

Prairie City Hometown Pride Committee
Prairie City City Hall
Minutes
April 24, 2017

The meeting of the Prairie City Hometown Pride Committee was called to order by Chairman Tony Ladehoff at 6 p.m.

Present: Tony Ladehoff, Sue Ponder, City Administrator Lori Martin, Mayor Chad Alleger, City Council Representative Lyle Burkett, Jasper County Hometown Pride Community Coach Jeff Davidson.

Minutes: Motion by Chad to approve the minutes. Lori seconded. Passed.

Lyle arrived at 6:07 pm.

Not-for-profit coffee/breakfast establishment - There was discussion of an article about a not-for-profit restaurant in Farnhamville, Iowa, and whether that would be something that would work in Prairie City for a breakfast/coffee shop. Jeff said he has seen this done with the city providing the building rent-free for a period of time. Sometimes it's a dilapidated structure that they have rehabbed. These are sometimes good TIF projects. There are no property taxes on a city owned property *as long as it is used for public use and not commercial use*. It was decided this is something we should keep in mind.

Regional Rail Trail Development

Keri Van Zante, director of Jasper County Conservation, said the contract for the FLAP grant was received, signed and has been returned. She is now focusing on reestablishing the trail's right-of-way. They need to complete the design and engineering work for the project to be ready to go out to bid sometime in January - March.

Lori said the offer to purchase the Prairie City section of the trail has been received and she is working on getting it sent to City Attorney John Judisch to review before it goes to council.

Jeff presented a list of proposed names from our last meeting and Monroe's meeting. He asked us to select our top one or two choices. These would be given to Keri, since it is actually a County Conservation Board decision.

Jeff said the section needed to connect with the Mitchellville trail is actually 1 ½ - 2 miles. Vern Willey will help him look at possible alignments this summer. Anyone who's interested should let him know.

Old Business

Pedal the Prairie - The Facebook event has 245 people "attending" and 2400+ "interested". Linda was checking the Travel Iowa website to make sure the Pedal the Prairie event was listed and suggested the uptown events that day be added by each event's sponsor.

Fire/EMS Building project - Jeff shared he had attended a meeting with them about 3 weeks ago. They are working towards a community needs assessment and a 3D video tour that will show the challenges and safety issues in the current facility. Lori is working on the different financing options they might have.

Farmers' Market - Sue read an update from Kirsten. She has received 5 applications so far. Contact has been made with local producers, food vendors, etc. She has sent emails to the vendors of the Newton farmers market that were provided by Graham Sullivan. The signup for musicians should be out by the end of the week, along with one for committee volunteers to manage the markets throughout the season. Signage has been ordered and she will be creating Facebook events that will feature the musicians and vendors. She welcomes any comments.

Building repair program - Jeff shared an article in the April 2nd Des Moines Register that reported on the incentive programs offered by West Des Moines to business owners in a historic district that are wanting to upgrade or renovate their buildings. There is also a program that offers grant funds for bringing buildings up to code. He shared that TIF projects are one type that is under local control and crafted however the council (and bond person) deem best.

Jeff shared a list of ideas to get empty buildings used. (Pop-up businesses, use of the display windows, allow a local artist to use the space, etc.)

Additional building lots - We discussed some options, but nothing has really developed. Sue brought up the fact that she felt we should be looking at purchasing existing properties that have been abandoned/vacant to demolish since the services (water/sewer/electric) are all already there.

Grant Status

- Prairie Meadows: \$10,000 grant from 2016 for new ambulance is on the way. Lori stated she would be sending the funds as a down payment on the ambulance because it will not be here by May.
- Prairie Meadows 2017 grants: Two applications for police and library. No word.
- REAP: Waiting for a purchase agreement to release the \$75,000 grant for trail acquisition.
- Jasper County Foundation: Sue shared she applied for a grant for the door openers through JCF in case she doesn't receive the Prairie Meadows one. In the application, she shared she would withdraw it if the PM grant was received.

Community Coach Information/Committee Information/Other business

- Nice article in both the Newton Daily News and Prairie City News on Hometown Pride's second anniversary in Jasper County.
- We will need to revisit our Vision Plan at our May meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Sue Ponder
Acting Recording Secretary