

**Chehalis Community Renaissance Team (CCRT)**  
**December 13, 2019**  
**Meeting Notes**

Nicole Sampson called the meeting to order at 8:35 A.M. with the following members present: Jill Anderson, Marcy Anholt, Andrea Culletto, Susan DeLaire, Michael Ervin, Valarie Filer, Terry Harris, Patty Kaija, Tanya Laeger, Randy Mueller, Brandon Rakes, Lindsey Senter, Heather Stewart, Annalee Tobey, Ed Wegele, Brian Wilkins, and Shane Wood

- 1. Welcome and Introductions of Guests:** Annalee Tobey began the meeting by thanking everyone involved in the CCRT for their time, enthusiasm, expertise, and financial support.
- 2. Committee Reports:**
  - a. Promotion:** Lindsey Senter informed the group that work on the 'Things to Do' cards continued. The 2020 Chehalis brochure with an event calendar would be completed no later than February.
  - b. Economic Restructuring:** Annalee Tobey explained that the 11<sup>th</sup> façade grant of the year had been awarded. With this award, only \$260 remain in the budgeted funds for façade improvement grants.
  - c. Design:** Ed Wegele thanked Michele Gallagher for her energetic leadership as Chair of the Design Committee; Emily von Flotow will be taking over as Design Chair in 2020. Overall, the war on beige continues and projects to entice bees and butterflies into the downtown core are underway.
  - d. Holiday Decorations:** Terry Harris expressed his joy over the success of the gingerbread house. He explained that it looks like 'Walt Disney threw up over there'. Annalee Tobey thanked Terry Harris for the idea and the creation of the gingerbread house and thanked the City of Chehalis staff for their continued assistance with holiday decorations throughout town.
  - e. Organization:** Nicole Sampson explained that the Board would be conducting the first strategic planning session on Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup>. She explained that Emily von Flotow would be taking over as the Design Committee Chair. Randy Mueller asked that anyone interested in the B&O tax program please contact the Board or Annalee Tobey.
- 3. Let's Celebrate! 2019 CCRT Program Review**
  - a. Organization:** Nicole Sampson explained that the Organization Committee existed to keep the structure of the CCRT strong. The Organization Committee manages the budget, creates and implements policies, and invites local businesses to participate in the B&O tax credit program. In 2019, the Organization Committee expanded the downtown boundaries to include State Avenue and cleaned up some boundaries that are required by the Main Street Program.
  - b. Design:** Ed Wegele reviewed the projects of the Design Committee, explaining that ideas from the committee had a ripple effect that encompassed even the most mundane objects. Banners, plants, murals, benches, utility boxes, cigarette receptacles, garbage can lids, and the transformation of the pump house into the gingerbread house for the holidays were discussed.

- c. **Economic Restructuring:** Annalee Tobey informed the group that the Façade Grant Program had exceeded expectations for the year, using almost all budgeted funding. Randy Mueller explained that the CCRT had decided to continue the Chehalis Coworks after the success of the pilot project. The Port of Chehalis will remain the owner of the property and will lease the building to the CCRT for \$1/year. Nicole Sampson explained that the Downtown Business Academy is being revised to better suit the needs of the community.
- d. **Promotions:** Lindsey Senter explained that the Promotions Committee had created the Experience Chehalis website and were looking to add a list of meeting rooms to the site, the ability to apply for façade grants online, and the ability to apply for micro grants online. She explained that the Facebook page has over 15,000 likes (double the population of Chehalis). She thanked Annalee Tobey for her assistance with social media campaigns. The Lewis County Visitor's Guide will no longer be produced by the CCRT.
- e. **2020 Projects:** Lindsey Senter informed the group that the Promotions Committee would be working to create 'Things to Do' cards to be distributed at local hotels, working on SEO and Google ads, increasing the footing with the Chehalis Coworks, hosting ChehalisFest for the fifth year, and creating Chehalis themed merchandise. Ed Wegele explained that the Design Committee would continue art projects to remedy the beige problem, completing the Chehalis themed coloring book, and a painted piano will be added outside of M&K Market for people to play. Annalee Tobey explained that the Economic Restructuring Committee was working to create a Safety and Security grant program to mimic the Façade Grant Program. Nicole Sampson informed the group that the Organization Committee would begin the strategic planning process, to be completed in 2020.

#### **4. Other Updates/Announcements/Good of the Order**

- a. Andrea Culletto informed the group that Twin Transit planned to add new bus stops around Chehalis in 2020. Andrea Culletto added that the bus stops will include a lot of color. Twin Transit will also be offering a no cost bus for transportation to the Lighted Tractor Parade in downtown Centralia.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 A.M. by Nicole Sampson.

**Next meeting is Friday, January 10<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 A.M.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kiley Franz, City Manager's Administrative Assistant.