

## Old Town Business Association

Minutes from Winter Breakfast on January 24, 2023

President Joanne Wunderly called the meeting to order at 8:40 am. There were 26 people in attendance. The City of Manassas was represented by Mayor Michelle Davis-Younger, Interim City Manager Doug Keen, Economic Development Director Patrick Small and Communications Director Patty Prince.

After introductions were made the minutes from our November regular meeting were approved. A motion to approve was made by Patty Prince and seconded by Jerry Martin.

Nury Mena presented the Treasurer's report. Currently we have \$9,133.13 in our Fulton Bank account as of January 23, 2024. Expenditures were \$83.40 for web hosting. We received \$1,210. in Christmas Light reimbursement and will owe that amount and possibly once we get the bill from the City. Nury expressed grateful thanks to Chip Rohr, a committee member, for his tireless efforts to insure that the Old Town looks festive during the holiday season by contacting each business to participate.

Joanne began the meeting with a brief recap of the holiday season in Old Town. A request that dues be promptly paid was made. Joanne also stated that the "Shop Small" campaign should be continued to emphasize the importance of shopping local. She also requested that OTBA members contact her with suggestions for speakers at our meetings that would be of interest to Old Town businesses.

**Historic Manassas** -Kristen Kiefer spoke about Main Street program and the priorities that the HMI Board will address at a meeting on February 2. The next First Friday is the popular "Souper Bowl" event . This year there will be 21 'stops' for soup with 17 restaurants participating. Volunteers are needed to help with serving the soup. The Farmers market will reopen on April 11. The Banner Art program is upcoming and artists are encouraged to enter.

**Manassas Museum/Harris Pavilion** - The Parks and Rec catalog of events and exhibits will be out in February. One can also check the City's website to find out the many and varied opportunities available.

**ARTfactory** - Jan Alten, a member of the Board of the ARTfactory, spoke in the absence of Executive Director Talya Conroy and announced the newly created sponsorship possibilities. The ARTfactory has 8,000+ followers on Facebook, has over 40,000 visitors either to the facility or in attendance at the theater productions and in excess of 6,000 email recipients. By becoming a sponsor, your business will increase its reach to potential clients/customers.

**Hylton Performing Arts Center** - Tionge Johnson stated that the Spring Season kicks off with a concert featuring the Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra

**Manassas Police**-Officer Tara Petty encouraged businesses to notify the police of planned events.

**Featured Speaker:** Mayor Michelle Davis-Younger gave a recap of memorable moments in 2023. Mayor Davis-Younger began with highlights from a recent visit to Manassas by President Joe Biden that was held at the Hylton Performing Arts Center. She thanked Interim City Manager Doug Keen for stepping in to fill the vacancy when former City Manager Pat Pate left to return to North Carolina. She also thanked Economic Director Patrick Small and Communications Director Patty Prince for their support providing her with the outline of the many notable events that occurred in 2023: Our 150 Celebration in July, the new Public Safety Building, the renovation of City Hall due to reopen in Spring of 2024, the purchase and demolition of the Olde Towne Inn, the continuing renovation of Annaberg, and the thirteen new business ribbon cuttings that will continue to draw people to Manassas. This is just a partial list of memorable moments that were mentioned.

### **What's New:**

Jerry Martin of VetPar said that our Veterans Banner program has inspired other communities to contact him about doing something similar in their community.

Chip Rohr said that the 47th Annual Ducks Unlimited Gala will again be held at the Portuguese Center in Manassas and is usually sold out. The date is February 23rd.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 am.

**Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 14th.**

Jan Alten Secretary