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**Revitalization Committee**

**September 15, 2020**

**Minutes**

Chairman Michael Coffman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM at Town Hall with seven members present and four attending by Zoom in order to comply with COVID-19 restrictions. Members in attendance were: Michael Coffman, Jereann King Johnson, Bob Shingler, Rose Derring, Mike Kelley, Roger St. Louis, Georgiana Weddington, Mark Wethington, and by Zoom Kimberly Harding, Victoria Lehman, Adam Foreman and Cheryl Bell. Also in attendance was Robert Davie, Town Administrator.

Jereann King requested to add three items to the agendas: an update on the webinars for Race and Systemic Racism, the process for reviewing surveys and an update on the All Saints project. A motion to approve the agenda with changes was made by Georgiana Weddington and seconded by Cheryl Bell. The motion was approved by a majority roll call vote, there being two abstentions and two nays.

The revised minutes of the June 2020 meeting and July 2020 meeting were presented. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Kimberly Harding and seconded by Cheryl Bell. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Under Old Business Michael Coffman discussed Halloween plans, noting that the Town Board was discouraging Halloween activities and that there would be no official day for Trick or Treating. It was noted that the Henderson Dispatch had been informed that there would be no Halloween activities. The editor of the Warren Record was present at the Warrenton Town Board meeting and aware of the situation.

Options for a COVID compliant Santa Clause were discussed including: a drive through Santa, a standard letter request to put in the Santa mailbox, a virtual event for kids and Santa, an appointment time for Santa and families, a blowup Santa for the inside of the Santa house. Cheryl Bell expressed concern over the blowup Santa. Bob Shingler motioned to bring out the Santa House and put it in place, with lights and regular tree decorating. The motion was seconded by Georgiana Weddington and the motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote. It was determined that Rose Derring and Cheryl Bell with purchase lights for the tree, based on the height and circumference. Kimberly Harding will email tree measurements.

Further efforts for Christmas were discussed, including options for the empty lot at Macon and Main Streets, a flyer promoting local businesses, a window decorating contest for merchants. Mark Wethington will inquire of Jimmy Harris regarding the lot, Rose and Cheryl will work on a flyer.

There was no report by the Design Committee.

For the Economic Vitality Committee, Mark Wethington reported that that the American Legion intends to repaint the exterior of the former Fritz’s gas station.

Michael Coffman announced reminded everyone of the one vacancy to be filled on the Revitalization Committee.

Under New Business Michael Coffman said he would be sending out an email with prior work plans for subcommittees, so that subcommittees could begin updating their work plans. He also noted that most Main Street communities are postponing events until the fall of 2021 and focusing on local businesses instead. He indicated that Springfest would not be possible due to COVID-19.

Jereann King Johnson discussed a recent webinar on Race and Systemic Racism, attended by several town commissioners and staff as well as revitalization members. She noted that it was important for Revitalization to discuss and suggested a sub-committee be formed. The intent was not to shame or blame but to build respect and trust. She believed the discussion to be within the scope of the Revitalization Committee’s mission. Bob Shingler read aloud a definition of systemic racism and inquired of Jereann’s viewpoint. Jereann indicated that systemic racism existed in Warrenton and gave an example of policing on Haley Street, a traditional African American neighborhood, versus policing on Hazelwood Street. Cheryl Bell indicated that she watched the webinar and though did not agree 100% with it, noted that systemic racism still exists. A sub-committee was formed of Bob Shingler, Mike Kelley, Jereann King Johnson, Mark Wethington and Kimberly Harding.

Mark Wethington noted that out of the results of the survey the topic could be addressed. A sub-committee was formed to review the surveys which included: Michael Coffman, Mark Wethington, Jereann King Johnson, Victoria Lehman. Mark will convene this sub-committee as Jereann will convene the Race and System Racism sub-committee.

A status report on All Saints was provided by Mark Wethington, noting the scope of the window repair project and the approval of funds by Preservation Warrenton to the project. He noted that the Town Board declined to support the project. Epiphany Studios of Virginia had been selected to perform the window work and that they were experts in stained glass repair.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.