

**Jan. 8, 2013 Draft Meeting Minutes:
8-9 a.m. Montague Public Safety Complex, Turnpike Road**

Attendees:

Stephan Smith, AH Rist Insurance
Lynne Rudié, Graphic design
Eileen Dowd, Carriage House Designs
Holly Givens, freelance writer
Linda Ackerman, Greenfield Savings Bank
Stacey Langnecht, Hotsapp Woodworks
Veronica Phaneuf, About Face Computers
Jack Nelson, Carriage House Designs
Kara McLaughlin, Gill-Montague Community Partnership

1. Association updates

- a. Dues billing (Holly)—Expect a dues renewal request by the end of the month. Thanks to RiverCulture for sending in a renewal already!
- b. Financial update (Holly)—We have about \$3900 in the bank; not expecting any major expenses in the next few weeks. Will have an estimate of annual expenses at the next meeting, and a profit and loss.
- c. Steering Committee opening
 - i. Used to be four; now there's a new opening
 - ii. One person stepped forward so far—Linda Ackerman
 - iii. Duties: meetings every other month; considers what the association wants to do; no job description; public face of the association; no officers; steering committee is the leadership; discussion about the size of the group—there could be more people on the committee; supports the mission
 - iv. Veronica—move to accept Linda Ackerman as a new member of the steering committee; Nomination accepted; Linda Ackerman unanimously voted to the steering committee. If anyone else steps forward, they could be considered at the next meeting.

2. Grant program update

Lynne Rudié presented the draft grant program to the group. The application encourages brevity. For the most part, we know each other; we just need to understand how grant money might be used. The proposed grants would cover expenses other than labor, and are on a reimbursement basis. Grant applications would be due May 1, and announced in June. Steering committee will do the first

couple rounds of grants. This program could be a good way to develop a first subcommittee.

Discussion points:

Does the money need to be used in the same year? No. It may be useful to put a 'use by' date in the program, so we know if we can regrant the funds. Veronica to put together a sentence or two about that.

Put application online; consider do surveys/or feedback forms about the grant projects, but keep it simple/in line with the amounts of money in the grant

Other ideas:

MBA could hire someone to represent MBA to sponsor a business to fill store fronts.

Sometimes it's for businesses to find information about developing a business in Montague; have a mentor/guide for new businesses, sort of a Welcome Wagon or folder of services highlighting MBA members

Is there a position that MBA would like to take about empty store fronts? Talk to recent new businesses about the steps they went through to get going
Walter at might be a good guest at an upcoming meeting to help businesses understand town hall resources; Mark Abrahamson (industrial real estate) might also be a useful contact.

3. Upcoming events update from event planners

Gill/Montague Community Partnership: Block Party is probably not happening; no revenue besides vendors, so not enough funding to pay an organizer; other events have higher rates of sales, so have money coming in;

RiverCulture: Working on getting the Pop-up shop going as a long term venture; considering a couple night out events in March and June, along the lines of December's "Wonderful Night in Turners Falls"

Pumpkinfest: Organizer Mike Nelson is open to ideas/feedback. The Fest will be Oct. 19; He will be leaving Third street open until 1:30; left more spaces between vendors to encourage and allow people to walk along the sidewalk and get to businesses.

Halloween: Rag/Shag Trick or Treat—Linda to organize. The Rag/Shag is always on Halloween proper.

4. Member Announcements

Gill/Montague Community Partnership: We're planning a project this spring to encourage bike helmet use—ideas include a BMX bike show; helmet safety at downtown; decorating helmets; a used helmet exchange; would MBA want to sponsor an ad in newspaper in conjunction with this?; We're looking for businesses that might want to sponsor or get involved.

One person observed that some of the downtown businesses have not made curb cuts through the snow to enable customers to get to their businesses. Be smart—help people get through the snow!

Adjourn and mingle