

COMMUNITY SUPPORT WORKING GROUP

Thursday, 4/1/2019 – 8am, via Zoom

Attendance: Council President Jack O'Brien, Councilpersons Joe Frederick, Larry Browne, Ben Bell, and Joe Flood, as well as Mayor Ron Strouse and Borough Manager John Davis. Paul Boger from Mind Your Design and Discover Doylestown also attended.

The **Minutes** from the March 19, 2021 meeting were approved. (Flood-Frederick)

COVID Impact on Non-Profits. Mayor Strouse started the discussion with an update on The County Theater; construction will be generally completed by April 15. A decision was made to open, with appropriate capacity limits, on June 1 but without a public opening celebration until Fall. Additionally, outdoor films are planned for the Mercer Museum property to begin in April.

Both museums are now booking events for the coming season, although many of the upcoming public events are planned to be virtual through Spring. Membership, fundraising and visitation are down, however, and museum staff is working to increase those. There are multiple grant programs that are being utilized to promote the museums, although there are some grants not available due to COVID. Mayor Strouse feels it would be a good idea to reach out to the Civil War Museum to touch base on their plans. The Historical Society is embarking on a new video program around Doylestown history. Many of their plans for last year, including the Historic District's 50th Anniversary, were canceled due to COVID but they are working on plans for the future.

Pedestrian Zone Schedule. John noted the schedule was released and it has been well-received. This is a positive thing for retailers as well as consumers in town; there has been no negative feedback other than some questions on required prior notification of entertainment. The Fire Marshal will attend at least in the beginning to keep an eye on social distancing and masking.

Mayor Strouse is concerned about the street closures becoming more of a street fair with the entertainment; however John noted there will be monitoring of the entertainment. The expectation is these events are for dinner; these events are not just for entertainment and drinking. Some of the merchants are in discussion to extend their own store hours during these events as well.

COVID Public Communications/Messaging. There was not any news to report.

Post-Emergency Plan. The group isn't sure when this plan will need to be considered, but it is best to start planning that now. John noted, from a staff prospective, it would be best to not make many changes in the middle of the season, but to look into more permanent changes next year. Keeping things more as they are for the remainder of this year, at least, would be best. Some zoning issues have not been enforced such as signage during this time. At some point, that will need to be considered, as well as tents and seating on private property such as parking lots and whether property owners would like to continue those ideas into a more permanent situation. Joe Flood noted there had been interest in more outside dining prior to COVID, so it may be best to continue that option on some level but that will need to be worked out within the zoning outdoor dining permit process.

Ben asked if it would be permissible to bring a bar outdoors for the outdoor dining; John explained that would not be permitted with the exception of possibly a service bar to allow ease of serving drinks. Regulations for participation in the event will require food service, regardless of less-stringent State regulations allowing for bar seating without food after April 4.

Old/New Business. Jack asked for details on repaving of East State Street since the fire/gas line repairs. John explained all repairs have been made other than the concrete. All agreed it would be best to try to work with PECO on scheduling the paving repairs on a day that will have the least impact on the businesses as possible.

Meeting adjourned 9:03am (Flood-Browne)

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Kramer
Minutes Secretary