

Marketing & Events Committee Meeting Notes
October 25, 2019 ~ 8:30 a.m.
Meeting Location: Commerce One, Room A ~ 901 Saginaw St.

Members Attending: Michelle Judd, Mike Murray, Brandon Strong, Christine Schwall, Valerie Allen, Laura Horwath (via telephone)

Absent: Tyler King, Peggy Rau, Becky Hortop

Also Attending: Mike Bacigalupo, Matthew Kowalski, Suzanne Maxwell, Marc Wagner – Graff Chevrolet, Beth Chorba – Base Camp Fitness

Public Input

Guests present included Beth Chorba of Base Camp Fitness and Marc Wagner of Graff Chevrolet. Chorba explained she is in attendance to gather event information as well as finding ways to get her business more involved in Downtown rather than what she refers to as “midtown”.

Maxwell shared that the “Open Sundays” Subcommittee, led by DMB Director Andrew Heppner, is currently working on setting up meetings and trying to coordinate their next steps. Strong shared that his business, Regent Floral and Mercantile has been open three Sundays now and has been successful. Horwath (via telephone) resounded similar sentiment in regard to being open on Sunday.

Judd shared that the CVB has been discussing potential billboards, as well as interpreting insights. Judd says CVB is seeing an unexpected downturn, citing visitors to the area are coming for business rather than pleasure. Judd shared that the “Pure Michigan” campaign has always had a positive impact, but there is no replacement plan. Judd shared that CVB uses a photo platform that follows travel partners that tag photos called “crowdriff” to get user-generated content.

Horwath informed the committee that the Winter Beer Garden will be returning to Unity Park the weekend before Christmas this year and is currently seeking sponsorships. There will be 4 igloos, blocks of time for each will be up to an hour, more food and drinks, including North Peak and Oracle, as well as movies, music, and.

Maxwell thanked everyone for participating in the Downtown Beautification contest throughout the summer, and congratulated the winners.

Small Business Saturday – Graff Chevrolet

Marc Wagner of Graff Chevrolet marketing team, is looking to initiate a cross-marketing program with Downtown merchants to share discounts. Wagner briefly explained it could be as simple as “spend \$X with Graff, get (something) at Downtown business” and vice versa, “spend \$X downtown on Small Business Saturday, get (discount) at Graff.” Wagner also explains the possibility of having a shuttle bring Graff customers downtown while they wait for service repairs.

Judd suggested maybe offering some kind of perks, rather than discounts from Downtown merchants – some kind of added value. DMB staff will post an informational post to the Downtown Merchants closed Facebook page to gauge level of interest from all merchants.

Wagner explained that Graff Chevrolet typically has 6-700 customers throughout that particular week and would love to partner with businesses in the Downtown area. Judd says she likes the idea of shuttling customers to Downtown. Beth Chorba suggests having marketing materials include a list of events happening downtown that weekend. Wagner agrees, and suggests even creating some kind of voucher to be made, rather than showing receipts back and forth.

Sundays in the City

Maxwell shared with the committee that the permit application has been submitted to the City for Santa's Arrival. Maxwell explained that the streets have always closed in years past, but will be kept closed longer this year. The same Santa Claus will be returning from last year's event and Maxwell noted the meeting with Santa will take place inside a warming tent, rather than the Nickless Family Community Pavilion accessory building. The accessory building will now be used solely for concessions and skate rentals. Miss Bay County will again be performing during the event.

Maxwell reached out to Mid Michigan Carriage Rides about extending the hours, but has been notified that three hours is the limit for the horses best interest, which can be noon-3pm or 1-4pm. The group agreed on noon - 3pm. Maxwell noted that she is going to direct the Mid Michigan Carriage to take different routes and show more areas of Downtown.

The DMB is currently gathering information for sign-ups, then getting Santa Bucks made to be inserted into the Bay City Times, Saginaw News, and Midland Daily News.

Other

Maxwell explains she would like to do something similar to the summer Beautification Contest during the holiday season as well. Maxwell says the City has their own contest, so we would need to find a panel to select winners, rather than having the Mayor choose again. This contest would be decorating of exterior windows, possibly Black Friday through the end of 2019 and can call it a "Holiday Decorating" contest instead of "Holiday Lighting" to include those that prefer not to display lights. The DMB will be posting to the details to the closed merchant Facebook page to allow merchants to announce their involvement.

Other

Murray shares the Delta College Planetarium is bringing in small groups to play live music on January 31st from the Saginaw Orchestra, calling it "Music under the Stars" which he would like to do for the Lifestyle & Wellness Weekend for 2020. Maxwell says suggested Murray add this to the online Downtown Calendar of Events.

The Marketing and Events Subcommittee will meet next on November 22nd at 8:30am. Maxwell noted that the focus will consist of planning the 2020 event calendar.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:46 am.

Respectively Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Matthew Kowalski".

Matthew Kowalski
Administrative/Marketing Specialist