

Portage County Bicentennial Committee
May 10, 2006
Minutes

Attendance

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Mark Cheplowitz, Chair; Portage County-Kerry Macomber; **Cities** of Aurora-George Horvat and Amy Humbert, Tallmadge-Sharon Alexander; **Townships** of Brimfield-Sue Fields, Deerfield-Bill Westover, Hiram-Richard Masters and Judy Wilson, Palmyra-Sam Vechter, Randolph-Becky Carter, Ravenna-Wayne Enders and Joan Onstatt, Shalersville- Don MacLearie, Suffield-Ginger Sayre and Windham- Brian Miller; **Villages** of Hiram-Roger Cram, Sugar Bush Knolls-Jim Beal; **Guests**- Doug Sender, James Stidham and Jeff Clark

Excused Absence: Townships of Atwater, Franklin, Freedom and Rootstown, Villages of Garrettsville and Windham

Unrepresented: Cities of Kent, Ravenna and Streetsboro; Townships of Charlestown, Edinburg, Mantua, Nelson, and Paris; Villages of Brady Lake Mantua and Mogadore

Approval of Minutes

Approval of the April 12, 2006, minutes was moved by Mr. Vechter; seconded by Ms. Sayers. Upon verbal vote, motion passed with Mr. Cheplowitz abstaining.

Chair Announcement

Mr. Cheplowitz announced the upcoming 50th Anniversary of the Chagrin Falls Blossom Time Event will feature a couple of events that the Portage County Bicentennial may want to duplicate.

1. Hot Air Balloon Glow choreographed to music on Thursday, May 25, 2006 at 9:00 p.m. at 400 East Washington St, Chagrin Falls; and
2. Aerial photographic event on Sunday, May 28, 2006, 9:30 a.m. at the Main Street Bridge in Chagrin Falls to capture the residents of Chagrin Falls. This event also known as human animation will use the photograph of the community members to form the numbers 5 and 0 or possible spell out a word depending on how many are in attendance.

Impact Marketing Solutions

Mr. Sender introduced himself and his colleague, Mr. Stidham, and explained that his company deals mainly with direct response marketing. They assist smaller agencies with restricted budgets meet marketing needs. Direct marketing allows a company to immediately gain feedback and measure effectiveness. Branding and other forms of marketing can take years to monitor and develop.

Creative Services

Mr. Clark introduced himself as Graphic Designer with 30+ years of experience. He is an Aurora resident and was active in the Aurora Bicentennial and also served as past-president of the Aurora Historical Society.

RFP for Entertainment Venues, Services and Merchandise

The suggestion from the Portage County Director of Internal Services was noted and it was agreed to incorporate that comment into the RFP as follows:

Page 7, item II – a specific date for receipt of the proposals will be established.

Hearing no other changes or corrections, Mr. Cheplowitz noted that the RFP will be held until decisions regarding entertainment, services and merchandising are finalized. At that time, the RFP will be forwarded to the Prosecuting Attorney's Office for review and then to the Board of Commissioners for approval. It was noted that this process may take at least 60 days.

RFP for Soliciting Public Relations Firms for Portage County Bicentennial Celebrations during the year 2008

Mr. Cram explained that the draft RFP is written for the entire process and that once the Bicentennial Committees finalize events, budgets, etc. the RFP can be tailored accordingly. The back-up documentation (schedule of events, meeting minutes, etc.) was provided as a source of information for finalizing the necessary marketing activities.

Mr. Cheplowitz explained that the RFP should provide for basic marketing services (i.e., advertising events and logo development) as well as media services that build awareness. The winning agency will create marketing and image pieces to facilitate the potential sponsor's decision. He invited comments and suggestions from the marketing professionals.

Mr. Clark commented that it is critical to secure the services of a printer. He also indicated that the actual Marketing of Events should be a professional piece but not so flashy as to give a misperception that the Committee was overspending on glitzy materials.

Mr. Sender commented that Public Relations firms typically write the news articles or develop other types of media announcements but do not typically do the advertising/marketing piece.

Ms. Humbert agreed that a Public Relations unit may be housed within Advertising/Marketing/Graphics, but those activities are separate. Ms. Humbert also noted that to back-up documentation provided in the draft RFP would be helpful for companies in determining what exactly will be required. The PR firm can also assist by developing an organized recruitment of volunteers.

Mr. Vechter inquired about the timing to submit an article requesting volunteers and recipes for the Portage County Bicentennial Cookbook. It was agreed that the request for volunteers is appropriate but it is too early to start soliciting for recipes. Mrs. Onstatt offered suggestions regarding the cookbook as did Mrs. Alexander.

Mr. Cheplowitz requested a meeting with Mr. Cram and interested members and guests to finalize the RFP next week.

Historical Committee Update

Mr. Enders reported that he met with the Portage County Historical Society on April 19, 2006 to provide information on the Bicentennial. He also met with Dr. Widener, East Columbus Christian Church and expert on the frontier preacher.

Events Committee

Mr. Enders reported that he and several committee members met with the Marketing Staff at Geauga Lake & Wild Water Kingdom in Aurora. It was agreed to further discuss this at the June 14, 2006 meeting.

Next Meeting – Back to Sue Hetrick Building

The next meeting will be Wednesday, June 14, 2006, at 6:00 p.m. at the Coleman Professional Services Sue Hetrick Building, 3922 Lovers Lane (aka Loomis Pkwy), Ravenna OH 44266.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kerry Macomber