

Forest City Outdoor Town Action Team MINUTES

Thursday, February 2nd, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Katie Zefran called the Forest City Outdoor Town Action Team meeting to order at 6:01pm.

ATTENDEES: Katie Zefran, Deb McNamara via FaceTime, Erin Debish, Susie Atcavage, Amy Bean, Hannah Debish, Paul Daugevelo, Christopher Ginton, Richard Suraci (Kost Tire), Gus Fahey, Valerie Senese, Juliann Doyle via phone, County Commissioner Betsy Arnold, Cain Chamberlin (EMHR), Bernie Scalzo, Lauren Canfield, Paul Bechtel (McLane Associates), Christine and Justin Byrd (Machi Systems).

MINUTES: Susie Atcavage made a motion to approve 1.5.23 Minutes; seconded by Erin Debish. All in favor 5-0. No opposition. Motion passed.

A. ADMINISTRATION (Katie Zefran)

Katie Zefran spoke with FCR Superintendent to confirm the Welcome Arch progress. The Arch is complete at CTC waiting for the spring thaw. Katie will send along photos of its progress once she acquires them. Deb McNamara noted the importance of coordinating with the Rail Trail Council regarding the installation. Katie will connect with Valarie Senese, Director of RTC when the time comes.

The FCOTAT has received 2 emails in response to the outreach in January. County Commissioner Judy Herschel emailed about her support of the Team's efforts. Miss Herschel sits on the Governor's Advisory Council on Rural Affairs and has access to rural grant opportunities that she will share with the Team as they become available. Elizabeth Nagy, VP, Director of Sales, Marketing and Digital Banking for the Honesdale National Bank reached out about the Bank's Foundation which she specifically noted could help with the Center Street Park Project among other community initiatives.

B. MARKETING TEAM: (Juliann Doyle)

Juliann Doyle stated that she has been sending out the reminders about the FCOTAT meetings to the media avenues. Lynn Conrad has agreed to write the press releases while Juliann is in Florida.

Justin Byrd of Machi Systems introduced himself and his business partner Christine noting they live locally on Susquehanna Street in Forest City. He presented their plan to begin work on the Facebook account for the FCOTAT. Machi Systems would like to work with a point

person and gather assets like photos, videos, and a logo. Justin mentioned DropMark as a way to share information similar to dropbox. A signup sheet was passed out. They handed out a comprehensive worksheet to be filled out by the officers and they also recommended that the officers do some research on “what we like”. They recommended looking at other municipalities and organizations to see what type of feel we want for social media.

C. CONTINUED BUSINESS/PROJECTS

Paul Bechtel from McLane Associates spoke on the Center Street Project. He had some questions that needed to be looked at before considering the design. Those questions are as follows:

Houses are very close to the park. Are there any condemned houses there? Is there any way to expand the park footprint? Katie said she would reach out to the homeowners

Are we looking to connect the walkway to Delaware Street?

Do we know the structural integrity of the wooden retaining wall?

Are we looking to replace the metal stairs completely? Would we like ramping?

Are there utilities to be aware of for digging?

Amy Bean voiced her concerns regarding ADA compliancy.

Paul Bechtel recommended keeping continuity with the Erie Street Welcome Arch. Katie will send photos of the arch once she acquires them.

Paul said the first step is to get public input especially since there are homes so close to the park. The team then reviewed a public survey. Paul will update the survey with the results of the meeting. Survey should circulate 3 weeks. The results should be available by the FCOTAT March 2nd meeting.

The Erie Street to Main Street Sidewalk project is a go and is just waiting for the grant to go live.

FCOTAT did NOT receive any money from the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau Room Tax Grant for the 1st sculpture of the Sculpture Trail. Deb is waiting on official word from the Rail Trail Council Board for the financial support of this project. The Greater Forest City Business Alliance Board has approved their 25% match for the grant for the project itself.

A steering team must be created to work with Machi Systems for the social media accounts.

Gus Fahey of Valley in Motion reported that Forest City Borough Council will vote on a resolution at their February 6th meeting to fund the remaining 8 facade applications at a lower amount. Katie Zefran stated that she will ask Council to look at funding another round of facade grants in their 2024 fiscal year.

Hannah Debish an 8th grader at Forest City Regional has taken on leadership of the FCOTAT Junior Board. Katie Zefran will attend a school board meeting to propose to the board to make the FCOTAT Jr. Board an official club at FCR. Katie hopes the Jr. Board will run a community event in the future.

D. GRANT TEAM (Susie Atcavage)

Susie Atcavage and Deb McNamara are looking to the Creative Sector Flex Funds (CSFF) in June to write a grant for the next sculpture of the Sculpture Trail.

NEW BUSINESS/PROJECTS:

PUBLIC COMMENT OR QUESTIONS:

Mayor Christopher Glinton recommended the Team be present at the Borough Council meeting on Feb 6th as Commissioner Alan Hall will be in attendance to discuss the break from the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau and the creation of the Susquehanna County Visitors Bureau.

Cain Chamberlin of Endless Mountains Heritage Region invited the Team to their grant workshop at the Dietrich Theatre in Tunkhannock on March 10th. He also mentioned EMHR's mini grant series for the Team to look into. These grants open in April.

Gus Fahey of Valley in Motion invited the Team to a webinar on Feb. 14th 2023 regarding strategies for trails and recreational economy in rural Pa. Juliann Doyle will attend.

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next FCOTAT meeting will be held on Thursday, March 2nd, 2023 at 6pm at Elegante's Pizzeria.

Katie Zefran will attend the FC Boro Council meeting on Monday, February 6th.

ADJOURNMENT:

Erin Debish made a motion to adjourn the meeting with Susie Atcavage seconding. All in favor 5-0. Zero opposed. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 7:16pm.