

CITY OF
WEST CHICAGO

WHERE HISTORY & PROGRESS MEET

Approved 2-19-09

MINUTES

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Thursday, January 15, 2009, 7:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order, Roll Call and Establishment of a Quorum.

Chairman Stout called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Roll Call found Chairman Rebecca Stout, Alderman Joseph Gianforte, Alderman Russell Radkiewicz and Alderman James Smith present. Quorum recognized.

Also in attendance was Director of Museum and Cultural Services, LuAnn Bombard.

Alderman Alan Murphy arrived at 7:13 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes.

Community Affairs Committee meeting of August 21, 2008: Alderman Gianforte moved, seconded by Alderman Radkiewicz, to approve the minutes of August 21, 2008, without any changes. Voting Yeah: Chairman Stout, Alderman Gianforte, Alderman Radkiewicz and Alderman Smith. Voting Nay: None. Motion carried.

3. Public Participation.

Chairman Stout asked if there was anyone in attendance for general Public Participation, and found no one in attendance.

4. Items for Consent.

A. Update of Museum Strategic Plan.

A printed copy of the West Chicago City Museum Strategic Planning Framework 2008-2009 was distributed to the committee members. Ms. Bombard gave a brief overview of several upcoming exhibits and noted that those items crossed out on the outline had already taken place.

The quilt exhibit is currently up. *Mexican Contributions to West Chicago through Oral Histories* will be going up in the next two weeks, after arriving from the fabricator. This traveling exhibit will be going to the University of Illinois, the National Mexican Museum in Chicago and several other venues. *Changing Worlds* will be another traveling exhibit that the museum will display for three months.

Anni Holm is working with the Danish Consulate to include another artist in the Artist In Residency program for 2009, which will be paid for through grants. ArtXposium raised about Two Thousand Two Hundred dollars (\$2,200) last year to help fund the program. A Mexican artist from Chicago might become a second resident in the program, without incurring additional housing costs.

The Last Great Necessity exhibit will be about funerals and dying. The museum has a lot of material that can be presented in a positive way, including costumes, mourning customs, hair jewelry, and Day of the Dead customs.

The second floor railroad panels will be re-done. The museum is working with the Friends of the Museum on the Railroad Depot. The building is now ADA compliant with the installation of a sidewalk. The Burlington Route Historical Society will be hosting their state annual meeting at the depot in April, 2009, which will be the kick-off of the exterior restoration of the building. The electric and lights are finished. Exterior work will include new windows and replacement of boards on the back of the building.

City Hall will become an extension of Gallery 200 as artwork will be hung in the hallway on a rotating basis. Three permanent panels will be added to the hallway providing a general history of West Chicago with additional rotating historical displays. Funding for the City Hall exhibits will not come from the museum budget.

The Day Camp from summer 2008 was very successful. Therefore, the museum will offer three additional Day Camps during summer 2009. The first Drop In program will be offered on January 16, 2009. Students that are off of school for the day can “drop in” to participate in a quilt-based project, coinciding with the current exhibit. A second Drop In program is scheduled in April, to bring additional families into the museum. Ms. Bombard mentioned that placing Santa inside of the museum during Frosty Fest 2008 brought many visitors to the museum that had not previously been there. People that came inside to visit Santa during Frosty Fest spent time looking at the exhibits, which helps to spread the word on museum programs.

Alderman Smith moved, seconded by Alderman Murphy, to approve the celebration. Voting Yeah: Alderman Murphy, Chairman Stout, Alderman Gianforte, Alderman Radkiewicz and Alderman Smith. Voting Nay: None. Motion carried.

B. 2009 Blooming Fest.

Rosemary Mackey gave a brief overview of Blooming Fest 2009. The event will be very similar to last year. Main Street will be closed from W. Washington Street to Turner Court with eighty plus vendors, crafters and artists on the street. The feedback from downtown businesses was tremendously positive, noting that the exposure and energy was great for their businesses. Ms. Mackey stated that the Blooming Fest committee will build on the winning formula of last year’s event by possibly adding puppet shows and story telling at Sesquicentennial Park and a car show/event at the Metra train station lot to incorporate the East Gateway section of the downtown. Preliminary research

shows that the Metra lot is typically very available on Saturday and would not necessitate closing the lot to commuters during the car show.

Alderman Radkiewicz moved, seconded by Alderman Gianforte, to approve the parade. Voting Yeah: Chairman Stout, Alderman Gianforte, Alderman Murphy, Alderman Radkiewicz, and Alderman Smith. Voting Nay: None. Motion carried.

5. Item for Discussion: 2009 Railroad Days Festival Update.

Dave Sabathne gave a brief overview of Railroad Days 2009, scheduled for July 9-12, 2009. Staff began meeting in November 2008. Mr. Sabathne assured committee members that there is adequate funding to continue programming. Mr. Sabathne believes that Railroad Days will be more visible to the surrounding communities since many local communities have cancelled events due to poor economic conditions.

The Railroad Days committee will be meeting with the West Chicago Park District in the next several weeks to look at the possible change in the layout of the event with the relocation of the skate park and see how they will delegate the responsibilities now that Leslie DeMoss is no longer with the organization. The layout will be revisited at future committee meetings as it will be determined by the final entertainment schedule.

Entertainment should be coordinated within the next five weeks and might include a dual, "reunion" show with Micky Dolenz and Davy Jones of the Monkeys, with the restriction that they do not appear together within fifty miles for twenty-one days before or after Railroad Days. Los Lobos has also been contacted. The AC/DC tribute band will be back again in conjunction with a laser light show. Dual stages will be used again for 2009.

Ms. Bombard added that the Park District is planning a 5K run for the Saturday morning of Railroad Days.

6. Unfinished Business:

A. Wayfinding Sign Update.

Rosemary Mackey provided an update and stated that the City is making progress. The designs for the LED monument sign and the ancillary signs have already been approved. Currently, the City is waiting on a design element for the wayfinding signs that would be unique to West Chicago. The master plan for all of the new signage will be delivered once the design element for the wayfinding signs has been determined.

Patrick Engineering is being considered as a fabricator for the LED monument sign which is still currently on schedule for spring installation. An update will be provided at the next Community Affairs Committee meeting.

7 New Business: None.

8. Reports from Staff:

The last Late Night brought approximately 50 people into the Gallery and 30-40 people into the museum despite the poor weather conditions. Staff is working to build on the theme of a "Downtown Late Night," including restaurants, and businesses in hopes of adding additional foot traffic in the downtown district.

Also, the new awning has been installed at Gallery 200.

9. Adjournment.

Alderman Radkiewicz motioned, seconded by Alderman Smith. Voting Yeah: Chairman Stout, Alderman Gianforte, Alderman Murphy, Alderman Radkiewicz, and Alderman Smith. Voting Nea: None. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Krista Coltrin

West Chicago Community Affairs Committee