



*****DRAFT*****

Merchants Meeting
October 5, 2017 at 8:30am
Bull Feeney's
375 Fore Street

Board members present: Suzie Rephan, Robyn Violette, Erik Urbanek

Others present: Tom Largay, Megan Perron, Dan Knight, Kelly Crotty, Amanda Cahoon, Jenn Tomlinson, Steve Corman, Peter Heinz, Vanessa Pike, Joanne Alfiero, Gudrun Cobb, Barbara Meusik, Marie Stewart Harmon, Sandy Jones, Paula Jalbert, Nancy Lawrence, Denise Holmes, Matt Stone, Mary Allen Lindemann

Cadets present: Killian Kondrup, Dakota Farris, Matthew O'Leary, Josh Partridge, Kyle McIlwaine

Staff present: Casey Gilbert, Amy Geren, Adam MacDonald, Taffy Eaton

Minute 1.

- a. Suzie Rephan welcomed everyone, asked for introductions and thanked Doug Fuss for hosting the meeting
- b. Review and approval of September 7, 2017 meeting minutes: A motion to approve the meeting minutes was made by Robyn Violette and seconded by Tom Largay. The vote was unanimous.

Minute 2. Casey Gilbert asked for the cadets to introduce themselves and gave some background on the cadet program in partnership with the Portland Police Department. The summer cadets will be finishing up this week and Killian Kondrup and Josh Partridge, interns from St. Joseph's College, will be downtown Tuesdays and Thursdays through May 2018.

Minute 3. Holiday 2017 event preview: Casey Gilbert offered a brief overview of each event.

- a. Tree Lighting – Friday November 24th: Pandora's lights will be illuminated that night also
- b. Shop for a Cause Day – Saturday November 25th
- c. Nomination and selection process for non-profit recipient: Adam said there are 6 nominees and will send an email for merchant voting today with a 2-week deadline. The nominees are: Amistad, Community Housing of Maine, Frannie Peabody Center, Junior Achievement of Maine, Ronald McDonald House, Spurwink.
 - Mary Allen Lindemann mentioned that World Aids Day is on First Friday Art Walk (Friday December 1st) and Frannie Peabody house is doing a big push surrounding this crisis.
- d. Elfternoon Lunchtime Shopping – Nov 29, Dec 6, Dec 13: Suzie said that Adam can include your menu on his "day of" email if you let him know
- e. Window Display Contest – Season
- f. Merry Madness – December 7th
- g. Horse & wagon rides – free Friday, Sat & Sun afternoons beginning Friday November 24th
 - The online registration form will be emailed to all merchants next week. Adam would like merchant registrations complete by November 1st. Casey encouraged merchants to spread the word about holiday event participation to their neighbors.

- Sponsorships are available for all events
- Portland Downtown will be looking for raffle prizes for Merry Madness

Minute 4. Street Art Vendor discussion: Ad Hoc Subcommittee – Suzie is looking for volunteers who would like to work on this project. Tom Largay, Vanessa Pike, Joe Redmond, Sandy Jones, Paula Jalbert and Nancy Lawrence (for input on juried craft shows) volunteered.

- a. Set first meeting date: October 10th at 3PM at the Portland Downtown office. Suzie will reach out to a few street art vendors to include them in the discussion. Casey suggested Suzie reach out to Dinah Minot at Creative Portland to see if Emily Southard can sit on the committee.
- b. Suzie reviewed the situation and need for this ad hoc committee. Merchants need to work with the artists and the City and develop ideas to constructively deal with this retail frustration. Write a letter of advocacy with suggestions of how to engage City Counselors, to encourage an appetite for dealing with this problem for their constituency. Casey reminded those present that there are State laws that need to be adhered to also.
 - Casey said that Portland Downtown is giving the city the impetus to act on various advocacy issues with the letters our committees have produced.
 - There is street vendor task force work from the past that should be looked at. This ad hoc committee will reach out to the State Sales Tax office for input.
 - Street vendors are parking all day and just getting tickets, no boots or towing

Minute 5. Old Port Festival 2018 preview: Pros/cons/changes

- Suzie mentioned the formation of the Old Port Festival Ad hoc committee to closely examine the festival. Merchants are key to this discussion. Erik Urbanek said the event is part of the Marketing & Events Committee and needs some consideration at this time. Portland Downtown has received feedback from attendees and vendors so now it's time to reach out to merchants. Is the festival in line with the Old Port and the area we want to promote? Suzie encouraged participation – the first meeting is Tuesday October 10th at 10:00AM at Portland Downtown. Entertainment, food, vendors, set-up, etc will all be discussed. Merchants and bars will receive a detailed survey. The feedback will be very helpful to this committee.
- Identity of the event - Adam said that we received comments about the lack of culture at the festival and that we should use local vendors and talent.
- Casey said this committee came from the Board retreat. 2018 is the 45th year – Portland Downtown inherited the event. Casey also encouraged focus group participation.
- Suzie would like information on how the event started and will reach out to merchants who have been downtown for many years
- Vanessa Pike added that from a destination standpoint, culture and authenticity are key concepts to consider
- Mary Allen Lindeman encouraged Arts District inclusion in all downtown events. Suzie confirmed that Square Hop and Summer Kick-off weekend both include the whole downtown area.
- Doug Fuss encouraged a representative from the Merchant Committee serve on the ad hoc committee

Minute 6. Other business:

a. Committee updates: Amy Geren

- District & Community Services Committee (Clean & Safe issues):
 - i. Included in Capital Improvement Projects with City recommendations are Wharf Street and Monument Way

- ii. The smoke & tobacco use issue is being worked on with the City Tobacco Prevention program. Recommendations on the removal of the Butt Butlers is ongoing.
- Parking & Transportation Committee:
 - i. The Way to Go Maine commuter challenge is ongoing through October
 - ii. The Multi Modal Marketing Campaign RFP is still open
 - iii. The Parking study results will be released soon. Doug Fuss commented that he is having problems with day time employee parking. Some suggestions were made.
 - iv. The Park & Work employee discount parking program is still viable at the Spring & Elm Street garages
- b. Sandy Jones suggested that METRO's Hop on Hop Off bus should return in order to circulate shoppers throughout downtown. Suzie mentioned that Cruise Portland Maine excursion passengers are offered the option to get off at 2 other stops downtown before returning to the ship. METRO use is encouraged at the disembarking location.
- c. Gudrun Cobb mentioned that Mark Deane is opening an entertainment club at 10 Exchange Street, open 7:00AM – 2:00AM. Residential condominiums are above. The Nightlife Oversight Committee (NLOC) will review the license application. Doug Fuss said NLOC is very concerned with Mark Deane's business practices.

Next meeting: Thursday November 2nd at 8:30am, Westin Portland Harborview Hotel (Top of the East)

Respectfully submitted,
Taffy Eaton, Recorder