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TOWN CLERK

Meeting Minutes
Special Meeting
300th Year Anniversary
Thursday, January 11, 2018

In attendance: Amber Wakley, Donna Wright, Lori Gianantoni, Jean Beckley and Paul Burns.
Absent: Terry Armelin, Allyson Diana, Rick Hartenstein and Lisa Baxter.

Quorum established. Special meeting called to order at 6:37 pm

1. We began by establishing this first-ever tri-centennial meeting would serve as a brainstorming session, a time for members to initiate ideas and contribute freely to develop concepts that could best memorialize Stafford's 300 years in 2019. We agreed creating a mission statement would help identify our committees purpose while inspiring the community to become involved as sub-committee members, attendees and/or supporters. To realize success, our goal is to involve as many individuals and groups as possible. It was agreed that our mission statement should be developed over the course of a few weeks, then voted on in a meeting to follow.

2. To best determine an appropriate secretary, Amber suggested waiting until the next meeting, when additional members are present.

3. Discussion about town wide-events and observances began with the concept to commemorate the past, celebrate the present and prepare for Stafford's future. Our goal is to coordinate a series of events, learning activities, social and cultural opportunities throughout 2019. Paul suggested we start with a historical focus, denoting the growth and evolution of Town. Jean stated the importance of communicating the significance of this anniversary to all community members. To reach some of Stafford's youngest residents, she suggested we partner with our schools, developing projects for students to help them feel invested in the 300th Anniversary. Donna stated that we should also focus on town pride and offer an overall theme relevant to Stafford's identity.

4. HISTORICAL OBSERVANCES

a. Organize an art/gallery show: a month-long display that would depict Stafford's history, progress, and architectural landmarks. This would be a great opportunity to partner with the historical society, art groups, civic organizations, schools, and churches (standalone event).
b. Honor longest existing business while distinguishing bygone establishments that helped put Stafford on the map (ex: Baker's Furniture, Maple Grove), and recognizing current hometown businesses. Explore evolution of business since town's inception; share impact of mills, natural resources and industries.
c. Find the oldest: resident, building, established family, etc.
d. Honor Veterans of all wars as well as recognize enlisted residents who made significant contributions.

e. Include an oral history at one (or several) events, organizing historians to share stories about individuals, families, significant events or everyday life.
f. Explore and share the significance of the spring in which we're reputed.
g. Invite people to open their homes for historical tours.
h. Include agricultural impacts.
i. Hold essay contest, encouraging students to write history of important events within Stafford.
j. Recognize importance/impact of indigenous culture.
k. Discover how different families arrived and determined Stafford to be their home; explore and share thier origins.
l. Uncover and share stories of our founders.
m. Explore how land was divided and distributed – share information on different communities/villages/boroughs.

5. COMMUNITY EVENTS

PARADE

a. Incorporate "old" Main Street and "new" Main Street. Paul suggests starting parade at Heritage Park, travel down Main Street and end at Stafford Motor Speedway – contact has to be made with owners to determine both interest and availability. It was discussed route could be problematic with crossing through rotary (blocking traffic). Specific routes will be explored further after discussions with Public Works and applicable departments.
b. Possible groups/performers to include: Drum & Fife from Nathan Hale Homestead, civic organizations, Stafford High Bands and others from nearby towns, UCONN Marching Band, Budweiser Clydesdales (Lori has contacted), Fire & emergency services, local clubs, groups, churches and residents – all are welcome to submit participation forms. Should also consider: Governors Foot Guard, US Governors, State Reps, past & current Selectman.
c. The parade could end with a town-wide event featuring attractions like: Stafford-based restaurants or "Taste of Stafford," with menu items recognizing authentic food samplings of our settlers. Other items to consider: kids areas, music, entertainment, a marketplace/vendors, reenactments, historical observances and fair-type activities.
d. Parade/event aimed for a weekend in early-October, but need to verify Speedway schedule, Town/area events and Farmers Market schedule on Saturday.

FIRST NIGHT

a. A New Year's Eve "Gala" or event that would kick off 2019. A possible ticketed event that could serve as a fundraiser and include food, music, dancing, and various activities to kick of 2019.

6. FUNDRAISERS

While a $40,000 budget has been earmarked for the tri-centennial celebration – an amount realized by several administrations – the committee believes key fundraising events will help offset costs while increasing the number of offerings throughout the year. Preliminary conversations/ideas include:

a. Battle of the [local] Bands in Hyde Park.
b. Commemorative Books
c. Memorabilia- plates, tokens, art, etc.

d. Create sponsorship packet with amounts ranging from the low $100s upwards to $15K, encouraging participation of businesses at all financial levels and abilities. Businesses would receive a range of recognition from event-day signage to logo recognition on website, social media and various marketing materials.

7. BEAUTIFICATION

The commission believes beautification projects will honor our mission of preparing for Stafford's future, while fostering civic pride and participation among residents; roundtable discussion led to a number of ideas:

a. Identify projects in town
b. Haymarket Common needs stonework completed.
c. Identify stone walls that need rebuilding
d. Clear and landscape Hyde Park Road area, on the right-hand side going down the hill.
e. Clean up Stafford Day – in conjunction with earth day – involve town committees/groups/clubs/families, assigning specific areas to each involved. Locate grant/community funding opportunities to purchase supplies and tools; when the cleanup day is over, open a permanent "tool library" where residents can borrow items for free.
f. Encourage residents to enhance their own yards with flowers or clean up; offer assistance to elderly residents by working with organizations like the Boy Scouts, for example.
g. Meet with other groups/commissions or poll residents to determine projects they feel would have the greatest lasting impact; will help develop productive endeavors to satisfy the greatest needs.

8. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

a. Collaboration with existing town events and functions, cross-promote marketing initiatives and offer sponsorship collaboration.
b. Ask Speedway to become involved – seek old cars, memorabilia, and photos to incorporate within public gallery display or parade day event
c. Trolley Rides – tour of Stafford – use as transport to different events/happenings around town
d. Time capsule – locate previously buried capsules and extract to examine. Create separate tri-centennial capsule with photos and items representative of 2019.
e. Arts & Agriculture event or festival
f. All faiths ceremony or observance

9. SUBCOMMITTEE

We discussed the creation of subcommittees to effectively plan and coordinate the multitude of diverse events, activities, and projects. We plan to have committee members volunteer as subcommittee chairs, which will oversee specified areas/tasks and report progress/needs back to the full group. Preliminary subcommittee areas of interest include:

a. Marketing/Website/Graphic Design/Media & Promotions
b. Historical (Paul volunteered to chair)
c. Parade Committee
d. Event Committee
e. Beautification Committee (Donna has expressed interest in heading this chair)

f. Fundraising/Sponsorship

Additional research will be conducted before the next meeting to determine additional needs. Once completed, committee members will vote on specific areas and chairpersons.

10. **LOGO & TAGLINE CONTEST**
    a. Serving as a "kick-off" and way to build immediate community enthusiasm, we talked about conducting a logo/tagline contest that will invite past or present Stafford residents to submit 300th Anniversary logo for consideration. A winner will be selected amongst committee members. Incentives to participate and prize ideas include: public recognition, tickets to anniversary events, place of honor in the parade and/or commemorative merchandise items.
    b. Amber offered to create logo parameters before the next meeting – which include items such as design requirements, submission guidelines and formatting information. Donna made a motion to move forward to logo and tagline contest with a submission deadline of June 1, seconded by Jean, all were in favor.

11. In order to gain momentum and until subcommittees are formed, all present agreed to it would be worthwhile to meet biweekly. The next meeting is set for Thursday, January 25 at 6:30 pm in the Community Center Arts & Crafts Room.

12. Amber made a motion to adjourn meeting, seconded by Donna, all in favor. The January 11, 2018, meeting of the 300th Year Anniversary Committee was adjourned at 8:32pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Amber E Wakley

Amber Wakley
Chair, 300 Year Anniversary Committee
Acting recording secretary