



ILLINOIS MAIN STREET

Illinois Main Street Council Minutes from March 25th, 2008 Meeting

Lt. Governor's Office

James R. Thompson Center Ste. 15-200 Conference Rm., Chicago, IL 60601	414 Stratton Bldg., Conference Room, Springfield, IL 62706
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I. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Lt. Governor Pat Quinn called the meeting to order at 2:38 p.m. He offered his thanks to the group for attending the meeting and then commented on Main Street's progress and turnout during "Main Street Day at the Capitol". *Lt. Governor Quinn* also mentioned the upcoming ArtWorks Symposium on April 29th and discussed how communities like Paducah, Kentucky have created successful Arts Districts. This success was discussed at the National Lieutenant Governor's Association Meeting (NLGA) a few weeks prior to this council meeting.

II. Introduction of Members and Roll Call – conducted by Wendy Bell

Advisory Council Members Present:

Lt. Governor Quinn; Dir. Lavin by Jason Tyszko (DCEO); Jennifer Tirey (IHPA Acting Director); Mary Blankenbaker; Tasha Greene; David Bahlman

Quorum was achieved

Other individuals present:

Lt. Governor's Staff:

Simone McNeil; Wendy Bell; Daniel Persky; Israel Salazar Jr.; Les Cavada;
Navonna Bunn; Rudi Hancock

IHPA Staff:

Darius Bryjka; Anthony Rubano; Mike Jackson; Anna Margaret Bortrager;
Carol Dyson

Community Members:

Diana Kenney (Crystal Lake); Beth Gelman (Lombard); Chris Morris (National Trust);

III. Approval of Minutes from December 7, 2007

Lt. Governor Pat Quinn asked the group if there were any objections, additions or corrections to the minutes from the December 7th, 2007 meeting. The Council did not object to adopting the minutes and voted to do so unanimously.

IV. Progress Report since last Advisory Council Meeting & Program Update - Wendy Bell, Illinois Main Street, Office of the Lt. Governor

a. Services & Activities:

In January, New Executive Director Training was held (one of three for the year). There were 11 registrants (Berwyn, Champaign, Dixon; Du Quoin, Elgin; Hoopston & Marengo) and the training was conducted over a two-day time period.

A Director's Workshop was added to this year's calendar to comply with the standards set by the National Trust. This workshop was held the day preceding the 5th Annual "Main Street Day at the Capitol" and had a total of 56 towns in attendance. With 92 people registered, it was the largest Main Street Day at the Capitol event on record. Additionally, this year we honored Bob Karls (Pontiac City Manager) with the 1st Annual Civic Leadership Award.

We have completed another round of videoconference training that boasted 150 registrants (largest number of registrants to date). There were 5 different segments held between March the 4th and 15th of this year.

We have also been on the road. Les Cavada was asked to conduct a presentation about Main Street for the Community Planning for Economic Growth Workshop hosted by the Southernmost Illinois Delta Empowerment Zone. Les also went to Du Quoin to conduct Economic Restructuring Committee Training before visiting the communities of Marion and Benton for an evaluation.

Wendy has visited Beardstown, Decatur, Paxton & Cambridge to assist their local programs with various training and community issues.

b. Plans for 2008 National Conference:

Rudi has obtained numerous contributions for the conference totaling over \$4,000. These items will be used in Illinois Main Street's tradeshow booth during the national conference to help promote the 2009 conference to be held in Chicago. A large one-of-a-kind banner will serve as the booth backdrop as a laptop will play Chicago's Convention and Visitor's Bureau film on Chicago attractions.

During the exhibit, Passport Prizes will be awarded to booth visitors who qualify and a Jelly Belly guessing game with a prize for the closest answer will be conducted.

Ideally, around \$100,000 in fundraising is the goal for next year's conference.

During the closing session, a customized video for the Philadelphia conference will be played. It's a Blues Brothers' theme that will hopefully get people excited about coming to Chicago for '09 Conference. Additionally, the Illinois contingent present will wear Blues Brothers' hats and sunglasses as they pass out candy donated by Wrigley's and Tootsie Roll. Anna Margaret has also designed a "Chicago" T-Shirt that will be used during the conference in conjunction with special buttons that will be pinned on.

During the Philadelphia Conference, Les and Wendy will be presenting an educational session on artistic entrepreneurship. Additionally, Mike Jackson and Carol Dyson will also present a topic during the National Conference.

Illinois accreditation numbers increased from 16 to 28. This was a great success for Main Street.

c. Other Updates:

Dan Persky: April 29th Arts Symposium – This one-day symposium will focus on using the arts as an economic development tool and is completely free to participants. It is being sponsored in conjunction with the Illinois Arts Council and will be hosted by the Illinois State Library.

V. **Design Services Discussion and Report** – *Mike Jackson, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency*

IHPA has been active in getting around and meeting owners in Main Street towns. There have been a total of 22 site visits thus far. Additionally, Darius was invited to Evansville Indiana to give a presentation about Mesker (in continuance of the “Got Mesker?” program).

Mike Jackson was recently in Washington D.C. for a “Smart Growth” conference. The National Trust has been very involved in the concept of the planning-side of downtowns and why they are important. Mike was invited on behalf of the National Trust to speak about the “Upstairs Downtown” program.

There will be another round of Streetscape Enhancement Funding from IDOT. We don’t know the exact amount available (in the low millions) and we have started to make the communities aware of this opportunity.

Dan Persky stated that the State has allocated some of this money for a new program called Illinois Green Streets. This initiative will utilize native plants in streetscapes across the State. People should contact this program for more information and possible project funding opportunities.

Mike Jackson will be giving a presentation in Philadelphia during the National Conference. It will be concerned with the environmental aspects of Main Street and Building re-use.

There was a recent grant opportunity for Historic Courthouses through the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation. About 30 communities applied for these funds and of those, less than 10 were Main Street communities.

Chris Morris with the National Trust was instrumental in assisting IHPA advocate for their lost funding. Mike Jackson wanted to express his gratitude for her help.

Jennifer Tirey stated that currently only \$50,000 has been included for Illinois Main Street’s design services in the fiscal year 2009 budget, but IHPA intends to continue performing Main Street duties. She noted however, that if \$50,000 is all that is budgeted, we will need to talk about how we want to reprioritize the services the IHPA staff is doing.

Lt. Governor Quinn stated that he is going to stress the importance of Main Street throughout the budget process. “IHPA has been a wonderful partner in Illinois Main Street” and has been instrumental in helping the program blossom.

Mike Jackson has solicited proposals from two different people for an assessment. Kennedy Smith is willing to perform the assessment for \$14,600. Mike then reminded the group that we have pledges for \$15,000 for this potential project. Additionally, Kennedy Smith has the ability to perform an economic impact study during the assessment for an additional \$8,500. While Mike is not suggesting that this be funded at this point, he does believe that it would be a good thing to have. Wendy Bell elaborated on Kennedy Smith’s skill and outstanding reputation within the national Main Street community.

Lt. Governor Quinn stated that there might be more room in the budget at the end of June and that having an economic impact study would be ideal.

Mike made the motion to have Kennedy Smith perform the assessment; David Bahlman seconded it. While the group, as a whole, agreed that having an economic impact study

would be ideal, if the funds can't be raised at this time, perhaps this study can be preformed at a later time. The vote was unanimous to accept Kennedy Smith's proposal.

Jason Tyszko indicated that since others had a commitment of funds and the assessment was moving forward, he could approach DCEO about potential funding as well.

VI. Votes and actions concerning local programs

- Introductory applications: Village of Antioch and East St. Louis Downtown Merchant's Association
Motion to accept: Mary Blankenbaker
Seconded: Lt. Governor Quinn.
Unanimous Acceptance. Lt. Governor Quinn offered his Welcome to both Antioch and East St. Louis.
- Associate Level:
We are losing Abingdon but hope to get them back when they are prepared.

Hoopston would like to increase the size of their downtown district.
Motion: Jason Tyszko
Seconded: Mary Blankenbaker
Unanimous Acceptance

Main Street Blue Island is dissolving

Beardstown would like to become a Designated Community.
Motion: Mike Jackson
Seconded: Jason Tyszko
Unanimous Acceptance

VII. Other Business

Jason Tyszko discussed the High Speed Internet Act. There is \$4 million allocated to this program. Rules have been filed and if the meeting goes well the money will be ready to be moved. An RFP has been designed and several, if not all, Main Street Communities (as well as other non-profits) will be able to apply to the program.

VIII. Set Date for Next Quarterly Meeting

June 5th 2008 around 2:30 p.m.

IX. Adjournment

Motion: Mary Blankenbaker
Seconded: Jason Tyszko
Unanimous Acceptance. Meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.