

*Illinois Main Street Council  
Minutes of the June 1, 2005 Meeting*

**Call to Order:** Lt. Governor Pat Quinn, Chair, called the 22nd meeting of the Council to order at 2:10 p.m. in his Statehouse office in Springfield.

**Roll Call:** Per roll call taken by Wendy Bell, members present in addition to Lieutenant Governor Quinn were: Carolyn Oxtoby, Mike Jackson for Director Coomer; Sue Klinkhamer and Jim Baum and Mary Blankenbaker via Conference Call.

Other attendees: Wendy Bell, IMS Coordinator and Les Cavada, IMS Staff.

Director Lavin or a designee was absent, but Lieutenant Governor Quinn noted that he had visited with him the previous evening.

**Call to Order and Opening Remarks:**

Lt. Governor Quinn asked for a motion on the minutes of the March 8, 2005 meeting. Sue Klinkhamer made the motion to accept the minutes as written, Carolyn Oxtoby seconded the motion and approval was made by acclamation.

**Review & Progress Report Report:**

Lieutenant Governor Quinn reported that a resolution naming the first Saturday of June as “Main Street Day” each year had passed the Legislature this week. Quinn thanked Senator Debbie Halvorson and Representative Brandon Phelps for their sponsorship of the Legislation. He noted this date could now be utilized to promote the many activities of our local Main Streets.

The Lieutenant Governor asked Wendy Bell to report on the Main Street efforts of the last several months and highlight the coming months. Keeping on the Main Street Day theme, Bell noted the success of the second annual day at the Capitol. Thirty-eight towns were in attendance, brought displays and visited with their Legislators. Lieutenant Governor Quinn led the rally in the Capitol with at least seven Legislators speaking as well – this number is significantly more than last year. A group picture was taken on the steps as well as individual towns with the Lieutenant Governor. Staff member Les Cavada reported the pictures had been sent to the towns.

A display in Chicago is now planned for the week of June 13<sup>th</sup> with a slightly different twist. Photos highlighting scenes of Main Street will be in the Thompson Center the entire week. On Tuesday the 14<sup>th</sup>, towns are invited to bring displays and access the approximately 10,000 people who go through the Center each day. Communities could promote the tourism opportunities in their towns.

Bell passed out notes concerning the recent National Main Street Conference in Baltimore. With 1,770 registrants, it was the largest ever. She noted this is the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year of Main Street and several special articles have been published, including Preservation Magazine and the Parade Magazine that coincides with the weekend newspaper. Because of the Anniversary, some grant funds are available from the NTMSC to bring in a staff person to a state event. A specific visioning session on the future of Main Street was held that included coordinators and then local programs. Wendy participated in a radio interview with the NTMSC Executive Director, and ED’s from Prophetstown and Dixon, Illinois. Bell passed out a list and summary of the sessions she and Les Cavada attended.

The NTMSC has sworn off holding the Conference on Mother’s Day ever again, and has scheduled it in New Orleans next year, April 2 – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Seattle will host in 2007. We have the opportunity to host in 2008 or 09. Quinn asked Bell her thoughts on hosting the Conference. She noted that the Midwest had always drawn a large turnout and that Chicago would be a great location. He asked about the staff time necessary. Bell responded that the key element in the next 6 – 9 months would be raising the funds

necessary for our sponsorship. From there National will do the planning with assistance/direction from us. We are responsible for the reception and a “Taste of Chicago” with the addition of Illinois products seems like a natural possibility. Ideas concerning tours include our GAMSAs winners, Chicago neighborhoods if we have programs there by then, and driving down Rt. 66. Klinkhamer and Jackson expressed their support for the idea. Quinn suggested we explore the possibility with a report by the next meeting.

Bell reported that it seems Lieutenant Governors seem to be becoming more involved with Main Streets. The Louisiana Lieutenant Governor gave the “come to our state next year” speech via video, the Lieutenant Governor was specifically thanked in the opening plenary session, and Indiana’s state program has now been moved under the direction of the Lieutenant Governor.

Coinciding with the visioning for the future is the National Trust Main Street Center’s strengthening the protection of the Main Street brand. A draft proposal for specific Coordinating Program Criteria for Recognition was presented at the Conference and Bell passed out copies. In addition, she passed out a comparison chart of the state program’s activities between IMS time at DCEO and now to give a perspective of what we are doing vs. what is expected. Quinn noted he’d like to use videoconference as much as possible to save staff time and travel. Bell said they’d been exploring that possibility and also what other states do. There are some things that have to be done in person such as an Application Workshop but she noted that Iowa is doing some specific topic sessions via videoconference and that is working well. Quinn asked what would work here and Bell responded that Board Training, Committee Training and potentially some specific topic sessions. This would actually provide more services rather than less.

Three Application Workshops have been completed but an additional workshop has been scheduled in Springfield due to the number of inquiries that have come in the past ten days. Participation has been excellent and come from a wide variety of locations and types of towns. She noted the Tiered System is working as towns who have been at the Introductory level understand the process and want the next level when they get to the Application Workshop. Bell also reported that several neighborhood business districts in Chicago are interested and at least one intends to apply. She suggested that as long as they can meet the requirements as any town, they should be included. Some states have separate city-wide programs but she does not recommend this as with the many suburban programs, it would be confusing.

Two communities have decided to resign their Designated status. Elmhurst has not had a Director for nine months and has not participated in statewide events for longer than that. They would like to move to the Introductory level to stay involved but so doing will mean losing their “Main Street” designation. The other community is Staunton. The program is dissolving due to lack of interest and effort though many efforts to help have been made by the State staff. Quinn noted the programs are locally driven and the status is at their request. Bell expressed that at this point we have some “driftwood” and some “deadwood” and some will probably “burn up” but we have a whole list of interested towns that want to be part of the program.

Basic Training will be held beginning next week in two locations, Mt. Vernon and Batavia. These locations were chosen due to their proximity to Associate level communities and other programs in need of training.

The Summer Director’s Workshop will be held in July beginning in Marion and followed by a bus trip of southern Illinois. The Workshop will focus on Tourism.

Requests for Proposals for the Fall Conference have been sent. Currently we know of three towns planning to submit a proposal, Springfield, Libertyville and Danville. The Conference is set for November 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> unless Springfield is the host. In that case the dates would move to the 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>.

Bell passed out a list of grantees from the Farmer's Market grants and recipients of registration to the National Main Street Conference. She also reported on the grant proposals received for the Wi-Fi grant for Main Streets. This is a \$20,000 grant to bring wireless internet to the downtown. Grants are due today and nine towns have applied so far. Bell gave a brief overview of what she learned of downtown Wi-Fi networks during a session at the National Conference.

The possibility of an online auction for the towns was mentioned at the last Advisory Council meeting. Bell reported since then, a meeting was held in Rosemont prior to the towns leaving for the National Conference. Marketworks, the software company, has taken care of all the details and made it very simple for the user. Bell and Cavada explained the process. Illinois Main Street would not handle any funds; our primary role would be to market the program. The auction is optional for our towns. Although single towns have previously had a similar auction, as far as we know there has not been an auction with multiple towns before – we would be the first.

The publicity kickoff for the auction would be September 14<sup>th</sup>. Collection deadline will be the 30<sup>th</sup>. The auction would begin on October 3<sup>rd</sup> and complete on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

Bell announced that Mission/Vision/Workplan in all 3 Associate Communities have been completed. A presentation was made to the Tree City USA conference, New Director Training, Intro presentation in Abingdon, Tourism symposium, 4 Board Trainings, Danville Board Retreat and ER Training.

She also passed around a packet of press clips for the month of April that had been collected by Dave Blanchette, PIO for IHPA.

#### **Design Services:**

Mike Jackson reported that Darius Bryjka completed 17 projects in the last three months. He noted that each of these requires a face to face visit, as you can't bring your building into the office.

The Upper Story Conference was a great success. The website now features case studies presented during the workshop as well as various technical information at [www.upstairsdowntown.org](http://www.upstairsdowntown.org). Anna Margaret Borntrager was primary person working on this project.

Darius has also been working on launching the "got Mesker" initiative, generating statewide interest. The IHPA website now also features a section about the ornamental sheet metal facades at [www.gotmesker.com](http://www.gotmesker.com).

Darius has assisted in updating the IHPA Design section of the website with all of the design projects previously completed. And Darius attended the Architect's meeting at the National Main Street Conference.

Jackson explained the Transportation Enhancement federal grant process. In the past we have had a designer who specifically worked and helped our communities in planning streetscapes for this grant. We no longer have such a person. IHPA had \$25,000 that could be used as seed money/grant for these architectural services. Twelve towns applied for the grants and we have seven candidates that have not previously received a transportation enhancement grant. Six are well qualified with good applications. Mike proposed we split the pot six ways to include: Aledo, Marion, Cambridge, Orion, Paxton, Pittsfield at \$4,150 each. Carolyn Oxtoby made the motion to do so, seconded by Sue Klinkhamer. Motion was unanimous. Jackson noted an announcement should go out concerning this. Quinn suggested we do a joint release with Claude Walker and Dave Blanchette.

**Approval of Community Designations**

Bell reported on the six towns that had applied as a Premier Program. All towns had to have a Certified Main Street Manager or have a Director with at least 5 years tenure, received National Main Street Recognition 2 of the last 3 years, and several questions covering their progress and success. Four towns met the criteria and scored at 90% or better. They were: Crystal Lake, Jacksonville, Quincy and St. Charles and Bell recommended they be named as our first Premier Programs. Carolyn Oxtoby made the motion and Sue Klinkhamer seconded it.

**Comments from Council Members**

Jim Baum expressed his support of holding the Conference in Springfield. He also said the design services especially the Upstairs Downtown Workshop were exceptional.

**Date for Next Quarterly Meeting**

Date for the next meeting was set for September 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Adjournment**

Lt. Governor Quinn called for a motion for adjournment. Made by Sue Klinkhamer, seconded by Carolyn Oxtoby. Meeting Adjourned at 3:45 p.m.