

# **Parksley, Get On Board!**

Parksley Downtown Revitalization Project Management Team Meeting Minutes  
March 15, 2018  
Town Office, Parksley

## **Management Team Members Present:**

Paul Muhly, Accomack County  
Wayne Marshall Jr., Interim Mayor  
Dana Bundick, Resident  
Tim Valentine, Business Owner  
Frank Russell, Business Owner  
Harris Phillips, Business Owner

## **Management Team Members Absent:**

Cara Burton, ES Public Library  
Billy Graham, Business Owner  
John Aigner, A-NPDC  
Ellen Russell, Business Owner  
Mark Bowden, Accomack County  
Elaine Meil, A-NPDC

## ***Other Attendees Present:***

Curt Smith, A-NPDC  
Shannon Alexander, A-NPDC  
Dan Matthews, Resident  
Donald Kilmon, Business Owner  
Laura Kilmon, Business Owner  
Betty Farley, Resident  
Doug Ellis, DHCD  
Joe Stalgatis, Business Owner  
Letitia Greer, Town of Parksley

## **The meeting was called to order at 6:06 pm.**

Curt Smith reviewed the agenda, accomplishment goals, and possibilities for new management team membership to discuss with the Town Council.

## **Action Items**

- Tim and Cara to work on securing pro-bono marketing specialist (logo, strategy, etc.) – remember that there can be a contract that *if* the Town is awarded the full grant, then that contractor will be hired for the larger contract (between \$10k and 30k probably)
- Frank to contact Museum Board and confirm meeting date/time with Curt
- **All to promote the project (façade agreement in particular) and a Downtown Business Owner Social (which will be in April)**

## **Community Announcements**

- Island House fund raiser for ES Library on March 17 (St. Patty's Day) tickets available at Book Bin, Jaxon's, etc.
- ES Annual Tourism Summit registration open – April 9<sup>th</sup>
- Onancock "Main Street" kick off

## **CIG Planning Grant Schedule Review**

- March 2019 final application due; Pre-application due in December 2018
  - Project implementation would begin January 2020, if project grant is awarded

## **Parksley, Get On Board!**

- We're on track, but lots to do!
  - Marketing/Logo designer relationship development
  - Business owner recruitment and efforts - Geared towards façade improvement projects/funds
  - Preliminary engineering report

### **Marketing Strategies**

Synopsis of history of public workshop, meetings, identifying strengths/assets, development of the vision statement and tagline. The tagline developed during previous meetings and was confirmed via email to the Management Team is "Parksley: There's Only One".

Frank Russell identified the old tagline "Parksley: A friendly place to work and live" and an existing logo. Suggestion from many to stick with the existing logo and add the new tagline text/font for the context of this planning process. Should the grant be awarded, it will be an opportunity to rebrand and promote the Town.

Doug Ellis posed the question about using funds and best using the planning grant. The *Economic Restructuring Plan* is the goal for the next year to be prepared for the full application. It is the "game plan" to revitalize the Town and this grant is very competitive. Part of the application process scoring is the 'capacity,' which is very important to show the participation at meetings and that that participation is representative of the town and the majority of the businesses (5 businesses represented during this meeting).

Planning grant needs 3 subcontracts or relationships to be completed or established prior to the end of the year:

- Marketing Company (preliminary advice and plan for a bigger marketing contract in full application); \$10-\$30k allocated to full development and implementation of the new tagline, website, etc. (Tim and Cara looking into pro-bono effort/quote)
- Architect: Façade improvements
- Engineering consultant (PER): plan/quote for facades, streetscaping, train car, water sewer, etc. (~\$20k)
  - Use Accomack Building Code Inspector to assess downtown; preliminary research to decide where to have the engineering consultant complete work

### **Match Discussion**

From the time you sign the full contract (Jan 2020), match goes back 2 years. Typically, 'sufficient' match means 1:1; VDOT efforts can count as match; County Assessor time counts; County discretionary funds are an option. There is a need to explore the library funding (private sector and County moneys) as potential match. One contract item for pro-bono or small preliminary work could indicate that their service will extend should the block grant be awarded.

### **Economic Restructuring Plan**

Curt Smith presented progress to date.

## **Parksley, Get On Board!**

It was reported that Mr. Muhly, Mr. Matthews, and Dr. Nash met since the last full Management Team meeting to develop the objectives for Goal 2. Need a workgroup to go into the Goals/Objectives in detail and go through each project in Goals 2 and 3.

Paul Muhly posed questions for business owners: What needs do they have? Responses included: Depends on architect theme/design; Signs, awnings, flashing, bricks/mortar repaired, etc. Suggestion to look at pictures of Parksley from the early 1900s for inspiration on design. It was pointed out that years ago, almost all the taxes collected were from the business community and now the businesses don't carry the town (Walmart, etc.) and no tax increase since 1987. So much work needed for some of the buildings – makes it difficult to entice buyers or potential new entrepreneurs.

**Façade Participation Agreements are vital from as many building owners as possible, including vacant buildings.**

Curt has drafted a one-page fact sheet for educating businesses about the Building Façade Improvement Program. A Social Gathering for downtown business and building owners to be in April and include the architect (with a before/after image example of one of the buildings in town). If an owner cannot come up with cash to match the FPA; other localities have used money from the \$700k CDBG Grant as a revolving loan fund. Parksley could also explore the option of utilizing its existing revolving loan fund to support the Façade Improvement Program. Also developing signs for businesses to have in their windows indicating that they are "On Board" to spread awareness about the program and encourage participation.

### **Community Improvement Grant Projects**

Draft budget with project list was circulated to help guide this discussion.

Parking lot funds were decided to be reallocated to the façade improvements. Added ~\$20k for marketing.

Refurbishing the train cars into restaurant/accommodations as new business/economic opportunity would be eligible for funding and should be added to budget.

Enhancing recreational opportunities downtown for outdoor music/theatre.

Something unique, fun, goofy a good idea. For example: The Spuds baseball team; ex. City of Emporia: Great Peanut Festival – "Peanuts Envy;" **Need to use the Train Cars!** Have to show an operating budget for 3-5 years for the railcar business. The Town (or Museum) could run the business, so that the revenues would come directly back into the Town (or Museum).

Discussion concerning using kit-built replicas versus refurbishing and having guests stay in an original car – there is a big difference in quality and genuine nature of the experience. There is also a Community Business Launch Program – entrepreneur contest.

Lighting: Important not to just replacing of existing, but a need for new additional wiring and new light posts. Electrical issue underground on the northeast side of downtown, alternate lighting, sensors, etc. ANEC still helps as courtesy because they used to be located in town, but not a required service (including labor and the bulbs). Again, it was emphasized that block grants do not pay for regular maintenance but do cover new infrastructure.

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For the walkthrough, an easement from the property owner would be necessary and could count as match.

### **Next steps:**

- Discussion with the Board of the Directors of the Railroad Museum – need date, Frank to call Curt
- Find expert in tiny house/AirBnB expert to give advice/opinion
- RFP engineer, architect, and possibly marketing company
- Thursday March 29<sup>th</sup> 3pm Economic Restructuring Plan Workgroup
- Management Team meeting time decided on: 5:30 pm first Thursday of the month, as to precede the Town Council meetings, which are held the second Monday of each month.
- The next Management Team meeting is scheduled for Thursday April 5<sup>th</sup> 5:30pm in the Parksley Town Hall.