



Marketing and Events Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday February 1, 2018 3:30 – 4:30pm

Portland Downtown, 549 Congress St

Board members: Erik Urbanek, Matt Veith, Mike Erickson

Others present: Joyce Mongeau, Emily Southard, Dawn Tully

Staff: Casey Gilbert, Adam MacDonald, Taffy Eaton

Minute 1. Erik opened the meeting by welcoming everyone present and asking for introductions. A motion to approve the November 2, 2017 meeting minutes was made, duly seconded and unanimously approved.

Minute 2. Holiday Event Recap / Wrap-Up / Ideas for Next Year: Adam

- Tree Lighting: this event is a well-oiled machine. Santa and Rick Charette visiting the VIP area is a hit. The PSO Choir and brass performance was great. The shot of the crowd taken from an office above the square really shows the size of the crowd.
- Shop for a Cause Day: 40 stores participated. Machias Savings Bank was the presenting sponsor this year and had a kick-off event at the Middle St location. The bank will generously donate \$2,000 to bring the total contribution to \$10,000. Portland Downtown will do a check presentation at Amistad on February 14th at 10:00. All merchants and volunteers are welcome to attend.
- Elfternoon Lunchtime Shopping: this was the 3rd year of the event and there were 40 participating locations. The event was created to encourage shopping by people who are already working downtown on a Wednesday.
 - For 2018: consider incentivizing employers to be an Elfternoon Champion by offering prizes
- Merry Madness: this event is another well-oiled machine thanks to volunteers, event manager Sally Newhall and Robyn Violette. The ticket price was increased from \$15 to \$20, with a few \$15 early-bird tickets available this year and tickets sold out. 1,200 is a good attendee number for now.
 - For 2018:
 - Casey is meeting with Cellardoor Winery about a partnership around wine as well as glassware. We could see revenue grow by not having to purchase glassware and attracting more sponsorships.
 - Staff has decided to sell all tickets online, with no day-of ticket sales
 - We will discuss a price increase and different venue after the 2018 event. Mike said Holiday Inn by the Bay would like to host but feels they are a little too far away. Committee members shared some ideas for venues.
- Holiday Window Display Contest: there were 60 participating businesses this year, lots of Facebook voting and there are great prizes for the winners.
 - For 2018: Fish Window Cleaning as potential sponsor?

- Advertising summary: Adam briefly reviewed the summary of Light Up Your Holidays advertising. Mike asked whether we could track the source of Merry Madness registrations with a discount code for ROI feedback. We do for certain ads (ie. PPH discount code). The PPH insert and counter cards are very popular with merchants.

Minute 3. Looking Ahead: 2018 Events (move to the March 1st meeting)

- Downtown Worker Appreciation Day (May 3)
- Summer Kickoff Weekend – Square Hop, Shop for a Cause Day, Old Port Festival (June 9-11)

Minute 4. Old Port Festival Ad hoc Committee recommendations discussion: Erik told those present, that based on the survey of downtown stakeholders, the committee found that respondents want OPF to be a reflection of local community, arts and culture. PD staff wants to be proud of the event and changes will attract sponsorships. We need to keep revenue generation in mind too. Changes to OPF 2018 will include discontinuing carnival rides, a decreased fee for merchants in the footprint and an increased fee for artists. Vendor booth placement control will be returned to PD, and the “Maine Food” and “Maine Artists” areas will be promoted with signage. The committee is working towards a festival that reflects Portland’s culture and a less carnival/county-fair feeling. Merchant involvement with tables in front of their stores will be encouraged.

Minute 5. Other business:

- Event manual creation: Adam distributed the Shop for A Cause sample event manual he created. He is working on manuals for all PD events. The manuals are meant for future staff and volunteers and for the organization’s sustainability.
- Saturday February 3rd is the Police Awards Breakfast at Holiday Inn by the Bay. PD hopes to raise awareness of this event and will notify this committee of the date in 2019. Sponsorships cover the costs of the event.
- Casey thanked the committee for their involvement. Our events strengthen the reach of PD and we couldn’t do it without volunteers.
- Maine Historical Society has the Kapow Maine Comic Artists exhibition for First Friday Art Walk
- Emily thinks the February 2nd art walk will be a good one and attendees can see the PMA exhibit

Erik adjourned the meeting at 4:35.

Respectfully submitted,
Taffy Eaton, Recorder.