



TOWN OF VERNON

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www.Vernon2008.org



VERNON BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

MINUTES - Wednesday, March 21, 2007 @ 7:00 PM

Attendees: Chairman, Rudy Rossmly, Mayor, Dr. Ellen Marmer, Dick Bowman, Chris Clark, Bryan Flint, Carl Schaefer, William J. Smith, Liz Stevenson, Recording Secretary, Donna Philipp, Jeff Adamson, Cheryl Arzt, James Ashe, Ellie Bellemore; Amarjit Buttar, William Call, Thomasina Clemons, Hank Cullinane, Cliff Edwards, Mary Edwards, Bill Fox, Lisa Gardiner, Joseph Grunske, Carole Guttman, Richard Guttman, Karen Ann Miller, Tim Paul, Chafik Rebai, Debby Rodriguez Polly Schaefer, Catherine Steinnagel, Dan Sullivan, Stephen Taylor, Steve Wakefield, Nancy Wetmore, Carol Whitney,

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Vernon Bicentennial Committee Chairman Rudy Rossmly.

I. Old Business

Logo – The inclusion of Dobsonville in the Bicentennial logo had been questioned. The Executive Committee determined that since the logo had been approved and introduced with Dobsonville included that the logo would remain as is.

A. Committee Reports

1. Parade Committee

Carl Schaefer reported that there will be three parades/events for Vernon, Rockville and Talcottville. Cheryl Arzt, speaking for the Vernon Historical Society, stated that it was voted unanimously by the Historical Society and the Garden Society that there should be one parade, not three. Carol Whitney noted that the 1958 parade

represented Rockville only and that if the three parade routes were to be combined into one that it would run for 6½ miles. Ms. Arzt stated that the decision had been made without input being solicited from VHS or anyone outside the Executive Committee. She also stated that Dobsonville did not exist as an entity. Mayor Marmer requested that everyone maintain a positive and respectful attitude and that decisions had been made by those able and willing to be involved at the time the decisions were needed. Mr. Rossmly re-emphasized the Mayor's statements. Bill Smith responded to Ms. Arzt's statement regarding Dobsonville by pointing out several individuals and events in Rockville's past involving Dobsonville and that, in fact, there is still a Dobsonville Fire House. Bryan Flint addressed the difficulty of having a 6½ mile parade, not only as to the difficulty of actually walking that distance, but particularly in light of the higher ambulance traffic to Rockville Hospital, which could not safely be rerouted. Mr. Flint did offer alternative routes that would pass through all three towns and still be within a manageable three miles. A copy of the alternate routes was provided to Mr. Schaefer for his review. Dick Bowman addressed Ms. Arzt's statement that no input was solicited for the decision regarding the parades by pointing out that the head of the VHS was invited on more than one occasion to become part of the process, but did not respond.

Mr. Schaefer reported that the Vernon parade will be the primary event and will be held on October 5, 2008 with a budget of \$40,000. The Talcottville and Rockville parades are being designated as "events" rather than "parades." Talcottville has a tentative date of June 8, 2008 and \$1,500 budget while the Rockville event, which will include a torchlight parade and fireworks, has a tentative date of September 13, 2008 and a \$9,000 budget.

2. VIP and Special Guest Committee

Committee Chair, Chet Morgan, is in Florida and will give his report at the next meeting.

3. Advertising Book Committee

Both Co-Chairs, Marie Herbst and Claire Janowski, had prior commitments, but sent word that the advertising book is in progress.

4. Publicity Committee

Polly Schaefer reported that Creative Exteriors and Eric Santini have offered assistance with fund-raising efforts. Bill McGurk of Rockville Bank has agreed to sell commemorative plates and buttons at the branches.

Bryan Flint requested that individual committees contact the publicity committee before speaking with the media, so that we can present a unified message to the public. Also Mr. Flint reminded everyone that the official web site for the Bicentennial is www.Vernon2008.org. He also recommends involving the Vernon's youths and surrounding towns in the event. In addition, he recommends that we involve big sponsors early so that they receive more good will value.

Cliff Edwards reported that we are receiving coverage from Horizons and the Journal Inquirer. Also, he has created a Bicentennial slide show available for public viewing using YouTube.com accessible from the homepage of the Vernon2008.org website.

5. Finance/Fundraising Committee

Liz Stevenson distributed a Bicentennial Merchandising and Cost Analysis (Budget) of proposed commemorative merchandise to be used in fundraising. Debra Rodriguez indicated that the Tolland County Art Association is in the process of developing a Bicentennial calendar for sale. Mr. Edwards provided a prototype of a proposed Bicentennial afghan and discussed various merchandise items, such as commemorative plates, balloons (to be sold at the events/parades) and t-shirts. There were some objections to the t-shirts being white, but it was suggested that special orders could be taken if individuals wanted a color other than white. Bill Fox suggested that local merchants might be willing to give some special consideration such as a discount to customers wearing a Bicentennial badge or pin.

The question was raised as to who would be sending out thank-you letters for contributions. It was determined that Donna Philipp, the Recording Secretary, would use a standard template letter with appropriate insertions and forward the final document to Mr. Rossmly for signature. Any committee receiving monetary or gift-in-kind contributions should forward the name, address and contribution details to Ms. Philipp.

6. Events/Scheduling Committee

a) Scheduling Committee.

Debra Rodriguez asked if there is a calendar of events available yet. It was determined that Jeff Adamson was responsible for the calendar. He would then make it available for the website.

At this time, Mr. Rossmly indicated that the committee list erroneously combines the Events and Scheduling Committees. There should be two separate committees with Thomasina Clemons as chair for events and Jeff Adamson and Steve Wakefield as co-chairs of scheduling.

b) Events Committee.

Ms Clemons asked for recommendations for events other than those already planned.

Carole and Richard Guttman would like to organize a Rubber Duck Race. It was determined that the Rockville Downtown Association office is already in possession of a large number of ducks that could be used so that we won't have to incur the expense of buying ducks.

Ms. Philipp suggested a Moonlight Splash Party and Karaoke at Henry Park for the town's teenagers and a Beard Growing Contest as a fund-raiser.

Mr. Rossmly suggested a Battle of the Bands. It was suggested that this would be a good opportunity for local garage bands to perform.

Hank Cullinane stated that the Civil War Veterans operate a Civil War Relic Show and that the organization would be willing to provide the town with a free table this year to promote the Bicentennial. Mr. Cullinane also suggested a Haunted Cemetery Tour and a Civil War Reenactment and/or Encampment.

Jeff Adamson suggested an Old-time Baseball Game. Various members indicated that this was a regular pastime in the town's history.

Mr. Rossmly suggested that we might combine a Town Hall Open House reception with the start of the Beard Contest.

Mr. Flint read a list of potential events and agreed to e-mail them to Ms. Clemons.

Cliff Edwards suggested we man a table at this year's Day in the Park to begin to stimulate public awareness of the Bicentennial and its events. Mr. Rossmly questioned if we could have a presentation flyer ready in time for this event.

7. Historical Committee

Jim Ashe reported that the Vernon Historical Society is preparing a presentation of Vernon's First 100 Years, possibly to be presented by S. Ardis Abbott, Museum Director. Mr. Ashe also suggested a tour of Fox Hill Tower. Tim Paul, Bicentennial Videographer, offered a 20-minute video of Fox Hill Tower, which he had produced and his offer was accepted. Mr. Ashe indicated that the VHS was looking for an appropriate downtown location for a rather large pictorial display. He indicated that the only site that he had discovered with sufficient wall space was in the lobby of the Assessor's office. Ms. Rodriguez of the Arts Association offered the use of stanchions that the Association uses for art displays. Mr. Ashe also indicated that the VHS would also like to offer a historical DVD or slide show presentation. Mr. Fox strongly urged that the presentation sites be ADA-accessible so that all interested members of the community would be able to attend.

8. Education Committee

Carol Whitney reported that 3rd and 4th grade students will be performing a play regarding the history of Vernon from prehistoric times to the present. Currently, two daytime performances are planned, which will require six school buses to bring in students from other schools. Ms. Whitney is concerned that the two performances will not be sufficient for the anticipated audience and suggested a nighttime performance. She pointed out that this would incur additional expenses for maintenance personnel, etc.

B. Discussion of Events

This topic was covered during the committee report.

II. New Business

There was no New Business.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05pm.

Next General Meeting: Wednesday, April 18, 2007 at 7:00pm at Vernon Senior Center

Respectfully submitted by Donna Philipp, Recording Secretary