

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

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

***MINUTES***

***May 16, 2017***

***4:00 PM***

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

**Members and Guests**

*Members and guests present:*

Michael Heard  
Cliff Manuel  
Brent Whitley  
Jimmy Kimbrough  
Sue Rupe  
Robert Buckner  
Joe Bernardini, City Council  
Bill Kemerer, City Council  
Sonny Vergara  
Paul Shaskan  
Ryan Malloy  
Matt Lowman  
Ivy E. Cordell  
Lee Golinello  
Billy Taylor  
Lauren Taylor  
Darryl Johnston  
Natalie Kahler, City Council  
Roger Sherman  
Ryan Malloy  
Lyndon Bonner, Interim City Manager  
Mike Walker, Parks and Recreation Director  
Steve Gouldman, City Planner  
Bill Geiger, Community Development Director

The Brooksville Vision Foundation Stakeholders Council meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by BVF Chair, Cliff Manuel.

**Approval of minutes – February 21, 2017**

**Motion:**

Motion was made by Sonny Vergara and seconded by Michael Heard to approve the February 21, 2017 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Newly appointed Interim City Manager, Lyndon Bonner, introduced himself to those present.

#### Update on Main St. Program

Main Street Executive Director, Ryan Malloy, reported on some events planned in the near future for the downtown area. These include a farmer's market, a week-long Founders event and monthly "Whine About It" get-togethers. He advised that the Main Street Program is currently working with the owner of 101 S. Main Street for improvements to the building in keeping with the historical integrity of the area. The owner may be pursuing a CRA façade grant to assist in the costs.

Sonny Vegara advised that the Hernando County Fine's Arts Council awarded a \$500.00 grant to the Brooksville Woman's Club for a mural that would be located between their building and 101 S. Main Street. Mr. Malloy indicated that he was award of those discussions.

Mr. Malloy went on to state that the Main Street's Economic Vitality Committee has been having conversations about City and State tax incentive opportunities to encourage investment in certain downtown areas. He added that he has contacted the City and the County about the potential of setting up a historical preservation ad valorem tax abatement program, as well as trying to enhance the CRA façade grant program to target specific industries that may want to come into the downtown area. One way this could be accomplished is offering a CRA grant at a higher match/value for specific businesses.

City Planner, Steve Gouldman, advised that the former City Hall building at 26 S. Brooksville Ave. just received a CRA façade grant. Those façade improvements will not impact the current mural at that site.

Mr. Malloy presented the Foundation with information regarding a current grant opportunity for fundraising initiatives to connect people back to their downtown. It is known as the Edward Jones "Placemaking on Main and Crowdfunding Challenge" which is a \$2,500 matching grant. ***[This power point presentation is attached and incorporated into these minutes in its entirety.]***

#### Wrap-Up report – 2017 Florida Blueberry Festival

Michael Heard reported that the Blueberry Festival was a success and they are excited about 2018. She stated that profits would be benefiting several 501 C3 organizations and partners. She acknowledged that there were several competing events held that same weekend and it was her understanding that attendance was down at many of those events. Mrs. Heard stated that her board is hopeful that by 2019, they will be breaking ground at a new location.

One of the efforts made at the event in 2017 was to get information through ticket sales, and from data entered on a form for a television giveaway contest, to determine the economic impact the festival has on the City or Hernando County. Those calculations are still being compiled. Out of the 1,000 tallied so far, only 333 were from Hernando County. Those complete calculations and the economic impact that they represent will be presented to City Council in a few weeks when she provides an update on the 2017 Florida Blueberry Festival. Mrs. Heard reported that there were a few injuries to some volunteers working with the urban slide.

Sonny Vegara stated that an attendance survey was done for the 2017 Art in the Park event and he thought it would be interesting to compare it to the results from the attendance survey done for the 2017 Florida Blueberry Festival. It may help to determine where promotion dollars are more wisely spent. Michael Heard agreed to share that information when it is available.

Robert Buckner contributed that as he worked with the parking at the 2017 Blueberry Festival, many told him that they were first time visitors to the area.

#### Membership/Makeup of the Brooksville Vision Foundation

There was no discussion on this agenda item.

#### Discussion of use of Brooksville Commons

Cliff Manuel advised that he was approached by the Brooksville Commons board about the Main Street Program and how they could better provide the Commons facility for related events. Ryan Mallow was advised that Trish Skipper at First United Methodist Church would be a good contact to help facilitate and coordinate those efforts.

#### Reminder of next meeting date – August 15, 2017

#### Old Business

##### BVF Vision

As there were new attendees at the meeting, Chairman Manuel briefly went over the vision of the Foundation. The vision is directly related to the enhancement of the quality of life in the City of Brooksville and help in the creation of jobs, economic activity and to encourage historic preservation. The BVF board has recently invested in a Main Street Program and has brought on Ryan Malloy to be its Executive Director. In partnering with the City of Brooksville, they have pursued efforts to eliminate the one-way pairs and to promote the Coast to Coast trail connector to come through the City of Brooksville. Volunteer participation is crucial.

Michael Heard informed those present that one of the first projects of the BVF was to renovate Hernando Park. It was the hope that it would become a City-owned park.

Sonny Vegara supported the creation of a BVF flyer that includes the mission statement, the structure, and the goals and objectives of the BVF. He felt that it is especially important as it relates to the revitalization efforts of the Main Street Program. It was pointed out that a flyer was produced a few years ago prior to the Main Street Program award.

#### New Business

##### Beautification Board – Recognition of residential or commercial improvements

Roger Sherman, member of the City's Beautification Board, advised that each month the board recognizes landscaping or building improvements to residential and commercial properties throughout the City. If anyone has any nominations for the award, they should contact the City Clerk's office.

Great Brooksvillian

As a member of the City's Great Brooksvillian Steering Committee, Mr. Sherman stated that nominations are now being accepted for the 2017 Great Brooksvillian award. Nominations should be submitted to the City Clerk and the deadline is in June.

Historic Preservation – Hernando County Courthouse

Roger Sherman advised that Mary Moses of the Historic Preservation Society is working with the County on the application process to obtain a grant for restoring/preserving the County Courthouse and having it listed on the National Register of Historic Sites. He advised the Foundation on the initial research on space usage for inside the Courthouse and the potential for it to be used for displays and events. Chairman Manuel advised that the BVF and the Main Street Program has offered it support of this space usage project several times in past discussions.

2017 Art in the Park

Paul Shaskin reported on the great success of the event in March. Through the \$5.00 parking fee, they were able to determine that they parked over 1,200 cars this year. 2100 surveys were handed out to participants and attendees. This survey contains information on where they heard about the show and the zip codes of where they are from. 19% of the zip codes were from out of County. 63 indicated that they were staying overnight. Discussion ensued on the budget spent on promotion and advertising efforts for the event.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

  
Jennifer J. Battista  
Brooksville Recording Secretary

Minutes approved: 10/17/17