years and come back, the city would be unrecognizable.

Dan passed out a flyer about Battle Ground Cares service project weekend coming up October 24th and 25th. There are several ways to help: Health Fair, Main Street Beautification, Food Drive, Outdoor Home Maintenance and Stream Restoration. Mike Ciraulo is chairman of the project. Let him know of any needs you're aware of, such as elderly residents needing leaves raked or firewood cut. Dan will head up the beautification of Old Town. Most will be low-skill projects like washing buildings, sweeping, raking or painting. It was mentioned that this might be a good time to wash and re-seal the mural. Buck suggested interest might be sustained by providing tee-shirts for volunteers, like SOLV. Someone else suggested that badges could be reused. See the city website for next organizational meeting dates and times.

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Dan reminded everyone that new officers will be elected at our next meeting in November. It is his intention to step down as President but remain an active member of the mural project team. Since we still do not have any real depth of active members to draw new officers from, we talked again about maybe reorganizing under the auspices of the Chamber. No one likes this idea. Teaming up with the BG Village business association was also brought up, but will not solve the problem. Mike chimed in about the importance of retaining the distinct personality and charm of the different areas of Battle Ground, i.e. BG Village, Old Town, Gardner Center, etc. Buck led us back to talking about an IDENTITY for Old Town, of getting folks excited about and actively engaged with our part of town. We should take a look at Leavenworth, Washington and Ferndale, California. Who were the prime movers and shakers and how did they motivate others and rally people? How did they make money for the projects? Mike reminded us that the City does not want to tell us what to do – the City wants us to tell them what we want.

Quick notes: The Art Walk that had been tentatively planned has been nixed due to all the empty store fronts. There is an idea afoot about moving the First Friday art event from business to business.

Thanks to Galeotti's for providing today's sandwiches.

Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 4th at noon in the Community Center.

Meeting minutes prepared and submitted by association secretary, Nola Cross.