

**BROOKSVILLE VISION FOUNDATION (BVF)  
STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL MEETING**

**Joseph E. Johnston, III, City Council Chambers  
201 Howell Avenue  
Brooksville, FL 34601**

***MINUTES***

***November 15, 2016***

***4:00 PM***

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

**Members and Guests**

*Members and guests present:*

Cliff Manuel, BVF President  
Michael Heard  
Brent Whitley  
Darryl Johnston  
Jimmy Kimbrough  
Sue Rupe  
Tammy Heon  
Sonny Vergara  
Lara Bradburn  
Paul Shaskan  
Don Lacey  
Natalie Kahler, Mayor  
Steve Gouldman, City Planner  
Bill Geiger, Community Development Director  
Jennifer Battista, recording secretary

The Brooksville Vision Foundation Stakeholders Council meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. by BVF Chair, Cliff Manuel.

**Approval of minutes – August 16, 2016**

**Motion:**

Motion was made Whitley and seconded by Vergara to approve the August 16, 2016 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

**Update on Main St. Program**

Chairman Manuel advised that the BVF Board of Directors has received 60 applications for the Main Street Executive Director's job. On November 22, 2016, they would be meeting to review the applications. Once they have shortlisted the applications to five, a final applicant will be selected for that position. He stated that although the volunteer effort for the Main Street Program is ongoing and extremely important, filling the director position with someone who can prioritize and work full time on it, is critical in making the Main Street Program a success.

Michael Heard encouraged everyone present to take a look at the Brooksville Vision Foundation website, which includes information about the Main Street Program. She is working on including a link to the TDC's (Florida's Adventure Coast) website as well.

Mrs. Heard reported that Founders' Week was a great success. The Florida Blueberry Festival donated a billboard on S. Broad Street to advertise that event. The billboard will be used to advertise some of the upcoming Christmas events.

Once a Main Street Executive Director is chosen, the BVF Board of Directors/Main Street Program committee members will host a welcome party at Southern Hills.

Michael Heard advised that the trolley purchase that they had been working on did not go through. They are researching other possibilities, and are working with the Saxon Manor who could utilize the trolley for their use as well.

She further related that once the Festival moves to a new location, they would like to eventually consider having the festival be a week-long event and include the entire community through a series of events held throughout the County.

Mrs. Heard reported on the Market on Main Street, which is held monthly. Most recently, the Market on Main Street was held the same day as the Grilled Cheese Festival, which was a great success.

Sonny Vergara requested that someone from the Florida Blueberry Festival make a presentation to the Hernando County Fine Arts Council regarding the potential change.

#### Update on Florida Blueberry Festival

Michael Heard advised those attending that beginning in 2018, the Florida Blueberry Festival will need to be looking at a new venue site due to various reasons. They have approached the City about leasing the Quarry property for the Blueberry Festival. In an effort to support the Main Street Program and continue the BVF efforts to revitalize Brooksville, Mrs. Heard stated that it is envisioned that other events could be held at the quarry venue site. The venue may also eventually include an amphitheater. The lease is currently being reviewed by City Council and hopefully it will be finalized soon. She added that other counties have expressed interest in being the venue site for the Blueberry Festival event but she is working hard to make sure it stays in Brooksville.

Chairman Manuel encouraged everyone to call the City Council members and encourage them to support the lease agreement. Mayor Kahler reported that the second City Council workshop to go over the lease will be held on November 16<sup>th</sup>.

Sonny Vergara expressed his opinion that the venue site proposed at the Quarry, and the many events that could be held there, has the potential of transforming the City in a very positive way. All the work put into making the lease acceptable to all parties is worth it. Michael Heard added that once the lease is signed and many other steps are accomplished, such as a feasibility study, they hope to hold the Festival there in 2018.

Regarding the 2017 upcoming Festival, Mrs. Heard advised that they have received 100% interest for return of the food vendors and almost that many for return of the craft/sales vendors.

#### Art in the Park – March 11 & 12, 2017

Paul Shaskan reminded the BVF of the upcoming event and advised that sponsorship opportunities are available in their event program.

#### Reminder of next meeting date – February 21, 2017

#### Old Business

##### Coast to Coast connector project

Community Development Department Director Geiger reported on the trail project between the Suncoast Trail and its eventual connection to the GNT trailhead. The preferred route through the City has been approved by the Hernando-Citrus MPO and has been submitted to FDOT.

Mr. Geiger went on to advise that this project has been split into two parts. The first part, from the Suncoast Trail to Cobb Road, is funded and going into design in 2017. From design, it will proceed to right-of-way acquisition in 2018, with construction in 2020. The plan for the section from Cobb Road to the GNT Trailhead has not yet been funded, but design is planned for 2018, right-of-way acquisition in 2020 and construction in 2022.

##### Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment

Community Development Director Geiger informed everyone that the 2050 Vision document, approved by the Brooksville Vision Foundation and City Council, has been incorporated into the City's Comprehensive Plan by means of a text change amendment petition. That petition has been approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission and goes before City Council as an ordinance for First Reading in December. Chairman Manuel requested that the recording secretary provide him with a copy of the text amendment through email.

Community Development Director Geiger stated that the timing of many projects and programs, such as the Main Street Program and the Coast to Coast Trail, are coming together in what he feels is a positive step towards redevelopment and accomplishing the BVF's vision.

New Business

Country Christmas at the Commons (109 S. Broad St.)

Lara Bradburn reported that the festivities and entertainment, which will include a potluck, will be held December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

National Bicycle Tourism Conference

Tammy Heon reported that she recently attended a bicycle tourism conference. She is excited for bicycle tourism and bike tour events to increase once the Coast to Coast Trail project is completed.

Grilled Cheese Festival – November 12, 2016

Several reported on the success of the recent downtown Cheese Festival and the good quality of food offered by the various participating food trucks.

Great Brooksvillian Ceremony

Mayor Kahler reminded everyone that the Great Brooksvillian reception to honor Lee Slaydon Gordon will be held at City Hall on November 22<sup>nd</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

Hernando County Ministerial event

Mayor Kahler informed those attending that there will be community Thanksgiving service at the Wesleyan Church on November 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Chinsegut Retreat – monthly luncheons

Mayor Kahler reported that a fundraiser lunch is held at Chinsegut from 10:30 – 1:30 on the first Wednesday of every month. You may eat there, or call ahead and pick it up. Tours of the retreat are also available.

Stakeholders attendance

Brent Whitley expressed his disappointment that more business owners and residents do not attend the Brooksville Vision Foundation meetings and wondered how they could bolster attendance. Chairman Manuel responded that, for a community of their size, there seems to be only a small amount of people invested enough in the community who are willing to attend these meetings. Having the meetings be more of a “social” seems to draw more attendance. Recording Secretary Battista advised that about 120 people are on the email distribution list and get notice of the meetings.

Darryl Johnston felt that once the Main Street Executive Director is in place, it will help invigorate community involvement and the attendance at these meetings will increase.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

  
Jennifer J. Battista  
Brooksville Recording Secretary

Minutes approved: 2/2/17