Downtown Promotions Committee MINUTES

February 10, 2022 8 am

In attendance via Zoom: Angie Spachman, Larry Pittsley, Cal Wescott, Kelly Chesney, Mark Mannino, Devin Mielke, Linda, Katie Gentz, and Nicole Haas.

**Committee Purpose Statement:** The Greater Freeport Partnership Downtown Promotions Committee strives to engage businesses and visitors to Downtown Freeport by organizing and promoting special events and initiatives for businesses, retailers and restaurants. The goal of the committee’s efforts is to (1) increase sales to stores and restaurants, (2) increase traffic for future stops, (3) provide entertainment for positive quality of life for area residents.

1. Review of Annual Event list & festival district days. Current list of all events downtown includes:
   1. January 14-February 28 - Downtown Winter Mania Punch Card - 29 Participating businesses
   2. March 5 – Arctic Ale & Art Walk & Festival District Day –11 participating businesses plus 5 bars for festival district day.
   3. March 19 – Downtown Pub Crawl
   4. April 9 - Back Country Roads Concert @ Masonic
   5. April 23 – Pretzel Fest –Katie working on new vendors and talent acts.
   6. May 6 – Festival District Day & Food Truck Friday
   7. May 14 – Farmer’s Market Opens & World Migratory Bird Day in Art Plaza
   8. May 21 - Pretzel City Winefest & Festival District Day
   9. June 3 – Music on Chicago, Food Truck Friday & Festival District Day
   10. July 1– Music on Chicago, Food Truck Friday & Festival District Day
   11. August 5 – Music on Chicago, Food Truck Friday & Festival District Day
   12. August 13 – Cruise Night
   13. August 26-27 – Eats & Beats, Paint the Port & Festival District (27), Lincoln-Douglas Commemoration (28)
   14. September 2 – Festival District Day
   15. September 24 – Pretzel City Brewfest
   16. October 7 – Festival District Day
   17. October 13 – Wine & Withes, Festival District Day
   18. November – Masonic Concert
   19. November 19-20 – Mistletoe Walk
   20. November 26 – Small Business Saturday
   21. December 15 – Business After Hours Stroll
2. Standard hours – Discussion concerning having set hours for promotion. While no store is required to work within these hours, these would be what the Partnership will promote as prime times to shop downtown. Change is hard, and people own their own business with little extra staff and we understand not everyone can accommodate. However, largest complaint is that when people come downtown, stores are not open.
3. Mistletoe Walk Surveys – Tabled to March
4. Sound system – Nicole has called about installing internet to 27 W. Stephenson. It would cost roughly $80/mo between Pandora subscription and internet line to get it running. Marketing portion of Neverly concert funds can be used to pay for this until a more long-term solution is determined. Some speakers could be disrupted by Chicago Avenue and could be replaced with new technology. Cal and Larry would like to look into how commercials could be included in feed to help pay for music. Cal and Larry also talking to City Public Works about how system could be moved.
5. Chicago Ave Reconstruction – Partnership and City are waiting on the announcement for the final bid, this should be in April. Once we get this we will start a marketing campaign on the process. Hard to release much information now as so much is still unknown.
6. Getting visitors from event into stores  
   Andrea and Nicole have contacted Main Street Illinois and they are working on a program to provide to business owners hopefully in March.

Adjourned at 9:10 am.

Next Meeting Date: March 10, 2022 at 8 am at Partnership Office.