

Chehalis Community Renaissance Team (CCRT)

January 11, 2013

Meeting Notes

Chair David Hartz called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. with the following members present: Corine Aiken, Tom Bradley, Shelly Clemens, Bill Deutscher, Frank DeVaul, Christine Fossett, Patty Kaija, Dick Larman, Merlin MacReynold, Larry McGee, Jan Nontell, Dr. Isaac Pope, Allyn Roe, Bill Schulte, Gail Shaw, and Annalee Tobey. City staff present included: Caryn Foley, Herta Fairbanks, Bob Nacht, and Dennis Osborn. Others in attendance included: Kari Winsor, Carolyn Shaw, Jim Valley, and Toby Van Altvorst.

1. Welcome and Communications.

David welcomed guests Kari Winsor from Blue Earth Farms, Toby Van Altvorst with Western Washington Railroad, Dennis Osborn, the city's new Community Development Director, and Jim Valley, the recently appointed director for the Discover! Children's Museum pilot museum.

Kari announced that they recently received a grant for a Farmers Market at Centralia College that will be student-run.

David recognized new/returning members: Bill Deutscher, Christine Fossett, and Johanna Jones.

David acknowledged Gail Shaw for being The Chronicle's 2012 Person of the Year – a much-deserved honor.

Finally, David reminded everyone that Bob Nacht was retiring on January 18, after 34 years of service, and asked everyone to stop by at city hall from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. on that date to wish Bob well.

2. Project Updates

a. **Children's Museum.** Everything is moving along well. Jim Valley is now on board as the Museum Director. The museum will open February 9, at 9:00 a.m. this Saturday. They will hold the first work party to prepare the space. Some exhibits are ready to go, and there will be a "soft" opening on February 6 – time TBD. A Volunteer Coordinator is still needed, along with several volunteers to help run the day to day operations of the museum. The committee is meeting weekly and a lot is happening between the meetings to get things ready for the upcoming opening. There will be 11 exhibits, and they need leaders for the grocery and music exhibits. They need to keep things new, so they will also incorporate weekend classes/activities/events. The facility will also be available for events such as birthday parties. General days and hours of operation will be Wednesday through Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

b. **Christmas Decorations.** Terry has done a wonderful job leading this project and the committee plans to meet soon to begin planning for this year.

c. **Dillenbaugh Creek Conservancy Park.** Markthor was not able to attend today's meeting, but provided the following report:

Dillenbaugh:

- so far I have met three times with the Lewis County Trails Committee who have been very helpful in discussing options, issues, and stakeholder contacts on developing or linking trails to the Willapa Trail head . They have also commented on opportunities East of the rail & and I-5 to Green Hill.
- I met with Bob Nacht in early December about former project opportunities that fizzled out in this area.
- I am in the process of contacting the property owners in and around the wetland since most are privately owned. I am leaving Tacoma Rail til last until we have something more concrete to discuss with them.
- Basically I am still working on flushing out the major issues, conflicts and opportunities.
- I have met with Herta and her staff but need to contact some of our members here eg. The Port Authority,etc. This will be set up in the next two weeks.
- I will be contacting DOT through the help of the Trails folks and find out the details of the road expansion and long term affects.

Steam Train Depot

- this project directly ties into the Dillenbaugh Park & Improvements
- I will be revisiting with Bill

d. Marketing Committee.

- Discover! Children's Museum
 - First e-newsletter went out yesterday.
 - Volunteers can sign up through the Discover! Facebook page.
- 2013 events rack card is being finalized for printing.
- Visitor brochure being updated. Please provide any feedback you might have.
- Experience Chehalis Facebook page is up to 934 likes after being combined with the Chehalis Business Association Facebook page.

- January edition of the e-newsletter goes out later today with a distribution list of 758 – please forward to others that aren't receiving it. The open rate for the newsletter is about 40%, which is great! The monthly contests are going great. Prizes are certificates donated by local businesses.
- Copies of the new walking tour booklet are available, so please take some.
- Welcome back to Shelly, who's been gone for several weeks following neck surgery. The marketing committee missed you!

Thanks to Frank DeVaul for the great article on the Renaissance in the January *Business To Business*. Christina Crea did a nice job.

e. **National/West Property Improvement.** Work continues on this project. A site plan was developed. The concept for the site is to incorporate fish and a water feature, perhaps like a Japanese garden. Funding is needed for this project. We will be looking into a PARC grant for the project. The project needs to have minimal impact to the city (e.g., ongoing maintenance).

f. **PUD Substation Property on Main Street.** They are watching for federal funding opportunities for this project. They want some community participation and plan to have a contest for the design of the picnic tables. They plan to incorporate art into the design, use gray water for irrigation, have compostable toilets, make it solar-powered, and use native plants. They also plan to incorporate surplus items from the former PUD substation. They are looking at obtaining a 22' sculpture for use on a long-term loan basis.

g. **Storefront Art.** We need to retrieve the lights from the OverAbundance Shoppe where art was previously located. Now that Phyl's Furniture is vacant, this would be a great place for art like the raven in the CCRT office. It would be great to get local realtors on board with this project. There was discussion about incorporating community art or having tagging contests. These types of activities need an endowment fund to keep them fresh.

h. **Steam Train and Western Washington Railroad.** Bill Deutscher is back on the steam train board and still vice president. The Polar Express trains were again a success and he thanked Caryn for volunteering on one of the trains. They are gearing up for their first event of 2013, which is the Easter train ride.

Bill introduced Toby Van Altvorst with the Western Washington Railroad. Bill is now employed by the Railroad and believes they will be compatible with the steam train. Toby's company does short-line railroading and is developing a freight business. The Chehalis-Centralia area is an ideal location between Seattle and Portland. They have had conversations with Tacoma Rail about purchasing/leasing rail to allow the steam train to travel north into Chehalis, Centralia, and beyond, but there have been some obstacles. The track conditions are not up to passenger standards and grant funding would be needed to get them up to such standards. It would cost about \$50,000 based on estimates from several years ago for ties and resurfacing work. A more thorough investigation would be needed. Great Wolf Lodge is interested in having the steam train come to their facility.

3. **Good of the Order**

a. Christine – The first edition of *The Blaze* went out this week in *The Chronicle*. This monthly publication is a collaboration between *The Chronicle* and students at Centralia College.

b. Dick – He is part of a steering committee to revisit the grain industry. WSU is currently conducting some trials in Skagit Valley. He planned to share results at the next meeting.

c. Jan – ARTrails is holding their second jury workshop this Saturday at 11:00 a.m. in Salkum. Applications are due February 1.

d. Dick – The EDC banquet is January 24 at 6:30 p.m. at the Hotel Washington.

e. David – A new restaurant has opened. Café Around the Corner is located at 527 NW Pacific Avenue.

f. Bill – The annual Boy Scouts dinner is February 7 at 6:00 p.m. at the Hotel Washington.

g. Patty asked about the scheduled CCRT meetings, specifically the December 6 meeting date since it was not on the second Friday of the month. Caryn stated it was moved to avoid conflict with the EDC's annual retreat.

The meeting concluded at 9:45 a.m.

Next meeting is Friday, February 8, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Caryn Foley, City Manager's Administrative Assistant.

Chehalis Community Renaissance Team (CCRT)

February 8, 2013

Meeting Notes

Chair David Hartz called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. with the following members present: Tom Bradley, Alicia Bull, Shelly Clemens, Bill Deutscher, Frank DeVaul, Judy DeVaul, Christine Fossett, Terry Harris, Johanna Jones, Merlin MacReynold, Larry McGee, Jan Nontell, Eric Olmstead, Jim Rothlin, Gail Shaw, and Annalee Tobey. City staff present included: Caryn Foley, Herta Fairbanks, and Dennis Osborn. Others in attendance included: Bob Geddes and Jason Baker.

1. Welcome and Communications.

David stated that Julie McDonald Zander's latest book on the history of the Chehalis Industrial Commission is now available at the Historical Museum and at Book 'n Brush for \$12.99. All proceeds benefit The Industrial Commission and the Chehalis Renaissance. In the book, Zander acknowledges that it would not have been created without the recollections and contributions of Gail Shaw.

2. Project Updates

a. **Business Incubator.** The Port plans to meet with the University of Washington to discuss their needs.

b. **Chehalis Avenue.** The city is still waiting on WSDOT's final approval. The project includes grinding and overlay of the street from Main to Pacific, and beautification enhancements from North to Park.

c. **Children's Museum.** Volunteers are needed to work at the museum. The purpose of the pilot museum is to educate the public over the six-month period to determine the feasibility of a permanent facility. The Olympia children's museum has reached out to us to see if there are opportunities to work together.

d. **Dillenbaugh Creek Conservancy Park.** Markthor was not able to attend today's meeting.

e. **Marketing Committee.** The 2013 events rack card and brochure are being finalized and will go out to bid for printing; the remaining wayfinding grant money will be used to create one-sided panels of the current two-sided pedestrian kiosk panels to put directly on buildings; the 2013 Festival & Events Guide looks great; and finishing up work on the mobile website.

f. **PARC Grant.** Larry reached out to PARC (Public Affairs Research Consultants) representatives some time ago to see if they could help us with some of our projects. David is meeting with Susan Neutzman to determine if any of our projects match their interests.

g. **PUD Substation Property on Main Street.** Planning continues, specifically moving the 22-foot, cubed art piece to the space. The artist would like to only have to move it once instead of moving it to his home and then again to the park. It was agreed that all the players of this project need to get together (Bob, Eric, Jan, and Dennis). Several questions/comments were brought up:

- Can the chain link fence be painted or have slats inserted?
- Install PUD's old time/temperature sign be incorporated into the park.
- Digging in the area could be a problem. They would like to construct a restroom, but that would require digging.
- Consider power for holiday decorations in the plans.

h. **Steam Train.** The steam train association is looking for someone to serve on a short-term strategic planning committee to update their current plan. They envision about six months of intermittent work. Annalee, Jim (or someone from his staff), and Terry expressed interest.

3. Good of the Order

a. David – The back of the agenda includes a list of vacant buildings. If anyone knows one of the owners please consider asking them about participating in the storefront art project. Jan has the artists, but will need help with lighting and backgrounds for the displays.

b. Larry – We have vacated the CCRT office in the St. Helens. We had signed a six-month lease and are working with T.J. Guyer to see if they will let us out of the agreement.

c. Alicia – The pool project through the Chehalis Foundation is now a \$1.8 million project, of which \$1.3 million has been secured. The Foundation will be seeking community donations for certain project items. Orin Smith is very involved in the project.

The meeting concluded at 9:45 a.m.

Next meeting is Friday, March 8, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Caryn Foley, City Manager's Administrative Assistant.

Chehalis Community Renaissance Team (CCRT)
March 8, 2013
Meeting Notes

Caryn was absent. No meetings notes available.

Chehalis Community Renaissance Team (CCRT)

April 19, 2013

Meeting Notes

Chair David Hartz called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. with the following members present: Corine Aiken, Del Ames, Tom Bradley, Bill Deutscher, Christine Fossett, Terry Harris, Patty Kaija, Markthor MacFarlane, Larry McGee, Jan Nontell, Dr. Isaac Pope, Allyn Roe, and Gail Shaw. City staff present included: Caryn Foley and Dennis Osborn. Others in attendance included: Stacy Engel, Bob Geddes, Renell Norquist, Jim Valley, Kelly Vanasse, and Julie McDonald Zander. The meeting was held at the Discover! Children's Museum.

1. Welcome and Communications.

David recognized Renell Norquist and Kelly Vanasse as the original visionaries of the Discover! Children Museum. David then led everyone in prayer for all of those impacted by the Boston tragedy.

2. Project Updates

a. **Children's Museum.** Corine recognized those involved and thanked everyone who has supported the museum, especially the Renaissance. The museum is always trying to improve and is working to change the exhibits so returning visitors have a new experience. Activities are planned this weekend in honor of Earth Day. Stats as of April 18:

- 6,072 visitors (2,714 adults / 3,318 children)
- 118 average visitors per day (Note: the projected attendance was 37 visitors per day)
- 680.5 volunteer hours
- 11 birthday parties
- 9 field trips
- 1,044 Facebook likes and 356 people talking about the museum

The five "goals" that the museum strives for are: Friendly, Fun, Family, Learning, and Safe. Comments are overwhelmingly positive, and in talking with businesses within the Twin City Town Center, they have experienced an increase in business since the museum opened. It was suggested that Jim approach businesses about their corporate foundations.

The museum board will begin looking at what will happen with the museum at the end of the pilot, which is July 31. The four options are:

- Shut down the pilot on July 31 and that's the end.
- Shut down the pilot and commit to create a new site for a permanent museum.
- Keep running the pilot as a permanent museum.
- Keep running the pilot and start working on a permanent museum.

Dr. Pope thought that if the pilot was successful, the expectation was to move forward with a permanent museum.

Patty thought the intent of the Renaissance was to revitalize the downtown, and she hoped that a permanent museum would be located there. Larry noted the Renaissance is actually a citywide plan. The museum board's first choice was to locate the pilot in the downtown core, but they were not successful in dealing with those property owners who had vacant buildings.

b. **Christmas Decorations.** The committee met last week to set their direction for this year's plan, but will keep it under their hat until it is better finalized. They plan to take another proposal to the Chehalis Foundation.

c. **Little Pickup.** Larry initiated garbage pickup with Reliable Enterprises about three years ago in certain areas of town. Reliable did a recent pickup around the following areas: Highway 6 to Riverside to the steam train; portions of Market Boulevard; and National / Kresky areas to Hampe Way. Allyn is leading a cleanup effort around the airport with help from some of the big-box stores.

Bob suggested that businesses consider letting their employees volunteer to do litter pickup by letting them off a couple hours. He will lead this effort.

d. **Marketing Committee.** The committee is working to finalize the 2013 events rack card and brochure for printing and distribution. A letter of thanks was read from Marilyn Chintella who won four steam train tickets through the e-newsletter contest.

e. **PARC Grant.** David met with Susan Neutzman from PARC (Public Affairs Research Consultants) to learn more about what the company does and how they might help us with some Renaissance projects. We now have a list of 10 possible projects that we will further discuss with Ms. Neutzman and Stan Foster, President of PARC.

f. **Market Boulevard Plantings & Baskets.** 29 hanging baskets have been planted by the high school FFA class. The city provides the baskets, Kaija's provides the plants and soil, and the FFA does the planting. The money paid by the city for the baskets is split between Kaija's for their costs and the FFA. The baskets should go up by Mother's Day, weather depending.

Last year, annuals were planted in the islands and tree pots in the 400 and 500 blocks of Market and were sponsored by businesses and individuals to support breast cancer awareness. This year, we would like to stay with the same color theme of pink, purple, and white, but we would also like to promote and support a local non-profit. The cost to sponsor an island/tree pot would remain at \$50 and any amount beyond that would go toward the non-profit, which this year would be Pope's Kids Place.

Corine asked if the two large concrete planting boxes running the length of the library could be included in the program, which all agreed was a great idea.

Patty noted that Spring Fling was very successful this year. People were lined up at her store to get a picture with the Easter Bunny.

g. **Treasurer Hunt.** Dr. Pope wondered if anyone with the children's museum had considered doing something geared toward junior high-aged kids. One day a week, kids search for clues at area businesses/offices, etc., to learn about their city. A prize is then given to the student who solves it first. He thought it might be something for the museum to do to get older kids involved.

h. **PUD Substation Property on Main Street.** The committee is meeting next week to continue work on this project, specifically getting the "cube" sculpture in place. They also need to nail down specific plans for the park, funding, liability, maintenance, etc.

i. **Recent Newspaper Articles.** David distributed two articles from The Chronicle. One was a great article on the economic benefits of tourism (4/4/2013) and the other relates to the potential purchase of a section of the Tacoma Rail line to expand operations of the steam train north to Centralia and also to the Great Wolf Lodge (4/16/2013).

i. **Steam Train.** Bill has been working with Councilor Daryl Lund on the purchase of part of the Tacoma Rail line to maintain local control. A meeting of several potential partners will be held on April 25 at 2:30 in the WSU Extension Office in the basement of the courthouse.

Bill also mentioned:

- The Easter train rides were successful.
- Work has begun on updating the association's strategic plan.
- Mother's Day brunch and dinner trains are May 12.
- A photo of the steam train was shown in an on-line ad by Kalmbach Publishing, although there was no mention of our name. The company publishes Trains, Model Railroader, and Classic Trains magazines.

3. **Good of the Order**

a. Jan – The Spring Youth Fair is now under the umbrella of ARTrails. Donations are being accepted for the youth fair through ARTrails.

Jan – ARTrails is building a giant bird's nest at Fort Borst Park this Sunday beginning at 11:30 am. The nest will be built from branches, sticks and twigs on the ground throughout the park. If successful, they might consider expanding to other parks.

b. Larry stated that several people were responsible for the success of the children's museum, but he wanted to especially acknowledge the services of Tom Bradley for making sure the museum operates in a fiscal manner; Jim Valley for marketing of the museum; and Allyn Roe and his family for constructing the exhibits.

The meeting concluded at 9:45 a.m.

Next meeting is Friday, May 10, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Caryn Foley, City Manager's Administrative Assistant.

Chehalis Community Renaissance Team (CCRT)

May 10, 2013

Meeting Notes

Chair David Hartz called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. with the following members present: Corine Aiken, Justin Becker, Tom Bradley, Alicia Bull, Bill Deutscher, Terry Harris, Markthor MacFarlane, Merlin MacReynold, Larry McGee, Jan Nontell, Allyn Roe, Jim Rothlin, and Gail Shaw. City staff present included: Caryn Foley and Dennis Osborn. Others in attendance included: Julie Balmelli-Powe, Christina Crea, Jackie Rose, and Andy Skinner.

1. Welcome and Communications.

Jackie Rose stated the Farmers Market would soon begin its 9th season in Chehalis, running June 11 – October 29. They will have a full market with new vendors. She acknowledged the generosity of Mike and Sue Pallas in letting the market use their empty building to store equipment.

Christina Crea, from DeVaul Publishing, was sitting in to learn more about the Renaissance.

Julie Balmelli-Powe, formerly with Congresswoman Herrera Beutler's office, wanted to learn more about the Renaissance and perhaps see if she can contribute.

Andy Skinner, interim director of the Lewis County Historical Museum stated he wants to bring youth and energy to the museum and start a new beginning following the unfortunate events over last couple years. Andy's background is in history and political science.

2. Project Updates

a. **Children's Museum.** The museum continues to do well. They have seen a drop in attendance with the warmer weather, but they are planning new programs to keep things fresh. An appreciation dinner is being held next Tuesday at the Hotel Washington to thank the volunteers for helping to make the museum so successful. Even though the attendance figures have dropped, they are still at the original forecasted level. In addition, they have already exceeded the six-month revenue forecast.

The museum board held a planning meeting Wednesday night to discuss where we go after the pilot ends. The big thing taken away from the meeting is that we still do not have enough information and we need to run the course, and also accomplish all of the learning that was committed to. The four options before the board include: 1) Shut down the pilot on July 31 and that's the end; 2) Shut down the pilot on July 31 and commit to create a new site for a permanent museum; 3) Keep running the pilot as a permanent museum; and 4) Keep running the pilot and start working on a new site for a permanent museum. The committee agreed that option 3 was off the table. In researching other successful museums it was advised that you should not make your pilot location your permanent site because people are less willing to donate because they think you already have enough resources.

Alicia asked if the committee was considering outside components. Larry stated they were, and were additionally looking at co-locating next to an existing facility, like the steam train. The committee plans to make a decision about how to proceed within the next month.

b. **Dillenbaugh Creek Conservancy Park.** Markthor stated the area is about 150 acres along I-5 between exits 76 and 77. He is still in the process of determining all the stakeholders, property owners, and options. His next task will be to create some schematic designs.

c. **Market Boulevard Island Sponsorship Project.** Caryn handed out info on this year's sponsorship of the islands/tree pots in downtown on Market. Since we had such a good response last year we decided to do it again. The cost is \$50 to plant an island or pot, or if you want to do the planting yourself, you can get a 20% discount at Kaija's on pink, purple, and white annuals to stay within the color scheme. Thank you, Patty! There is an irrigation system, but it would be great if business owners sponsoring the islands in front of their businesses would make sure the annuals stay watered and help keep the area weeded.

At the last CCRT meeting, Patty mentioned that the islands were planted in shades of pink, purple, and white in honor of breast cancer awareness last year. We thought it would be nice to also recognize a local non-profit, so any contributions beyond the \$50 sponsorship fee will go to Pope's Kids Place. Contact Caryn if you would like to participate.

d. **Marketing Committee.** The committee has set the following priorities for the rest of the year:

1. Wayfinding signs (use remaining .09 grant money)
 - 1.a. Exploded downtown map
2. Shop Local Campaign (logo/brand) – Chamber
3. Main Street (B&O Tax) – Annalee
4. Storefront Art – David/Caryn
5. Photos (contest/Flickr/postcards)

- 6. Tourism/Hospitality Seminars
- 7. Events Planning

The Official Visitors Guide is complete, except for one last ad and should be ready for distribution by June 1 by Certified Rack – 80,000 copies between SeaTac and Portland, and locally. Thanks to Marketing Committee for their collaboration on the piece. The guide includes some new additions, including local picks, new photos, and lodging information. It's much-improved and will be more useful to visitors.

Alicia also reminded everyone that the Rob Fuller Scholarship Luncheon is May 13 from 11:30 to 1:00 at the Great Wolf Lodge. Four scholarships will be awarded, including two from the Visiting Nurses Foundation.

e. **Historic Plaque Project.** Caryn reminded everyone that after the Historic Walking Tour was completed, the Chehalis Foundation approached us about installing plaques on the buildings that were featured in the walking tour and they donated \$4,500 toward the idea. An anonymous donor added another \$1,000, and building owners were asked to contribute just \$100. The final two plaques were recently ordered to complete the project. She stated 33 out of the 42 building owners purchased a plaque.

f. **PUD Park.** Due to needed truck access by PUD, the final measurements (38' x 68') for the area are significantly smaller than originally thought. They need to start from scratch and will have to really scale back on the plans. Stay tuned.

g. **Steam Train.** A group is working to put together a proposal to purchase the portion of Tacoma Rail line which runs from Maytown to Chehalis. This is a huge project with big opportunities, specifically it would allow us to control the line. It is about 20 miles of line that is costing Tacoma Rail money and they want to get rid of it.

Bill also noted:

- Mothers' Day brunch and dinner trains are almost sold out.
- The regular season begins May 25.
- 2013 brochures are available.

h. **Storefront Art.** Letters went out to several owners of empty buildings to solicit their participation in the storefront art project. David and Jan will follow up with phone calls to meet with the owners to further discuss the project. Jan is looking into grants to provide backdrops and lighting for the displays. She also shared that there is a new Lewis County arts group being formed and they are basing their model on how the Renaissance works.

i. **PARC Resources.** David recently met with Susan Neutzman from PARC (Public Affairs Research Consultants) Resources to talk about how they might help us with some Renaissance projects. Susan and Stan Foster, president of PARC, are available to come to Chehalis next week on the 14th and 15th to discuss our projects. Gail noted they have a good reputation – they've been in business a long time and they get things done. PARC works with small, rural communities and tribes, and primarily use private foundations. Larry suggested putting together a small synopsis of each project for Stan and Susan to review ahead of time.

3. **Good of the Order**

a. Jackie – The Farmers Market is hosting their annual movie event at the Fox Theatre on May 16. This year's feature documentary is, *Small Farm Rising*. Tickets are \$12 and are available at Jeremy's Bistro & Market, Santa Lucia Coffee, or at the door the night of the show. Proceeds benefit the Historic Fox Theatre restoration project and the Market.

b. Jan – Book 'n Brush is hosting the Princess Bride at the Fox Theatre on May 18 at 2:00 and 7:00 pm. Tickets are available at Book 'n Brush, Holley's Place, Santa Lucia, HUBBUB, and Debbie's Boutique.

c. Larry, Allyn, and David acknowledged Caryn's work with the Renaissance. Larry stated that Caryn was having an important life event later in the year and they would like to give her a gift to mark the occasion. Caryn stated that she was going to become a grandma at the end of October. ***"Thank you, Larry, Allyn, and David. The books are great and I can't wait to read them to my first grandbaby!"***

The meeting concluded at 9:40 a.m.

Next meeting is Friday, June 14, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Caryn Foley, City Manager's Administrative Assistant.

Chehalis Community Renaissance Team (CCRT)

June 14, 2013

Meeting Notes

Chair David Hartz called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. with the following members present: Alicia Bull, Bill Deutscher, Christine Fossett, Terry Harris, Patty Kaija, Larry McGee, Jan Nontell, Allyn Roe, Jim Rothlin, Gail Shaw, and Andy Skinner. City staff present included: Herta Fairbanks and Caryn Foley. Others in attendance included: Julie Balmelli-Powe, Marilynn Chintella, Christina Crea, Harmony Hamilton, and Julie McDonald Zander.

1. **Welcome and Communications.**

Andy Skinner introduced Harmony Hamilton who started volunteering at the Historical Museum this week. Welcome, Harmony.

2. **Project Updates**

a. **PARC (Public Affairs Research Consultants) Resources.** David stated that Stan Foster, president of PARC, was now the lead in working with the CCRT.

b. **Business Incubator.** Jim spoke with Maren Ohaks, the Assistant Director at C4C, which is the research and development center for the University of Washington. Maren stated that in her discussions with the research group, all prototype and small scale development is contracted out. The researchers who develop the idea of the products rely on engineers with product development experience to take it to the next level of small scale manufacturing. She put Jim in contact with CAMPS (Center for Advanced Manufacturing Programs) to see if an incubator facility would be useful for them to do their research. Jim will work to get a meeting or site visit set up with the group to see if there is a need for this type of facility.

c. **Children's Museum.** Museum Director, Marilynn Chintella, provided the following:

- * May paid attendance – 1,677
- * Feb-May paid attendance – 8,267 (far exceeds original estimates)
- * May field trips – 13 (391 children and chaperones)
- * Feb-May birthday parties – 14

Marilynn noted everything is going well, overall. The space is working well, and they are working on improving the party room and birthday party offerings. "Learning cards" are being created for each exhibit for parents to engage their children with questions.

Larry added that the WSU Extension Office reached out and offered to quantify some of the learning aspects, which will be important information in talking to potential funders. Because of the success of the museum, the board made the decision to stay open an additional three months through the end of October to collect more data and make sure we've learned everything we need. He also noted that the Olympia museum has been very cooperative in sharing information and answering questions.

Upcoming Events:

- * 6/22 Cosser & Associates 5K Fun Run to benefit Discover!
- * 6/22 Lewis County Children's Oral Health Coalition free oral health screenings
- * 7/13 Kids Day at the Steam Train (working with steam train to cross-promote)
- * 7/20 Twin Star Credit Union Dollar Day
- * 7/27 Planes, Trains & Automobiles (\$1 off admission to Discover! with Steam Train ticket stub)
- * 7/29 Director's birthday party (free admission to first 30 visitors; birthday cake for all from 10:00 to 3:00)
- * Other events being planned include participating at Squirrel Fest in Longview, and a joint event with the Chehalis Fire Department and Lewis County Fire District No. 6.

Patty suggested that something be done to promote the museum during STP. Marilynn and Alicia will work together on this.

d. **Downtown Landscaping.** 19 of the 34 islands have been sponsored. The cost is \$50. Extra contributions beyond \$50 go to Pope's Kids Place. The pots and islands around the Farmers Market were spruced up for opening of the Market and the rest will be completed this coming week. Patty is adding more perennials to fill in the islands. The hanging baskets are up, including five in front of the PUD that they paid for. Bill Hillier also pays for one in front of his office. Patty stated she would like to involve Chehalis Avenue next year. She is putting together an estimate for improving the large islands on Market as you enter the downtown area and near the Historical Museum. Finally, wave petunias were planted in the planter boxes along the front of the library, which was sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Gail thanked the PUD for their efforts in providing community participation, specifically, Bob Geddes.

e. **Chehalis Avenue.** Herta announced that as of yesterday, the city has been authorized to go out to bid for the Chehalis Avenue project. Bids will be due July 11. The project includes resurfacing the street from Pacific to Main, and beautification from Park to Main. Larry thanked Herta for pushing the involved agencies to get this project authorized. He reminded everyone that the CCRT is responsible for the benches and plantings on this project.

Patty suggested that we implement an island sponsorship on Chehalis Avenue like we do for Market Boulevard. There was discussion that this project would be a real boost for Chehalis Avenue and would go a long way in making them feel like part of the downtown. Terry stated he would lead a committee to address beautifying the area, including holiday decorations. Patty, Julie, and Herta volunteered to be part of the committee. Dennis Osborn and/or Rich Trotter also needs to be part of the committee.

Patty also noted that the islands near Security State at Pacific and Chehalis look pretty bad. She will talk with Dwayne Aberle at the bank.

Herta will include information about these improvement plans when she sends information out to update the businesses/residents of Chehalis Avenue on the resurfacing/beautification project.

Herta asked about the status of the PUD Park. Jan stated that because of the significant decrease in available space, they are working on a complete redesign. Herta suggested they contact the Master Gardeners to see if they might be able to assist. Jan thought that was an excellent idea. Terry said he knows the chair of that group and will contact him.

f. **Marketing Committee.** David stated the committee is in the process of delivering the 2013 visitor brochure and event card.

Alicia stated the Official Visitors Guide is being distributed via Certified Rack – 80,000 copies between SeaTac and Portland, and locally. Thanks to the Marketing Committee for their contributions and to the City for the tourism dollars that make this publication possible. The guide features local picks and lodging information for the entire county. They hope to get it out sooner next year and appreciate any feedback.

g. **Steam Train.** David reported that an offer was made to the City of Tacoma for about 20 miles of Tacoma Rail line running from Maytown to Chehalis. Negotiations are ongoing. Merlin and Bill Schulte are leading this effort.

Patty also commented that Merlin, Bill, and J. Vander Stoep have been instrumental in leading the charge regarding the proposed FEMA flood maps. The proposed maps will have a huge impact and will affect the entire county regardless if you live in a floodplain or not.

Bill D. also noted:

- Harold Borovec received the Heritage Award from the South Sound Heritage Association for his service on the steam train
- The regular Dinner train and Father's Day dinner train are sold out, but rides on the 5:00 train are still available.
- Kids Day is July 13
- Senior Day is July 14
- Work on updating the strategic plan continues
- 2013 brochures are available

3. **Good of the Order**

a. Community Health Issues – Allyn recently attended a hospital conference where the growing trend of childhood obesity was discussed. He suggested the need for a community coalition to address this and wondered if it would be appropriate to have a CCRT representative on such a board. There was discussion that this was certainly an economic issue stating that 85% of Medicare is spend on five chronic conditions which costs communities. Patty thought Kari Winsor would make a good representative with her work in school gardens.

b. Patty – Almost Home will have a fireworks stand on their future site on Kresky Avenue. Gift certificates are available.

c. Bill – The steam train is looking for volunteers for Kids Day, which is July 13. They are also in need of give-away items. They are working with Discover! to do some sort of cross-promotion. The contact is Melanie Case at 269-7976.

d. Andy – The museum's annual pie social is July 14 at Claquato Church.

The meeting concluded at 9:50 a.m.

Next meeting is Friday, July 12, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Caryn Foley, City Manager's Administrative Assistant.

Chehalis Community Renaissance Team (CCRT)

July 12, 2013

Meeting Notes

Chair David Hartz called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. with the following members present: Tom Bradley, Shelly Clemens, Bill Deutscher, Christine Fossett, Terry Harris, Patty Kaija, Merlin MacReynold, Larry McGee, Jan Nontell, Dr. Isaac Pope, Allyn Roe, Gail Shaw, Bill Schulte, and Andy Skinner. City staff present included: Herta Fairbanks and Caryn Foley. Others in attendance included: Julie Balmelli-Powe, Marilyn Chintella, Christina Crea, Trevor Elliott, Bob Geddes, Tony Ketchum, Julie McDonald Zander, Kevin Smith, Orin Smith, Kyle Spurr, Jack Tavares, Annalee Tobey, and Kelly Vanasse.

1. **Welcome and Introduction of Guests.** The Chronicle's new print salesperson, Jack Tavares; Trevor Elliott with V.R. Lee & Son Insurance and Young Professionals, Mayor Tony Ketchum, and Kevin & Orin Smith of the Orin Smith Family Foundation were welcomed.

2. **Presentation to Pope's Kids Place.** Patty Kaija stated that in addition to asking businesses and individuals to sponsor the planting of annual flowers in the downtown islands, the project was expanded to give people the opportunity to support a local non-profit agency. Pope's Kids Place was chosen and Patty presented a \$650 check to Dr. Pope.

Dr. Pope thanked the Renaissance and stated the money would be used for enrichment programs for the Early Learning Center. He added that the CCRT should be very proud of what they've accomplished through partnerships, teamwork, and community involvement.

3. **Presentation to Smith Family.** Mayor Ketchum stated that even though the Smith Family lives elsewhere, they've really never left Chehalis. From the library and now the pool, they continue to love and truly care about Chehalis. Through not only their financial support, but also their advice, we are building a stronger community. Mayor Ketchum believed that Chehalis is the best place to live in Lewis County. He hoped that the Smith Family would always remain a part of the Chehalis family and he presented them a key to the city on behalf of the City Council.

Orin expressed his thanks, stating he and his brothers grew up in Chehalis and they continue to believe in this great community, and he looked forward to continued involvement.

4. **Overview of Renaissance Projects.** David stated that the library really spurred the Renaissance. Back in 2007, talk began about the need for a city visioning plan that would actively engage the community. He said that City Manager MacReynold and former Economic Development Administrator Joanne Schwartz proposed hiring a consultant to lead such a project. During the April 23, 2007, Chehalis City Council meeting, City Manager MacReynold, "... wanted to use the library as a linchpin in the much bigger process that would engage the whole city."

David then provided an overview of the many Renaissance projects that have been completed and others that are currently in progress.

Additional notes from the Overview:

- Young Professionals meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 6:00 pm at Riverside Golf Club
- Discover! Children's Museum
 - 9,500 visitors from 80 zip codes to-date.
 - Pilot extended to 10/31/2013.
 - Working to enhance education – learn through play.
 - Partnering with various organizations to provide special events at the museum and to increase community outreach.
 - What happens after pilot closes? Collecting data to provide to potential funding sources for a permanent museum.
- Eyesore Properties – Dr. Pope noted there are areas on Cascade Avenue and one on Market Boulevard where properties are in a dilapidated state and should be pursued by the city to get them cleaned up.
- "Renaissance Park" – Allyn stated the owner lives out-of-state and wants too much money for this property. He suggested that the Renaissance lease the property with right of first refusal to purchase. Perhaps the owner would be amenable to this so that the property could be improved. Dr. Pope noted that the Chehalis Foundation is looking for a location for an office and this property might be a good location.
- Marketing – Dr. Pope stated a medical conference was being held on October 11, and it would be good if someone from the Marketing Committee could attend to welcome the participants and give them an overview of what Chehalis has to offer.

5. Good of the Order

a. FEMA Flood Maps – Bill S. reported that FEMA announced today they have finalized mapping procedures for non-accredited levees, and that some that have been on hold (Chehalis-Centralia Airport levee) will be dealt with in 2013. **Note: The city was notified that FEMA has only started with pilot projects, which do not include the airport levee. According to FEMA, they are still a little ways off (possibly years) from starting in Lewis County.**

b. Rail Traffic – Bill S. stated that at the last Transportation Strategy Council meeting, there was discussion about the potential for a 50% increase in rail traffic due to an increase in crude oil shipping. With the numerous at-grade crossings in both Chehalis and Centralia, this could cause significant impacts through our community.

The meeting concluded at 10:00 a.m.

Next meeting is Friday, August 9, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Caryn Foley, City Manager's Administrative Assistant.

Chehalis Community Renaissance Team (CCRT)

August 9, 2013

Meeting Notes

Meeting Canceled

Chehalis Community Renaissance Team (CCRT)

September 13, 2013

Meeting Notes

Chair David Hartz called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. with the following members present: Corine Aiken, Julie Balmelli-Powe, Tom Bradley, Bill Deutscher, Trevor Elliott, Caryn Foley, Christine Fossett, Terry Harris, Dick Larman, Julie McDonald Zander, Jan Nontell, Allyn Roe, Gail Shaw, Andy Skinner, Shawn Thomas, and Annalee Tobey. Others in attendance included Bret Bryan (steam train), Marilyn Chintella (Discover! Children's Museum), Christina Crea (DeVaul Publishing), Cameron Dean, and Buck Hubbert (The Industrial Commission).

1. **Welcome and Introduction of Guests**. David welcomed new attendees Bret Bryan with the steam train and Cameron Dean, interested citizen.

2. **Communications**. David announced new CCRT members Julie Balmelli-Powe, Trevor Elliott, Bob Geddes, and Julie McDonald-Zander, and thanked them for their interest in being part of the Renaissance.

3. **Project Updates**.

a. **Young Professionals**. As president of Young Professionals Trevor stated he would like to see the group do more networking and community service. There are about 20 to 30 members and he hoped they could become more connected to the Renaissance.

b. **Chehalis Avenue**. Herta was unable to attend the meeting, but Caryn reported that bids were received and are currently being reviewed.

c. **Children's Museum**. Marilyn reported that paid admissions have reached 11,800 to-date. There are several special events taking place and the museum will have a presence at numerous upcoming events. She thanked Christine for reaching out to her fellow newspaper contacts to help spread the word about the museum. Marilyn noted that the museum pilot is scheduled to end October 31, and the board will be meeting next week to discuss what the next steps will be relating to a permanent facility.

d. **Marketing Committee**. Annalee stated there is about \$3,600 remaining in the grant for wayfinding signs. The committee has made several revisions and will replace the existing six signs and have additional signs made for the hotels, businesses, etc. She also noted that the committee is submitting an application to the Chehalis Lodging Tax Advisory Committee to help with some of the projects that are being worked on.

e. **Steam Train**. Bill D. provided the following report:

- The association will be doing track maintenance on October 5 – young, strong volunteers needed
- Regular season ends September 29
- Pumpkin trains are October 26 and 27 – volunteers needed
- Polar Express and Santa Ride tickets go on sale in October – volunteers needed

Bill thanked the anonymous donor and the Renaissance for offering to pay for an audit of the organization and for securing the services of PARC to assist with the completion of a strategic plan, and eventually, identifying funding sources.

f. **PARC Resources**. David stated that with the help of Stan Foster, they put together a proposed budget for 2014 and potential funding sources. If anyone has questions or is interested in a particular project, please contact David or Caryn.

g. **Christmas Decorations**. Terry and David will be making a request to the Chehalis Foundation for \$10,000 for Christmas decorations. This year's focus will be on Chehalis Avenue and Market. In addition, they want to see lights along Cascade Avenue from city hall to Recreation Park, and they have done some community outreach to get people to participate.

h. **Marketing Committee**. Annalee stated the marketing committee has been looking into the Main Street Program, which would allow us to participate in their B&O tax incentive program to provide a funding source for the Renaissance. The committee is meeting with a representative from the Main Street Program next week to talk about our eligibility. The B&O tax incentive program allows businesses to direct a certain percentage of their state B&O to eligible non-profits versus paying it to the state.

4. **Business Comings & Goings**

- New – Sabra's Place (formerly Paradise); Texas BBQ Grill (formerly Skippers); I Want That Furniture (365 NW State Avenue)
- Closed – Cold Stone Creamery

5. **Good of the Order**

a. Dick reminded everyone about the energy audit program through the EDC and he encouraged businesses to take advantage of it. The program promotes energy cost-saving opportunities for local businesses. Dick announced that Matt Matayoshi was recently hired by the

EDC as their new director of business development. Matt will begin October 1, and will focus on assisting existing business and recruiting new companies to Lewis County.

b. ARTrails gala is September 20, and tours are the 21st, 22nd, 28th and 29th. The gala and tours are free of charge. Jan added that the Lewis County Arts Coalition meets on the 1st Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm at Santa Lucia – all are welcome.

c. Christine stated that Chris Sharp with Sign Pro (a division of The Chronicle) is retiring, so they will be moving those offices to their Pearl Street location.

d. Julie Balmelli-Powe announced that the National Day of Service is September 11. Volunteers are needed. She also reminded everyone to support the Girl Scout cookie sale and the Boy Scout popcorn sale.

e. Gail reminded everyone that we owe Bob Nacht, former Community Development Director for the city, a thank you for connecting Stan Foster with Larry. PARC has a great reputation for developing ideas, giving direction, and helping to find funding. He hoped that our relationship with Stan and PARC would increase our opportunities.

The meeting concluded at 9:45 a.m.

Next meeting is Friday, October 11, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Caryn Foley, City Manager's Administrative Assistant.

Chehalis Community Renaissance Team (CCRT)

October 11, 2013

Meeting Notes

Chair David Hartz called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. with the following members present: Corine Aiken, Julie Balmelli-Powe, Alicia Bull, Bill Deutscher, Trevor Elliott, Caryn Foley, Bob Geddes, Markthor MacFarlane, Allyn Roe, Gail Shaw, Shawn Thomas, and Annalee Tobey. Others in attendance included Bret Bryan, Steam Train; Marilyn Chintella, Discover!; Christina Crea, DeVaul Publishing; Cameron Dean; Bob Holland, Centralia General Agencies; Sharon Krupski, Hope & Health Medical Outreach; and Brian Watson, The Chronicle.

1. **Welcome and Introduction of Guests.** David welcomed Bob Holland, Sharon Krupski, and Brian Watson.

Sharon Krupski stated Hope & Health provides medical services to the uninsured and began seeing patients in February. The facility provides free, holistic, quality health care. The program operates out of the Northwest Pediatric Clinic and is working with various health care providers.

Brian Watson stated he is the sales director for The Chronicle, sitting in for Christine Fossett today.

2. **Communications.**

a. Everyone is invited to the Lewis County Historical Museum's annual society meeting and dinner on Sunday, November 10, 5:00 pm, at the museum. Enjoy ham, potatoes, green beans, and salad, and "Penny Cake" & ice cream for dessert. The presentation will recap 2013 and look ahead to 2014.

b. David distributed the 2014 Project & Budget Overview. If you are interested in any particular project, please contact David or Caryn.

3. **Project Updates.**

a. **Children's Museum.** Paid admissions have reached 12,000+ to-date, not including groups such as field trips. August and September volunteer hours were 135. The museum has been involved in several community events and hosted numerous special events. Marilyn shared an article from Thursday's Chronicle about a new exhibit at the museum. Raygen's Lite Brite wall was unveiled October 9. It is hoped that this fun, interactive exhibit will help raise awareness of a congenital heart defect known as Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome, which Raygen was born with. Raygen's story and facts about her syndrome are displayed on a plaque next to the exhibit.

b. **PUD Park.** Markthor shared the latest concept for the PUD Park project. The concept includes using recycled pieces from the former substation, planters, benches, a fountain, and an electronic reader board.

c. **Marketing Committee.** The committee:

- finalized revisions to the wayfinding signs. The six existing pedestrian kiosk signs will be updated and additional signs will be available for hotels, businesses, etc.
- made a presentation to the Chehalis Lodging Tax Advisory Committee to request \$11,000 for marketing projects. The committee's recommendations will go to the city council October 28.
- is beginning work to update the visitor brochure and event rack card for 2014.
- is providing visitor information for the Washington Tourism Alliance website to ensure that Chehalis has a presence.
- received approval from the Friends Foundation to pursue the Main Street Program.

e. **Steam Train.**

- The city, on behalf of the association, submitted an application for .09 funding for repair of Engine #15.
- Polar Express tickets are now on sale. Volunteers are needed for the 18 runs. Contact Mike Beehler at kate_mike@comcast.net.
- The strategic plan update is moving along.
- PARC will be making calls to gather information as part of the strategic plan update.
- A work party was held last Saturday to complete track work.

f. **Young Professionals Lewis County.** The group meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at Riverside Golf. They are in a transition and visioning phase. Having been more of a social group, they now want to become more community-oriented. Trevor distributed a brochure about the group and stated you can find them on Facebook and also on the city's website under Renaissance.

g. **Christmas Decorations.** The Chehalis Foundation donated \$10,000 to the Renaissance for Christmas decorations and requested that we put together a three to five year plan for future funding of this project. David noted that Terry Harris was actually on his way to pick up some of the decorations as we speak.

h. **PARC Resources.** David reported that Stan Foster has already made a couple trips to Chehalis to meet with various individuals and groups.

4. **Business Comings & Goings**

- Baby Gear! & Maternity – moved a couple doors up to 470 N Market (formerly Sewsie's)

5. **Good of the Order**

a. **Affordable Care Act (ACA) Presentation**. Bob Holland with Centralia General Agencies provided a brief outline of the ACA. The ACA was designed to make health insurance coverage available to all individuals. States were given the flexibility to tailor their approaches to their unique needs. In Washington, you can find information and answers at www.wahealthplanfinder.org. Starting in 2014, insurance companies can no longer deny coverage for pre-existing conditions and tax credits are available in some circumstances. If you can afford insurance and choose not to purchase it, there will be penalties.

The meeting concluded at 9:40 a.m.

Next meeting is Friday, November 8, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Caryn Foley, City Manager's Administrative Assistant.

Chehalis Community Renaissance Team (CCRT)

November 8, 2013

Meeting Notes

Chair David Hartz called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. with the following members present: Corine Aiken, Julie Balmelli-Powe, Bill Deutscher, Trevor Elliott, Caryn Foley, Christine Fossett, Terry Harris, Patty Kaija, Merlin MacReynold, Julie McDonald Zander, Larry McGee, Gail Shaw, Andy Skinner, Shawn Thomas, and Annalee Tobey. Others in attendance included Cameron Dean; and Rachael Reiton with the Community Farmers Market.

1. **Welcome and Introduction of Guests.** David welcomed Rachael Reiton, Manager of the Community Farmers Market.

2. **Communications.**

a. Andy invited everyone to the Lewis County Historical Museum's annual society meeting and dinner on Sunday, November 10, 5:00 pm, at the museum. Andy also announced that on Tuesday he was appointed director of the museum. Congratulations, Andy!

3. **Project Updates.**

a. **Discover! Children's Museum.**

- The pilot will close on December 29
- Birthday parties have increased since lowering the cost from \$175 to \$125
- A couple board members recently attended the Northwest Association of Youth Museums Annual Conference held at the Olympia Children's Museum. Through both the conference offerings and talking with other museums, they learned the importance of capital campaigns, especially showing gratitude and giving thanks to supporters. They also learned that we have already been doing several things right, like opening a pilot museum before diving right in to a permanent facility.
- Discover! will have a presence at the Festival of Trees with a display and craft
- Paid attendance is well over 12,000

Patty asked why not keep the pilot going until a permanent museum is opened given the success of the pilot. Larry stated there were several factors – the generous lease agreement they have with the property owner is running out, they won't have the revenue to keep it going past the end of the year, and energy and manpower to do both.

Larry added that they have always pushed the education experience of the museum as being first and having fun second. They learned at the conference that Discover! is the only one taking the educational aspect to such an extent, and some larger museums were very interested in what we were doing.

Terry commented that you should always leave people wanting more – when the pilot is closed and a permanent museum is opened, people will be that more excited about it.

David added that he appreciated the board extending the closing date twice and having a whole year's data to study.

b. **Christmas Decorations.** Terry stated that the committee will meet in January to draft a plan per the Chehalis Foundation's request. City staff is readying the holiday decorations to go up at the end of the month. Letters were sent to a few property owners on Chehalis Avenue asking them to use their electricity since the power poles near their buildings don't have an adequate power supply. Letters are also being sent to businesses/residents on Cascade Avenue from Market Boulevard to 13th Street asking them to be a part of lighting up Chehalis for the holidays.

Patty stated that Kaija's will offer a 20% discount on garlands and wreaths to businesses that want to decorate for the holidays. The products will be available November 18.

c. **Marketing Committee.** The committee:

- received \$11,000 in tourism funding for use in 2014, for reprinting the visitor brochure and event rack card; reprinting the Historic Downtown Chehalis Walking Tour booklet; continuance of the Experience Chehalis Facebook site and e-newsletter; and photography. Christine offered The Chronicle's assistance relating to photography.
- is still pursuing the Main Street Program
- is working with the Chamber on a shop local campaign for black Friday
- will be doing some Facebook ads to boost our fan base

d. **Farmers Market.** Now that the market has closed for the season, Rachel is focusing on finding a storage space for next year, looking into increasing their volunteer program, and working on a marketing plan.

e. **PARC Resources.** David reported that PARC is continuing their work and will be back in town on November 20 to meet with the steam train about their strategic planning process.

f. **PUD Park.** Markthor has made a lot of progress on this project. He met with Bob Geddes to go over the plan and except for a couple questions, Bob was pleased with it. They also had a chance to look at PUD's surplus items that may be of potential use in the park. They will next meet with PARC to discuss funding possibilities. David noted that an electronic sign is included in the park concept. The Port of Chehalis, who is also looking to replace the sign at their office, shared some rough costs.

g. **Steam Train.**

- After adding another train, the Polar Express rides are now up to 19 trains, which equals 1,900 riders! They will decide later today if another train will be added to the schedule. They are still in need of volunteers to be Santa, elves, story readers, servers, and to bake cookies. Contact Melanie Case at 748-3768 or at i_thatgirl@yahoo.com.
- Santa Stream Train Rides run December 7, 8, 14, and 15
- Work continues on the strategic planning process. Surveys went out to CCRT members and the Experience Chehalis e-newsletter distribution list. Please take a couple minutes to complete the survey. Everyone's input is important.

h. **Young Professionals Lewis County.** Next meeting is from 5:00 to 8:00 pm at Riverside Golf.

i. **City Report.** Merlin noted the following:

- The Chehalis Avenue street project is being rebid. Only two bids were received and they were significantly higher than the engineer's estimate. They plan to rebid in December to have a better opportunity to receive lower bids. He indicated that keeping the street open during the project is what is driving the higher costs.
- First readings of the budget ordinances will be next Tuesday during the council's regular meeting. The budget includes funding for three Music in the Park events at Recreation Park.
- The Christmas parade is December 7. David noted that Joanne Schwartz is the grand marshal for the parade.
- Everyone should take a great deal of pride in what the Renaissance is doing. Merlin stated that the CCRT is making a huge difference in this community and he thanked everyone for their involvement.
- Merlin stated he is retiring at the end of 2014. Gail recognized Merlin for what he has done for Chehalis, starting with supporting construction of the library when he first became city manager.

4. **Business Comings & Goings**

- Chehalis Travel closed October 31
- Shankz Black Light Miniature Golf opened at the Yard Birds Mall

5. **Good of the Order**

a. Patty thought it would be good if we could get some art or pop-up galleries in some of the empty storefronts during the holiday season. David stated that building owners have been hesitant to opening up their buildings for the storefront art project.

b. Christine stated that The Chronicle is working on two new websites and she would like everyone to take a look at them and send her any comments:

- lewiscountytable.com
- seesouthwestwa.com

c. Upcoming Events:

- Lewis County Veterans Day Parade – November 11 at noon in downtown Toledo
- Kaija's open house – November 22-24
- Festival of Trees – November 25-30
- Drive & Drop food drive – December 6

The meeting concluded at 9:35 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Caryn Foley, City Manager's Administrative Assistant.

Next meeting is Friday, December 6, 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. Our December meeting has traditionally been a time when we look at the current year's accomplishments and what we want to focus on in the coming year. Please note the special date and extended time for this meeting.

Chehalis Community Renaissance Team (CCRT)

December 6, 2013

Meeting Notes

Chair David Hartz called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. with the following members present: Julie Balmelli-Powe, Tom Bradley, Caryn Foley, Christine Fossett, Terry Harris, Patty Kaija, Dick Larman, Markthor MacFarlane, Merlin MacReynold, Julie McDonald Zander, Larry McGee, Jan Nontell, Dr. Isaac Pope, Allyn Roe, Gail Shaw, Andy Skinner, Shawn Thomas, and Annalee Tobey. Others in attendance included Bret Bryan, Marilynn Chintella, Christina Crea, Cameron Dean; Stan Foster, Harmony Hamilton, Rachael Reiton, and Brian Watson.

Welcome and Introductions

David stated the purpose of the meeting was to review the accomplishments of 2013 and to look ahead to 2014. David introduced Stan Foster with PARC Resources.

Stan stated that his company was hired by the Renaissance to work on several projects, including the steam train strategic plan update, the purchase of a portion of Tacoma Rail line, the PUD Park, the Lewis County Historical Museum, and Discover! Children's Museum. PARC began in 1985 and provides grant writing, planning and other developmental services to state, regional, local, and tribal governments, as well as private sector for-profit and not-for-profit businesses, matching opportunities to resources.

Communications

1. Evening with the Authors is tonight at the Historical Museum from 4:00-5:00 pm for members, and from 5:00-7:00 pm for the general public. 23 authors will be on hand and the Museum will also unveil the 2014 Rosie calendar, which features 12 local Rosie the Riveters.

2. The 64th Annual Chehalis Santa Parade & Toy Drive is tomorrow at 11:00 am downtown. Grand Marshal is Joanne Schwartz.

Review 2013 Accomplishments and 2014 Projects

David stated the intent was that the Renaissance Plan would not be a plan that would sit on the shelf, and from the list of successful projects that have been completed, that is certainly not the case. He then highlighted some of the accomplishments made since 2009.

Review of 2013 Key Projects

1. **Business Incubator.** The project is on hold until the right match can be found. Larry noted that a \$66,000 grant was received to conduct a feasibility study, which determined that the focus on thin film technology would not work. He considered it a successful study, noting it was money well spent. Dick noted that the EDC is still looking into the idea.

2. **Discover! Children's Museum.** Marilynn reported that as of the end of November, the museum has seen 14,000+ paid admissions. The party room is being used for events other than just birthday parties. A promotional video will be shot on December 20 to be used when seeking funding sources for the permanent facility. The video is being done at no cost by Jeff McQuarrie from Centralia College who approached Larry and offered his services. The pilot is closing on December 29, and activities are being planned for closing day. Allyn invited those who have not yet been to the museum to stop by to get a better understanding of what the museum is about. Plans are progressing for a permanent museum, including a location. Some of the exhibits will be incorporated into the permanent museum and thanks to Bob Geddes, the PUD may have space to store the items until the permanent museum is opened.

Larry noted that a couple board members recently attended the Northwest Association of Youth Museums Annual Conference and were very impressed in the fact that we have always put education first and entertainment second.

3. **Chehalis Avenue Enhancements.** The project will be re-bid this month or next. The first bid process resulted in only two bids with the lowest being \$250,000 over the engineer's estimate. It is hoped that rebidding during this time of the year will result in better proposals.

4. **Marketing Campaign.** Among other items, the committee is pursuing Main Street designation and a "Choose Local First" campaign in partnership with the chamber. Recent Facebook ads have bolstered our fan base to 2,015.

5. **PUD Substation Park.** Markthor stated the first phase of creating a schematic drawing of the park is complete. Next steps will include determining the best materials for constructing the concrete planter and bench, and selecting the surplus PUD materials that will be incorporated into the park. They will also work with Terry to make sure that holiday lights can be incorporated. He hoped the project could be completed over the next two years. Larry will forward Markthor the contact information for the company that made the large tree pots on Market Boulevard. Stan noted that all the work that Markthor has done and using recycled materials from PUD constitute local contributions for grant applications.

6. **Holiday Decorations.** Terry stated he is getting a lot of the credit for this project, but it really is a committee project. In fact, the committee steered him to put all-white lights in the historic downtown, which look great! The snowflakes were refurbished with new garland and lights, and the large snowflake on city hall was crafted by Hy Harris with the parks department. This year's focus was on Chehalis Avenue and Terry thanked all the building owners who are letting us use their electricity. The committee will again seek funding from the Chehalis Foundation in 2014 and is also preparing a three to five year plan at the request of the Foundation. Dr. Pope stated that while on a trip he went to a town that also had problems with access to sufficient electrical for holiday decorations. Their downtown had contiguous buildings like ours and they ran a line from building to building, which would require cooperation from all the building owners.

2014 Key Projects

1. **Chehalis Theatre** – Shawn Thomas (lead), Corine Aiken, Julie Balmelli-Powe, Cameron Dean, Terry Harris, Dr. Pope, Annalee Tobey, and Brian Watson. Stan and others have met with Daryl Lund, the building owner, and Daryl wants the theatre to be used. It is in relatively good shape, but has some limitations on what it can be used for. In order to go after grant funding, it would need to be sold to a non-profit entity. Stan thought the first steps were to form a group, tour the facility, and determine the best sources of use for the community. He stated this was a real opportunity and estimated it would cost around half a million dollars to refurbish.

2. **PUD Park** – Markthor MacFarlane and Jan Nontell.

3. **Marketing Campaign** – Andy Skinner and Jan Nontell will join current Marketing Committee members, Julie Balmelli-Powe, Alicia Bull, Caryn Foley, David Hartz, and Annalee Tobey.

4. **Downtown Plantings** – Terry Harris, Rachael Reiton, and Dennis Osborn will join Caryn Foley, Patty Kaija, and David Hartz. Patty noted they would like to involve the public more in both the plantings and hanging baskets for Market Boulevard and eventually Chehalis Avenue. Terry noted that Dennis Osborn should be involved since it is his city department that is charged with maintaining the islands and baskets.

5. **Discover! Children's Museum** – Discover! Advisory Board.

6. **Local Business Development/Community Outreach** – Dick Larman, Alicia Bull, Marketing Committee. This item would provide education to employees.

David stated that although these are the key projects for next year, all of the other listed projects will also continue into the new year.

Good of the Order

1. Bret thanked Stan and Annalee for their participation in updating the steam train's strategic plan. He also thanked Caryn for her help in preparing the grant application for .09 funds to repair Engine 15. Both the Polar Express and Santa Steam Train rides are sold out. Overall, he felt the organization was moving in the right direction.

Annalee reminded everyone to complete the consumer survey, which are part of the strategic planning process.

2. Merlin announced that the City of Tacoma approved an agreement to sell a portion of the Tacoma Rail line from Maytown to Chehalis to Lewis County and the City of Chehalis. The agreement will now be presented to the Board of County Commissioners and Chehalis City Council in early January.

3. Patty invited everyone to Kaija's for a book signing and cat adopt-a-thon on the 14th from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. Marlaena Shannon's children's book "Black and White Cat, White and Black Dog," will be available for sale. Cats and kittens will be available for adoption through The Almost Home Project, Kitty Kat Haven, and The Cat's Meow.

4. Jan reported that the Fox Theatre is celebrating the lighting of the bottom half of the marquee on December 14. The lighted tractor parade also takes place on the 14th beginning at 6:00 pm.

5. Larry announced that Centralia College is introducing their second BA degree program for diesel technology next fall. The program is the fourth in the country and first for a community college.

6. Andy reported that he and Caryn, along with Commissioner Edna Fund, and Mike Strozyk and Doug Carey with the county, are working toward placing the courthouse on the National Register of Historic Places.

The meeting concluded at 10:20 a.m.

Next meeting is Friday, January 10, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Caryn Foley, City Manager's Administrative Assistant.