

*Illinois Main Street Council
Minutes of the March 25, 2004 Meeting*

Call to Order: Lt. Governor Pat Quinn, Chair, called the 17th meeting of the Council to order at 2:45 p.m. in his Springfield office.

Roll Call: Per roll call taken by Wendy Bell, members present were: Mike Jackson for Director Crossland in Springfield, and Mark Harris for Director Lavin, Mary Blankenbaker, Carolyn Oxtoby, and Mayor Sue Klinkhamer via conference call.

Other attendees: Dan Persky (LTG/IMS Staff) via Conference call.

Those absent: Jim Baum, Marc Gordon

Call to Order and Opening Remarks:

Lt. Governor Quinn asked for a motion on the minutes of the December 18, 2003 meeting. Carolyn Oxtoby made the motion to accept the minutes as written, Mary Blankenbaker seconded the motion and approval was made by acclamation. Lt. Governor Quinn noted he'd had the opportunity to see many of the historic sites displays in the Capitol today. He visited with delegates from Nauvoo, who are interested in the Illinois Main Street program. He also announced that he will visit Utah next month to apologize to those of the Mormon faith for the atrocities that occurred in Nauvoo.

Review & Progress Report Report:

Lt. Governor Quinn asked Wendy to report on the program's recent progress. She pointed out a few revisions that had been made in the titles of the Tier System, passed at the September board meeting. Bell expressed her appreciation to Mark Harris for his help in adding interested towns to the Introductory level. She reported that Governor Blagojevich had included the revitalization of Illinois Main Street in his West Central Illinois Opportunity Returns announcement. Four towns from that region, Nauvoo, Monmouth, Mount Sterling and Hamilton were also named as Introductory towns. Wendy and the Lt. Governor recently met with DCEO officials and are planning a meeting to visit with the four communities. Later in the summer Wendy and an architect will visit the communities personally to assess their assets and challenges. Bell handed out a list of all towns, both current and interested in the program, by DCEO region. She also reported that the last of the equipment from DCEO was in the process of being transferred.

The winter Manager's Meeting in Danville at the historic Fischer Theatre the first week of March. Dan Persky presented a session on Advocacy, Mike Kirchoff from the Jacksonville Regional Economic Development program spoke on Business Recruitment, and Wendy used some tips she gleaned from Certification Institute to talk on Work Plans. Wendy reported that in general, the local programs are doing very well. During the meeting several new items were unveiled. The first was an updated report form, condensing a previous 11 page report to 4 pages. It is planned for this form to be a transition to a totally computerized system. Response to the new form has been very good. Annual Community Information was also requested; which includes updates on Board Members, Bylaws, downtown ordinances, manager salary and other items that usually change no more than once a year.

A Calendar of Upcoming Activities was also passed out. Wendy noted the most exciting item on the Calendar were a number of Annual Program Reviews, a benchmark service that Illinois Main Street has not been able to complete on-site for several years. Lt. Governor Quinn has made it possible for this service to be reinstated by contracting with the National Main Street Center to complete 24 APRs over the next few months. Wendy will be doing an additional 10. Previously all Reviews were done in a few months in the spring. Bell noted a plan to transition to splitting the process up over a year's time, making it easier on the staff. There will be about 20 Annual Program Reviews to finish before the end of the calendar year. Lt. Governor Quinn inquired if the NMSC could complete any more before June 30th and Bell replied we have already maxed out their staff. The Lt. Governor expressed the importance of restoring these vital services.

Dan Persky reported on the Lt. Governor's Main Street visits over the last few months. These included: Quincy, Libertyville, Waukegan, and Mundelein. The Lt. Governor will be visiting Carbondale next week.

Lt. Governor Quinn noted he plans to visit more towns through the summer and promote their many assets including nature-based tourism. He reported an agreement had recently been signed to preserve Plum Island. He encourages towns to send us their events so they may be included on our website. Bell noted this information is now included on our new monthly report to facilitate this process.

Design Services:

Mike Jackson reported that Darius Bryjka has completed 13 projects total and 8 project revisions; and since he started in August, he and Anthony Rubano have visited 23 towns for services. Jackson noted that each drawing also means a site visit within the community which usually includes a mini-training visit.

Jackson gave an overview of planned services for the next year. With the addition of an additional architect when the new fiscal year begins, the goal is to present Design Committee training through a regional approach, refreshing the committees so they can facilitate services locally. A special need is assistance in upper-story development and looking for ways to address this issue. They are also watching to see if the federal government renews the Transportation Enhancement Act. If this happens more communities will be looking to upgrade their streetscape which will create additional needs. Mike reported that he and Dan have been talking about energy conservation projects that may be incorporated into the program. One design staff member is especially interested in Junior Main Street. Lt. Governor Quinn asked if this was a national program. Bell said a number of towns throughout the U.S. use this program to involve high school students in the downtown. In Illinois, Rushville is the best example.

Overview of Upcoming Plans

Wendy directed everyone's attention to the Calendar of Activities. Jackson explained the upcoming Historic Preservation and Design Workshop in Marshall is part of an Agency program that brings training in many areas of preservation to the community. Wendy pointed out the Regional Board Training locations on the schedule and New Manager Training.

She announced a new event, Illinois Main Street Day at the State Capitol on Wednesday, May 5th and presented a tentative agenda. Highlights of the day will include table displays by the communities in the north and south hallways, visits to their local legislators, an advocacy update to prepare the managers and volunteers for the legislative visits, and a rally with Lt. Governor Quinn in the Rotunda at noon, followed by a group picture on the Capitol steps. An introductory meeting is planned in the afternoon to reach out to those towns that may be interested in the program. The day will culminate with a reception at the new Center for the Arts followed by Downtown Springfield, Inc.'s second story development tour. Lt. Governor Quinn noted a recent article in the Post Dispatch that talked about the number of people who are moving downtown. He reiterated the date of the Main Street Day at the Capitol activity and expressed the need to thank the legislators for their past support and inform them of the progress in the program. Bell reported one way the communities will be seen in the crowd is through a new "state shirt". A bright mango oxford embroidered with "Illinois Main Street" has been selected and is available for the local program volunteers to purchase.

The following week is the National Main Street Conference in Albuquerque. Bell updated the Council on plans to bring the Conference to Chicago in 2007. While in Washington, D.C. the National Main Street Center asked Wendy if Illinois would host in 2006. She brought the idea back and after discussions with Lt. Governor Quinn on the need to focus first on stabilizing Illinois Main Street, declined the '06 offer. Lt. Governor Quinn expressed that we certainly want to bring the National Conference to Illinois sometime in the next 4 years.

Moving through the Calendar, the remainder of May, it is full with a mixture of Annual Program Reviews and Regional Trainings.

The Lt. Governor's Office has proposed that the first Saturday of June be named Main Street Day throughout Illinois. This would cross-promote a number of activities in the local communities and highlight the summer tourism opportunities available. The legislation is currently moving through the process.

June 15th will be the Application Workshop for communities interested in applying to move to the Associate level.

The Summer Manager's Meeting will be June 23rd in Galena, followed by the Tri-State Conference on the 24th and 25th with Wisconsin and Iowa. The theme of the conference will be "Speaking Up for Main Street" and our architects have come up with a design that can be used on various materials for the Conference. Most of the activities will be held at the DeSoto House, and all 55 sleeping rooms there have already been booked. Additional rooms are available at three other hotels. Lt. Governor Quinn plans to use this opportunity to reach out to the Iowa and Wisconsin Lt. Governors to hold a Mississippi River Summit. Conference events include an Opening Reception at the Galena/JoDaviess County History Museum, a keynote by Steve Siemens of People Builders, break out sessions and a group dinner. Lt. Governor Quinn noted that the Grand Excursion follows our Conference and so attendees can stay over to enjoy this special event. He inquired about the affordability of the event and Bell responded that since most of the sessions are being done by local programs, and the Federal Home Loan Bank is giving a sponsorship, the cost in the past has been in the \$60-65 range. It should be affordable for everyone. Mary Blankenbaker asked about attendance numbers and Bell reported that previous numbers have been 100-130.

We'll offer Basic Training in July, another service we have gone without for several years. This will be held in Bloomington on the 13th & 14th. The training will be a half day session on each point, utilizing Sheri Stuart from the National Main Street Center, our IHPA architects and Wendy.

Other Business

Wendy reported a potential partnership with the Railway Marketing Division of the Illinois Department of Transportation. The idea would be to showcase Main Street towns along a rail route. This could be done via IDOT and Main Street websites.

Date for Next Quarterly Meeting

Date for the next meeting was for June 17th at 2:30 p.m..

Adjournment

Lt. Governor Quinn called for a motion for adjournment. Made by Mary Blankenbaker, seconded by Mayor Klinkhamer. Meeting Adjourned.