



Marketing and Events Committee Meeting Minutes

January 24, 2019 9:30 – 10:30am

Portland Downtown, 549 Congress St

Committee members present: Dawn Homa, David Davis, Mike Erickson

Board members: Dawn Homa, David Davis, Mike Erickson

Staff: Adam MacDonald, Casey Gilbert, Taffy Eaton

Minute 1. Welcome and introductions: Dawn Homa opened the meeting by welcoming everyone present

Minute 2. Review and approval of November 12, 2018 meeting minutes. Mike Erickson made a motion to accept the November 12th meeting minutes. David Davis seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

Minute 3. Holiday events wrap-up – Adam delivered a power point presentation

- Merry Madness -
 - Staggered arrival times worked for managing venue capacity and merchants said it helped provide a more steady flow of shoppers in their stores
 - Will add high tables in the right and left sections of the venue next year to encourage attendees to spread out. They all clustered in the middle this year.
 - Band breaks were too frequent – if they are rehired, Casey will request that they reduce the number and length of breaks.
 - Casey said she looked at lighting options but the cost would have been \$3,000 - \$4,000
 - Bar
 - Had to replenish the white wine supply
 - Had a few beer requests – might add a case of beer next year
 - Mike noticed a few attendees take a second glass of wine
 - The security team needs more training
 - The restroom locations caused some people to backtrack past the bar
 - Adam said the ticket scanning worked well. Security will wristband outside next year but ticket scanning will move inside, before the bar
 - Mike felt we could handle 500 more people. Casey said we might consider increasing the number of tickets sold by 100 to 1,300 for 2019
 - Adam confirmed that we have booked the Custom House for Merry Madness 2019
- Elfternoon Lunchtime Shopping – 3 Wednesday's, 12 – 2PM
 - Had 40 participating merchants
 - Androscoggin Bank, the Presenting Sponsor, hosted a kick-off event on the first Wednesday at their branch location on Middle Street.
 - Casey welcomed unexpected TV coverage at the kick-off event
 - The Merchant Committee came up with the name and idea for this event – it is unique to Portland

- Window signage worked well (suction cups and 3 different signs). It was a budget friendly option.
- Merchant participants did a nice job promoting the event on Instagram. Mike suggested adding an Instagram challenge in 2019.
- Positive merchant feedback is rewarding
- Window Display Contest – went very well
 - Judges looked at each window to determine the winners
- Shop for A Cause Day – Boys & Girls Club of Southern Maine is the recipient, voted on by the Merchant Committee
 - We have received \$7,800 to date with about a dozen donations still outstanding
 - Machias Savings Bank hosted a kick-off event in Post Office Park
 - Portland Community Chorus performed and visited participating businesses
- Tree Lighting – Because of a generous donation, we added a tree topper this year
 - Rick Charette is retiring so this committee can help determine entertainment for 2019
- Horse & Wagon rides – PD in partnership with sponsors offered free wagon rides throughout downtown

Minute 4. Current/Upcoming projects - Adam

- 2018 Annual report – Adam is working on our 2018 report. Do committee members have any input on anything that should be included?
 - The 2017 report was intended to provide a broad overview of the organization. Casey would like to stay with the basic format, as it was well-received.
 - Adam would like to highlight PD accomplishments and focus more on story-telling this year. Casey would like to add testimonials, perhaps from participants of the Learning Works' Graffiti Busters program and the Cadet program
 - Mike suggested including pictures of the expansion area (ie. Bao Bao, Artemesia, Pleasant Street Park, etc)
- New: Pandora's Winter Lights map
 - The map will follow the design of the Walking Tour brochures
 - We will work closely with Pandora to ensure that the inspirations for her installations are included
 - We will try to keep the map to downtown installations and will have arrows pointing to the Deering Oaks Park and other installations outside of the DID.
- Updated Walking Tour brochures
 - Several brochures need updating, due to businesses that have closed (ie. Portland Science Center, Coastal Maine Popcorn)
 - Casey might go back to the USM hospitality program to see if there are any students interested in working on updating them
 - Maine Historical Society fact-checked the historical brochures and PD made a donation to their organization as a thank you

Minute 5. A Look Ahead to Downtown Worker Appreciation Day May 2nd:

- PD and Portland Buy Local (PBL) partner to thank downtown workers. We will invite Mary Alice Scott with PBL to the March meeting.
- Three locations: Portland Museum of Art, Monument Square and Tommy's Park, 7:30 – 9:30AM
- Volunteers and staff hand out free coffee, breakfast treats, a coupon booklet, flowers and some PD swag
- We prepare for 1,200 total attendees, 400 per location
- In 2017 we offered an afternoon session at the PD office for restaurant workers or those who could not attend the morning event and will do so again this year
- Benchmark Realty, a major sponsor, handed out water bottles and activated a social media challenge
- Diversified Communications has been the flower sponsor for several years
- When Circus Maine was around, we had performers at each location
- It is a relatively simple event to produce

Minute 6. Other business/Share time – What’s new at your organization?

- Banners – we might add new ones in the expansion district but the ones we have now are still in good shape
- Downtown Worker Appreciation Day - brainstorm and discuss further at the March meeting:
 - Swag ideas for roughly \$1.00 cost
 - Sponsor ideas - who would value the audience of downtown workers?
 - Square Hop – Adam will provide committee members sponsor benefit information
- Mike asked about timing of Goal #1 work. Casey said she hopes to have final holiday financial information available for the March meeting, possibly the February Board retreat.
- OPF planning:
 - Dawn asked about bi-monthly meetings and OPF planning. Casey said the committee can always call an additional meeting if committee members feel they need more planning.
 - Casey recommends this committee or the OPF Ad hoc committee meeting annually to make sure the event is still viable
 - It has historically been difficult to attract sponsorships for OPF. A \$25,000 sponsor 10 years ago inflated the numbers.
- Dawn asked about any events PD has discontinued – Alive at 5, Winterfest. Casey indicated that the main reason, from her understanding, is that they caused the organization to lose money and were therefore discontinued.
- Making sure events are fiscally sound is very important. At this time, staff time is not accounted for in the overall cost of events.
- Adam mentioned that we have added events (Square Hop, a summer Shop for A Cause, Elfternoon) that have rounded out the event schedule. We also resurrected the Window Display Contest. The Police Awards Breakfast is mostly an internally organized event.
- Adam mentioned the Creative Portland and City of Portland event Hear, Here on February 17th at Merrill Auditorium, of which Portland Downtown is a community sponsor. A diverse group of artists will be performing.

Next meeting: Thursday, March 28th

Dawn adjourned the meeting at 10:40.

Respectfully submitted,
Taffy Eaton, Recorder.