

***Illinois Main Street Council
Minutes of the March 30, 2006 Meeting***

(Subject to approval at the next scheduled meeting)

Call to Order: Lt. Governor Pat Quinn, Chair, called the 25th meeting of the Council to order at 3:00 PM

Roll Call: Per roll call taken by Wendy Bell, members present in addition to Lieutenant Governor Quinn were: Mike Jackson for Director Coomer, Carolyn Oxtoby, Mary Blankenbaker, and David Bahlman. Jim Baum, Marc Gordon, and Mark Harris for Director Lavin were absent.

Other attendees: Wendy Bell, IMS Coordinator; Les Cavada, IMS Program Assistant; Jean Ann Hutchison

Call to Order and Opening Remarks:

Lt. Governor Quinn asked for a motion on the minutes of the December 29, 2005 meeting. Motion was approved.

Agenda was changed due to time constraints on council members to move action items up on the Agenda to make certain they can happen.

Governor has named David Bahlman from LPCI to the Main Street Council, the Lt. Governor thanks David for joining the Council.

Discussion and Approvals/Disapprovals:

Wendy Bell updates the council on boundary protocols, noting that the council must approve all boundary changes the communities would like to make. Crystal Lake, which has had TIF district in downtown to finance Downtown Crystal Lake since 1985, would like add a second TIF district that connects with their current district. It is an area that is underdeveloped and in need of infrastructure. This would expand the boundaries by a small amount to include commercially viable downtown buildings. Motion to approve by Carolyn Oxtoby, seconded by Mike Jackson and approved by the Council.

Two new introductory applications have come in since the last meeting: Berwyn, near Chicago-Michelle Skyrd attended Main Street Day at the Capitol; and Sumner, from downstate Lawrence County. The Lt. Governor mentions the new program RIDES in Lawrence County, as well as the attributes of Berwyn, which has Route 66 as well as the World's Largest Laundromat. Motion to approve Berwyn and Sumner by Carolyn Oxtoby, seconded by David Bahlman, approved by the Council. Bahlman said this is a huge step for Berwyn considering the struggle with the City over the Berwyn Bank Building, which is a spectacular building from about 1912 and was miraculously saved.

Bell asks for a motion authorizing Tuscola to move down to Introductory level from a Designated community due to a lack of interest in the local program, as stated in an official letter from Tuscola. Motion to accept letter from Mike Jackson, seconded by Carolyn Oxtoby and approved by Council.

Designation binders from Mt. Vernon and Lombard were passed around to the Council. The binders show how communities have met designation requirements. Mt. Vernon and Lombard have both met all of their requirements at this time and are two of the three Associate programs IMS took on last year, the remaining is Hardin County which is very close to designation, but due to the director's personal issues they have been unable to complete training for him but will do so next week. Motion to approve Designation of Mt. Vernon and Lombard by Carolyn Oxtoby, seconded by Mike Jackson and approved by Council. The Lt. Governor wants to schedule Designation ceremonies, and would like to fly to Hardin County, stay at the Rose Hotel, and do the Great Race in Marshall the next day. The Great Race is an antique car event. He may also want to squeeze in Mt. Vernon that day as well.

Review & Progress Report:

Bell gives a progress report of happenings since the last meeting, the most important having been the February 9 Main Street Day at the Capitol. It was the largest ever with forty-six communities. New Executive Director Training, with Board Presidents included was held the day before. Main Street Day included a continental breakfast with the legislators, put together by Navonna Bunn, as well as a Networking Dinner for the Directors the night before, coordinated by Jennifer Even.

Word on the Street for January was actually an Illinois Main Street Year in Review, which was hand delivered to each legislator and electronically distributed. February's Word on the Street focused on Main Street Day at the Capitol and Jacksonville's selection as a GAMSAs finalist. Jackson spoke about Jacksonville's achievements to become a GAMSAs finalist.

Organizational visits have included Benton, Du Quoin, West Frankfort, Chicago Midway, Chicago Six Corners, and Rockford, putting Bell on the road a lot lately. She has not yet been to Abingdon due to a scheduling conflict. Bell also stopped in Flora, which is interested in reapplying to Main Street after realizing the mistakes Flora made the first time around in the program. The mayor of Flora is very interested in bringing the program back, as well as at least two-dozen people who also attended a presentation by Bell. Bell has also been to Collinsville to reconcile issues between the City and the program; and Elgin, which is interested in doing a workshop for more mature communities and possibly helping fund that event.

The summary of the awards winners is finished and has been reduced to two CDs. They will be sent out to the towns so they can see what was submitted, how to submit an award winning application, and how the project was done. This is the first time this has been done. The Lt. Governor would like the board members to have a copy of this.

The first ever President's Retreat was held at the Executive Mansion on March 25, with twenty attendees from all over the state. Many went on the tour of the Mansion. There were good, positive comments about the event, and this is something that will be done again due to its success. It was a learning experience for the Presidents since they learned that their counterparts had similar issues to them.

Bell updated the Council on her trip to Chicago with the National Trust to host the 2009 National Conference. Mary de la Fe and Amanda West from DC were there from the Trust as well as the Chicago Convention and Tourism Bureau. Chicago is up against Richmond and Atlantic City, but Bell is confident they will choose Chicago. Chicago was their first stop, with the group visiting the Palmer House and the Sheraton, the historic theatres: the Civic Opera, Cadillac Palace, Oriental Theatre, and the Chicago Theatre. They did not go to the LaSalle-Shubert Theatre because it is under construction. The group was pleased as they usually are lucky to have one historic theatre at a location, in Chicago they have a selection. Also visited was the Grand Ballroom, Crystal Gardens, The Odyssey, the Planetarium, the Aquarium, Winter Gardens, Cultural Center, Union Station, and the House of Blues. The only issue was with the Field Museum, which was to be considered as a venue, but was far too expensive at \$34,175 before food and beverage. The likely site would be the Palmer House and possibly the Shubert right across the street. The Opening Reception would be up to IMS and would likely be either at Union Station or Navy Pier. The Coordinators Dinner would likely be at the Winter Gardens on top of the Library, and a potential Awards Luncheon at the Cultural Center. De la Fe and West loved the House of Blues for the "Big Bash." The great thing about Chicago is that most of the venues are in walking distance. A book was put together for them to take back to Washington for consideration. Chris Morris from the National Trust, Lisa DiChiera from LCPI, Les Cavada from IMS, David Richards of St. Charles, Mike Jackson of IHPA, and Anita Cummings of Midway also joined the group in Chicago for a potential planning partners meeting. A decision will be reached in four to six weeks by the National Trust.

2009 would be the same year as the Lincoln Bicentennial, and the Lt. Governor would like people attending the Conference to know about this and have information about Lincoln locations across the State. This might be accomplished by putting people on Amtrak to Springfield to check out the historic sites and then taking it back

up to Chicago. The Lt. Governor would like this tourism effort to go beyond this convention to all others as well as international visitors.

March 4 & 5 will be the Spring Directors Workshop in Alton, where money will be discussed. Guest speakers will be S.B. Friedman on TIF Districts and SSAs, Cory Jobe from the Treasurer's Office, and Sheri Stuart from the National Trust on intermediate fundraising. New Director's Training will also be held for Hardin County, as well as Board Training for Alton on the 3rd.

The Lt. Governor would like to know about the progress on pitching Greening Main Street and the Wireless Grants. Bell and Jackson said there have been a lot of calls and emails about both. The Lt. Governor would like to connect this to the Green Government Coordinating Council to encourage clean energy on Main Street. No grants have been put out for Wireless yet this year, but there have been many inquiries. The Lt. Governor would like to do more Wireless grants. The Lt. Governor expressed disappointment in Springfield and Mayor Davlin's inaction on bringing wireless to downtown and read an excerpt from a newspaper to the Council. The Lt. Governor said that downtown businesses benefit from free wireless access and likens Davlin's attitude on the subject to denying automobiles when a horse-drawn carriage is still available. The State of IL is willing to give nearly \$200,000 worth of equipment to do a wireless zone in Springfield to include the Medical District. In order to do this municipal help would be needed, such as putting equipment on light poles, etc., which was embraced until the appearance of Ernie Slottag at a Wireless Springfield meeting. He said that Davlin does not want to use any municipal services for Wireless. The Lt. Governor will meet with Davlin in the next couple of weeks for a heart to heart on at least bringing wireless to the historic district. The big telecom services such as AT&T and Comcast want to do this and view the municipality as competition. A question arose about why this is a problem when Springfield has CWLP, its own municipal utility. The Lt. Governor said tourism equals money into the city, and Springfield will be losing out if it does not come on board somehow. The grants that were given to Quincy and Mt. Vernon were very successful, and Springfield should be a good host as well, if not just to show the legislators what a wireless downtown is.

Application workshops will be April 26 & 28th in Springfield and St. Charles, with Lombard's Designation possibly on April 27th. Basic training is scheduled for May in Benton, Pekin, and Rockford. Since the Calendar has come out, Midway and Paxton have requested basic trainings to be held in their communities. In June, staff will be in New Orleans for the National Conference. The same thing as last year will be done with the registration scholarships.

Two years ago when Utica had a tornado the Grainger Rebuilding America Foundation provided a grant that was administered through Main Street to help with recovery. They have contacted Bell again to assist with the damage in Springfield and Jerome from the March 12th tornadoes. There are more businesses to deal with this time. In Utica Grainger gave \$50,000 to be split equally among the twenty or so businesses. In this case Bell is looking at independently owned businesses with major damage and destruction. The money will not stretch as far, with \$50,000 for 50-100 businesses in Springfield and Jerome.

Applications have been turned in to host the State Conference from Waukegan and Vandalia. The Vandalia director is new and a real go-getter, so it is great she applied. Waukegan turned in an outstanding application with price quotes and locations. The bulk of the conference would be held at the Genesee historic theatre, which the Lt. Governor toured. The Opening Reception would be at the Sundance Saloon, with the Awards Banquet at the Yacht Club. They have already secured \$ 3000 from the City and the Ramada, and have a goal of having \$10,000 for Conference costs. Bell recommended Waukegan because of commitment and background with an experienced director. Bahlman also agreed, as Waukegan has had a lot of difficulties lately. The Conference is on the schedule for November 14 & 15th. Motion to approve Waukegan for the Conference by Oxtoby, seconded by Bahlman and approved by the Council.

The Lt. Governor would like to extend Farmers Markets grants again this year. It personifies Main Street and brings people downtown. Bell said a number of people have asked about it, and will announce it at the workshop in Alton. Farmers Market ties in very nice to the Rural Affairs Council.

The Lt. Governor would like to look into Bronzeville, since it has a lot of historic buildings. Bahlman says LPCI is trying to save the old Pickford Theatre there, along with Pilgrim Baptist as well as IIT and the newer buildings. Lt Governor says Harold Lucas is big on historic Bronzeville, so Bell may want to talk to him.

Bell has a tentative date of May 24th for Main Street Day in Chicago for the towns to come in and set up displays to focus on tourism. The pictures would be up all week. Tables are limited to about twenty-four, so space is tight.

Main Street Day at the State Fair will likely be the first Saturday, August 12th. Last year was successful in connecting with people and informing them.

Design Services:

Mike Jackson presents a handout to the Council. There have been 26 site inspections this quarter which means a visit today and a project tomorrow, so Anna Margaret Borntrager and Darius Bryjka have been in the field. Outreach and education has been a strong point, with the Building Code and Historic Rehabilitation conference in Chicago next week. Jackson has scholarships to attend. Jackson has said that IHPA, through suggestion of Director Coomer, will be putting \$25000 into the Main Street budget to be put in a contract with the National Main Street Center that can be drawn upon for services to Main Street, such as scholarships and support services. Bell and Jackson have been planning an assessment for the program itself from an independent third party. Lt. Governor Quinn thinks this is a good idea and suggests picking up new ideas at the Conference in New Orleans.

IHPA is moving forward with a head count for IHPA on the architects. Jackson interviewed two students for summer internships, and thanked the Lt. Governor for all his help in the process.

Momence's downtown will now be a National Registered Historic District, one of the first Main Street towns in years to achieve this in Illinois. The nomination is moving forward and there will be a ceremony when it is officially designated on the list. Momence received a lot of local support to do this.

One of the projects IHPA is championing in Danville is a historic rehabilitation downtown. They are doing all of the things for communities downtown while practicing greening and affordable housing. The affordable housing has a geo-thermal heating/cooling system to lower utility costs, and they have met targeted thresholds of 50% below what would be the efficiency requirement. The grand opening is in the middle of May, and Danville has been trying to get the Lt. Governor there, he thinks possibly May 17th. One thing holding up their Green certification is that they have to operate through summer and winter to prove the housing operates efficiently. The Lt. Governor would like to do more promotion of soybean roofs, and mentions the Green Government Council. Jackson lists soybean products on the market such as insoylation (soy insulation), paint strippers from Normal (Franmar).

In a Mesker update, Jackson says Darius Bryjka is arranging a Mesker façade swap to move a façade from a town near Effingham to a building in Arcola where the owner is enthusiastic about putting an original façade on it. The owner also wants to fund a documentary about the project. A Mesker was spotted in Nova Scotia, a tourism town south of Halifax.

Jackson and the other architects have been accepted to do a town meeting in New Orleans on Upper Stories. Jackson is speaking about ramping up the training on Upper Stories and will likely get another workshop going in the next cycle on the topic.

The Lt. Governor asked Bahlman to update the Council on LPCI. LPCI has been very busy for the last couple of years. He would like to get Main Street into Yorkville or Plano to possibly do something the Farnsworth House that will turn into a substantial operation through allocations. Bahlman also talks about the Ten Most

Endangered Historic Places list, and the Trail of Tears Encampment on the list. The Historic Preservation Caucus will be a great tool to promote Main Street.

Jackson suggests looking into Pilsen as a good Main Street community because of 18th Street and its National Registered Historic District. 18th Street is one of the great commercial streets in Chicago.

Date for Next Quarterly Meeting

Date for the next meeting was set for the week of June 26, 2006.

Adjournment

Lieutenant Governor Quinn called for a motion for adjournment, made by Carolyn Oxtoby, seconded by Mike Jackson.