

**Minutes of the Downtown Development Authority  
City of Portland**

Held on Thursday, April 8, 2004  
In Council Chambers at City Hall

Members Present: Antaya, Barnes, Neller, Rademacher, Urie Ward, Williams

Members Absent: Clement, Dempsey, Dumas, Kavanagh, Kolarik

Vice-Chair Antaya called the meeting to order at 3:34 P.M.

Motion by Williams, supported by Rademacher, to approve the agenda as presented.  
All in favor. Adopted

Motion by Barnes, supported by Williams, to approve the Treasurer's Report.  
All in favor. Adopted

Wanda Urie stated unless Rush Clement gets more business owners on board for the billboard on I-96, the program will be terminated at the end of the 6-month contract.

Wanda Urie stated that Spring Fever went well, and wanted to publicly thank Amy Williams for opening up half of her restaurant for the fashion show and parade of tables. She stated there were a lot of activities in the City, and all were well received. She also stated even though it was a success, much can be done to improve it. However, for a first time event, it went well.

Economic Development Director, Flanders stated the fourth edition of "On the Street" has been mailed which depicts the services in Portland. He stated it will continue for at least the next two months.

Economic Development Director, Flanders stated they are soliciting volunteers to help cleanup the east side of the shoreline of the Grand River between the bandshell and Bridge Street on April 24<sup>th</sup>. He stated the youth of the community has offered to help with our clean up effort. Several business owners have offered to cook hotdogs for the volunteers. Boardmember Rademacher stated that several students from Saint Patrick School are looking to get more involved in their community, and if asked, would probably volunteer.

Mr. Flanders stated the Resource Team Visit last week sent seven representatives from National Main Street Programs as well as representatives from M.E.D.C., S.H.P.O., and M.S.H.D.A. He stated they met with the D.D.A. members, Council members, staff members, and various citizen groups. He stated the members of the community that were interviewed were pleased with the progress being made by the Main Street Committees, and the members involved in the committees. He stated Portland is somewhat ahead of the other Main Street Communities with the activities that are being planned by the Main Street Committees. Wanda Urie stated there will be a music event planned for June, and the Riverfest held in August. Mr. Flanders stated the Main Street Committees will play a big part in those activities.

He stated the Portland Area Arts Council is sponsoring the music event, and the Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring the Riverfest. He stated the Main Street Committees are helping with both activities.

Mayor Barnes stated D.D.A. President Chuck Dumas drove the van chauffeuring the Resource Team visitors around Portland. He stated they were genuinely much impressed by our unique neighborhoods. He said, “You can drive through town and see different types of structures, different periods are represented, and the visit to the dam property was especially enlightening to them”. He stated they were impressed with the fact that we have the dam property to develop. We told them of our plan for the Portland Area Arts Council to develop the property into a place to work and hold art shows. Mayor Barnes said, “We are trying to capitalize on the resources that we have”. He also stated the architect was impressed with the accessibility of our rivers, and the old 1950’s Maynard Bank Building, which he stated was quite rare. Mayor Barnes was told that building would be a good candidate for Historic Preservation. They also suggested illuminating all our beautiful bridges with floodlights. Vice-Chair Antaya stated that several proposals have been discussed about illuminating the bridges over the past ten years, and he was unsure why it was dropped. It may have been cost prohibited. Mr. Flanders stated the Resource Team stated that Portland was doing a splendid job with our Main Street Program.

Mr. Flanders stated he is working with a possible prospect for the Portland Café. He stated he gave them the name of the realtor handling the sale. Mr. Flanders stated when he called the realtor to follow up on the conversation, he was informed that an offer was received to purchase the building.

Mr. Flanders stated they are working on the uptown area with possible new prospects for the Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Flanders referencing a “Letter to the Editor” in this weeks Review and Observer and was disturbed with the comment that stores are lacking customer service in Portland. Mr. Flanders stated he has always been treated with love and respect from the businesses in Portland, and will following up on the accusation. He stated if there is a problem in Portland, we may bring people in to assist the employees in better customer related services.

Vice-Chair Antaya stated he appreciates all the hard work the Main Street Committees have done for Portland, and in his 22 years of doing business in Portland, the downtown is now the most viable it has ever been. He also stated that even though the Income Tax hurts to pay, it has brought the property values up because of the good streets, and the people wanting to fix up their property.

Motion by Ward, supported by Neller to adjourn the meeting at 3:58 P.M.  
All in favor. Adopted

Respectfully submitted,

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Becky Ward, Secretary

