Library Committee Meeting March 18, 2024

Present: Jaimie, Kallie, John, Marguerite, Earl, Curt, Ginny

Jaimie called us to order at 5:01 pm.

Earl volunteered to take over as Secretary for Cassandra, who has to step down from the committee. We signed a card of appreciation for her service on the committee.

Earl read highlights of the minutes from February 19, 2024. (Jaimie forgot to email the minutes to everyone.)

Jaimie asked for a vote to approve the minutes as summarized, motion passed.

Jaimie described an early conference call with a realty agent with representatives of the Village Board, it did not cover details that Jaimie hoped would have been covered, specifically what price might they be willing to offer, etc. The realty agent did not offer any advice as to reasonable market value. We were all shocked to hear that the agent charges $300 per hour!

The site was once a gas station and although the tanks were removed and soil remediated, there is still a vaguely contradictory DNR statement about “continuing obligations”, so it is not completely clear whether or not all remediation has actually been accomplished. This should be a simple answer, but it is an answer that needs to be addressed.

Jaimie did a lot of investigatory homework to make a plausible estimate of $70k which would provide D&T with a reasonable return on investment of just under 6% over the five years since they purchased the site and did the demolition of the structure. The tank removal and soil remediation were completed several years before D&T bought the property.

Curt likes the analysis of the property value that Jaimie presented, and wondered if we need to ask to expand to another realtor. Could Val connect us to a better realtor resource?

Curt wondered if we should attend the next Village COTW meeting? Jaimie noted that the actual deliberation about a purchase price would probably happen in closed session and we would be excluded from that. Curt thinks it would be useful to offer to attend and share the research that Jaimie has done. John noted that if their agenda has them going right to closed session, then it isn’t worth our time attended. But it can be helpful to provide them with information.

Community Engagement Updates

Jaimie and Curt were going to meet last week, but illness intervened.

Jaimie has been working on a rough draft timeline for community engagement, which includes developing the content and promotion strategy for a Community Open House. So even though we deferred discussion of the Open House at the February 19 meeting, we can begin the process.

John noted that he has experience with the process of putting together an Open House and he has some documentation from what Fall Creek did in their recent efforts, and he is willing to draft a document and share it with the committee. Then we can get a subcommittee mustered to develop the Open House plan further.

Kallie shared a rough draft of a web page for the building project, noting that mysterious things happened to the formatting of some sections. We liked the choice of images that she included. She has all the agendas of the committee and plans to add minutes soon.

John noted that we have not come up with a tagline for this project. It is common to come up with a catchy slogan, he’ll try to find some examples to jumpstart our creative juices. “A new heart of the community.”

Facebook and other social media: nothing has been done yet. This is where photos of library programs come into play, Marguerite offered to get some photos taken of her struggling to get in and out of the library on crutches to help tell the story about our current lack of accessibility. Goal: Marguerite, Kallie and Ginny will try to meet for brainstorming Facebook posts and gathering photos and useful artifacts in the next week.

Jaimie noted that the library is getting more Spanish-speaking patrons and we have not considered them as a constituency for the new library. We don’t have space even though we really need those resources right now!

Engineers and Grant Writing

Kallie reported that Eric Barkly (sp?) from MSA (the engineering firm employed by the village) has offered to make a presentation to us about how he might be able to help us write the grant when the time is right. Their help would not be free, but they are familiar with the village. They have experience working with municipalities to get grants, so they have grant writers on staff.

Curt suggested that we should meet with their representative to get to know them and they need to become familiar with our project. John observed that no one knows the specifics of this grant yet. Curt observed that we could benefit from establishing a relationship before getting into the details of a specific grant that is still unknown. Earl asked if it would be helpful for the engineering firms grant writer to learn about our project and what we already have developed? John is wary about giving them a blank slate of what they would talk about, but rather to cover the basics of how we would work with them to get a grant proposal written. However, he agreed with Curt that starting to build the relationship with the grant writer sooner rather than later is a good idea. We could even invite the Library Board to the meeting with the grant writer so that they would also be familiar with the grant writing process.

We resolved unanimously to have Kallie invite MSA to send someone to meet with us next week at a time to be sorted out by Kallie and MSA. Goal is to have a short presentation with time for exchange of questions. Kallie will also invite the Library Board.

Jaimie is concerned that the committee is losing steam, but all of us in attendance are still enthusiastic about the process. Curt suggested we could reinvigorate our team spirit by taking time for just socializing together.

Next meeting TBA.

The next regularly scheduled meeting was April 15, but conflicts have arisen so we will need to schedule a meeting if fast-moving action is required.

Adjourned at 6:37 pm

Minutes recorded by Earl