

Indiana Main Street Council Meeting

Meeting Minutes

10/30/19

Present: Justin Ferguson, Lewis Ricci, Jay Ellis, Abigail Crump, Brian Blackford, Misty Weisensteiner, Jodi Golden, Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch, Laura Brown, Matt Crouch, J.P. Hall, Valecia Crisafulli, Jackie Swihart

Next meeting: February 2020

1. Announcements

Welcome – Justin Ferguson (CAP Indy / Ball State) welcomed council and gave background on CAP Indy.

Call to Order – Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch called to order The October 30th meeting and had the group do introductions.

Welcome – Jodi Golden welcomed the group

Introduction of IMS Coordinator(s) – Jodi Golden introduced Jackie Swihart as the new IMS program manager. Jackie gave a background on her experiences and her path to her position now at The Office of Community and Rural Affairs. Jodi gave her thanks to Lt. Governor Crouch for her support of Main Street and increasing the budget so that OCRA can increase the staff for Indiana Main Street to two people. That second Main Street staff member will be Abigail Crump who is currently a governor's fellow but will be transitioning into a position with Main Street at OCRA.

Downtown Development Week – Abigail Crump gave a brief overview of DDW per the following notes:

DDW (October 7th-12th, 2019)

- Total Number of Communities Involved:
 - 34 communities take part in comparison to 30 last year
 - Good participation in all four corners of the state with the only lack of participation in the northwest corner and parts of central western part of the state
 - Some events had as many as 3,000+ people come through and got creative through events such as yoga on the square, ghouls and goblets events that got people out into stores after hours, art installations with live music, and much more.
- Estimated Miles Traveled by OCRA staff:
 - 2,000+ miles traveled by OCRA staff members – made it to a majority of events other than the ones inputted in the system 2 weeks prior to DDW
 - Communities really appreciated our presence at those events and was a successful way to show our support

- Swag Success
 - We handed out 5 different types of swag to communities: poncho balls, Frisbees, water bottles, hand sanitizers, and drawstring bags.
 - Communities really appreciated this and we had a neutral OCRA logo on them so many of them have utilized the extras outside of their DDW events which is great for us as well as them to have some swag to pass out
- 5 grant winning communities celebrated and with attendance from the Lieutenant Governor – ex: Edinburgh store front celebrations
 - Bedford, Edinburgh, Jeffersonville, Monticello, and Knightstown
 - They greatly appreciated the help and this grant is a great incentive to utilize an event that helps with long term strategic plans – many from Main Street org planning
- Improvements
 - Overall the event went great and we are looking at ways to improve this next year through even better promotion of community events and more.
 - We are reaching out to the communities via survey to find out their feedback about DDW and will utilize that as well to improve where we need to.

Great Lakes Conference 2019 – Jodi Golden reported on Main Street Great Lakes Conference and the success that came with that. 280 attendees and high praises from these attendees. Michigan will be hosting next year's Great Lakes Conference 2020 in Royal Oak, Michigan. Valecia Crisafulli commented and said that the conference was excellent and spoke highly of Zach Benedict and his talk. Lt. Governor asked about what made it such a good conference and Valecia explained that it had good attendance, good space to meet, good food, and overall great organization structure.

Coordinators Meeting – Jackie Swihart gave a brief overview of the coordinators meeting that met in Owasso, Michigan. 28-30 Main Street coordinating programs took part and they were able to network, share best practices, and they had 3 main take aways. (1) NMS is working on creating requirements for coordinating programs and brand preservation (2) the national accreditation standards are changing to 6 standards from the original 10 that are more holistic (make it more inclusive and benefit the communities) – new standards will be enforced in 2021 (3) community engagement strategies – we need to be better at engaging our communities through advocacy (advocating by showing up with celebrations, certificates, etc.) Matt Crouch then spoke about being prepared by talking to other states about how their communities responded to the new changes in the accreditation standards so that Indiana can be best prepared on how to handle the change. He also spoke on transformational strategies and there was not a consensus about what that will look like in the accreditation standards.

QuIP/Arts Commission Partnership – Matt Crouch talked about OCRA's partnership with the Art Commission and that we will be releasing that partnership soon and releasing the QUIP

application soon. These projects are revolved around place making efforts – applications are due March 6th, 2020 and decisions will be made by April 2nd, 2020. Matt gave some examples of these projects that will be what we are looking for. Lewis Ricci also reported on another program that they are involved with around performing arts that many Main Street communities have applied for – for this program there are 10 3,000 grants being awarded.

IMPACT – Brian Blackford reported on IMPACT which is a partnership between Ball State, OCRA, and USDA-RD. Brian reported that the draft data reports have been sent to all 9 communities that were involved in this program. They were sent in September and are planning the next phase of the project in January or early of next year through May conducting a series of trainings that will be based on potential opportunities/challenges in their communities. This allows the communities to come to the table with a team of experts and then come up with new ideas to address these issues. J.P. Hall added that it was a good experience for him because he was able to see different areas of the state and he is interested to see how it develops because the communities are hungry for change. Brian reported that there wasn't great turnout at the community sessions for the reports but that they are ways to improve that in the future.

GMS – Annual Assessment and ROI Data – Matt Crouch gave a background on the Grants Management System that is based out of the Lieutenant Governor Family of Business. In GMS OCRA has rolled out Community Development Block Grants through this system and it allows us to have all of the documentation from application to updates to closing of grant. It will help OCRA be more strategic and help the organization track metrics that show impact of programs and in what area. Jackie Swihart reported that the next few months will be focused around adding in our annual self-assessments and ROI data into the GMS. This will be very helpful in tracking metrics for the Main Streets and keeping better track of this information. Self-assessment and ROIs are the two documents that are going to be put in the system. These will be sent out in January and be returned sometime in February and then sent to NMS in March. NMS wants to know 1) Do Main Streets receive local funding and if so how much? And 2) Do they use national main street brand/logo on website as an addition to the assessment.

Independent Colleges of Indiana – Jodi Golden reported on the LGs family of business meeting with ICI. In the meeting it was discussed about students from ICI to adopt a main street and play an interim director role that would give them credit. Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch affirmed that this is a positive plan because many of these colleges are in rural areas. J.P. Hall then affirmed this idea also and talked about the benefit that coming out of school and having a position in a Main Street org will teach them a variety of skills. Lewis Ricci asked about if we are looking at Main Street orgs that are close to having paid staff and whether we will specifically work with them to make some pairings of these students. Jodi responded and said that is a definite possibility and that it could also be placing secondary positions at even our high functioning Main Streets.

Radically Rural Conference – Jodi Golden reported on attending the Radically Rural conference. She spoke highly of the way that the conference was laid out and you walked all throughout the downtown and it caused you to see the place and she wants to evolve our conferences to this structure.

2. Discussion

Old Business – Jodi Golden welcomed Matt Crouch and Jackie Swihart to begin the discussion on Old Business

Main Street Levels – Matt gave a brief overview of last council meeting and that the need was to have an exact draft of the levels to share with the council to get feedback. Matt emphasized protecting and preserving the brand, which means focusing on all four points of Main Street not just event planning. Matt also explained that we have had an issue with communities thinking that Main Street is just a way to get grant money – but that is not what the program is. There are grant opportunities, but that is not Main Street. These levels will help us prioritize what kind of projects and programs we need to utilize in these communities. He mentioned that NMS recommends a staff person for every 10 communities – Indiana has 138 communities and the levels will help reprioritize the capacity for OCRA.

- Jackie Swihart then walked through the levels and some of the different criteria and why. She noted that each level builds upon each level so that communities are always building and growing.
- Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch asked the question of whether we should only allow the CDBG grant money to be allowed for nationally accredited. Conversation then allowed for open opinions which then Jackie Swihart, Matt Crouch, J.P. Hall, and then Abigail Crump responded giving reasoning and looking at the options.
 - o Lt. Governor recommended increasing the CDBG MSRP for the nationally accredited.
 - o Lewis Ricci asked whether or not having a full time staff member was a nationally accredited requirement and Jackie Swihart responded with yes – Lewis then recommended a change in wording on the levels.
 - Staffing reference changed recommended by Lewis Ricci – in must have staffing in accordance to National Main Street accreditation standards.
 - o JP hall spoke about the example of CLG funds which then opened up the discussion of creating a larger pot of funds through CDBG for only nationally accredited communities.

- Mark Wasky spoke on creating a scoring system or setting that money aside as another carrot. Jay Ellis affirmed the set aside idea. Matt explained that the consolidated plan process which would allow us to have flexibility to do so. Lt. Governor recommended a vote on this.
- Valecia Crisafulli then spoke on mentoring requirement and how nationally accredited Main Street directors do not have the time to mentor. It was clarified by Lt. Governor that it is not a requirement but is permitted. It is recommended that it is more defined and reworded and was recommended to utilize these times at already based together times such as community exchanges. The word will be changed from commitment to willingness. Need to redefine that under incentive. Jackie affirmed good idea to do this at already placed events for these nationally accredited and also Facebook group recommended for these nationally accredited leaders as well.
- Automatically eligible for additional funding pool – Lt. Gov suggestion – on NMS. Lt. Gov brought the group into benchmarks and willingness to enter into mentorship with communities.
 - Wording changed to priority funding pool back to funding pool available. More conversation to follow on CDBG funds, OCRA must receive public consideration before we move forward officially. Fund set aside – priority consideration given to our nationally accredited main street communities. Automatically eligible for set aside funding.
- Lewis Ricci advised on changing the onsite training from OCRA staff and/or Main Street mentor in the traditional Main Street level. Valecia agreed but emphasized the need of OCRA meeting at least once a year still with these communities.
- Lewis recommended the value piece for the traditional and FOMS levels that is focused around training. Valecia Crisafulli agreed and suggested adding webinar access to FOMS. The Lieutenant Governor affirmed all of these suggestions as did OCRA staff members.

Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch calls to a motion the levels with changes in wording named above – Lewis motions – J.P. seconds - Council consensus – all yes

Historic Commercial District Definition – Matt Crouch gave a background on the definition of historic commercial district. Jackie Swihart also explains background. Jackie explains the issue with communities who experienced tragedy or change in

their architecture that then would push them out of the historical district. Jay, Valecia, and J.P. agreed with the story telling piece that makes them a historic district. Lewis agreed and suggested adding the word and emphasizes **authentic** story of place – change. Valecia changes the word story to stories so it shows a variety of different stories that make up communities.

Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch call the definition and changes in wording to a motion – J.P. motions – Valecia 2nds – council consensus – all yes

New Business

Process Map – Jackie and Abby walked through it with the council. Jackie walked through first row.

- J.P. asked if NMS is on board – was answered yes by Jackie.
- Lewis Ricci asked about 50 question survey and if it is biased towards the higher or more functioning Main Street. Therefore it was clarified that it is a self-assessment rather than a survey so wording needs to be changed to self-assessment instead of survey. Being recommended that the survey is broke down by smaller amount of questions for those lower functioning Main Streets with less capacity.
- Abby walked through next section – it was recommended that OCRA is open to being wrong about their initial assessments and was agreed on by OCRA staff members.
- Jackie walks through next section. Lewis Ricci asked about criteria and recommended a committee that is not staff that could help with gray areas. Valecia confirmed.
- J.P. asked about predictions for how OCRA thinks the levels are going to pan out. Matt responded giving a breakdown of predicted numbers in each level.

IMS Application – Matt Crouch explained new process for applications is in the works for new main streets – asking for future feedback and vote at next meeting

Ethics Training – Canceled – please finish by November 20th

Meeting concluded by Matt Crouch