

A Message From Your Executive Director - 9/27/2020

Fall, 2020

Executive Order Number 20-244 (Phase 3; Right to Work; Business Certainty; Suspension of Fines)

On September 25, 2020, Governor DeSantis Ordered Florida into Phase 3 of the Emergency Covid-19 Plan. Hopefully, we are on our way to as much of a recovery economically as possible. Our lives will never be the same as many revisions and changes have been put into place to keep us safe and healthy now and in the future. Thank you to all of our community members, NMSO members, businesses, and city partners who have weathered the storm and worked together during this difficult time. Let's continue to respect others and not be hasty to judge when planning and attending events and making decisions on how to restructure what lies ahead.

During the shut down, our office has been closed. But that doesn't mean we weren't working! The Executive Board continued to meet via Zoom and they and other volunteers continued to check on businesses and members to make sure they were safe and had what they needed. Some members made home-made masks and donated them to the cafeteria workers that were making and delivering food to students over the summer, health care workers, and others who needed them. NMSO partnered with FRLA to provide 1,000 masks to the 3 schools in Newberry when they opened this Fall. We also worked with the City of Newberry to complete a grant application for a new Farmer's Market through USDA which we should hear about sometime in October. We had a successful "Re-Open Newberry" Promotion when businesses were allowed to re-open in July which encouraged citizens to SHOP LOCAL. A new "hanging system" was installed in one room of the Art Gallery. In August, NMSO worked feverishly to apply for support through the Alachua County Commission for a Culture and Destination Grant, hoping to restructure the existing Firehouse Gallery, Studio, Office Space, and Visitor's Center into a more inviting space with room for a historical museum.

Our first face-to-face membership meeting with social distancing and also by zoom, took place September 10, 2020. We decided to meet in the Municipal Building in the future to allow more room for social distancing and larger attendance.

Proposed Projects for 2020-2021:

- *Fall Festival
- *SHOP LOCAL - Fall Promotion
- *Decorate Pocket Park for FALL
- *Art Gallery Showing
- *Complete Renovation of Firehouse Gallery/Welcome Center/Studio/Offices
- *Bike Parking Stations (1-4)
- *Historic Walking Tour
- *Christmas Lights for District Businesses
- *Decorate Pocket Park for Christmas
- *Electric Vehicle Charging Station

Kindly,

Janeice Marshall Smith

