

## CommUnity Team

December 6<sup>th</sup> 2023

AJ's Riverside

Members Present: Emmett Durtschi- Berlin Area School District, Jenn Moen- Extravaganza Group and Fortifi Bank, Michelle Cassidy- Berlin Farmers and Artist's Market, Bobbie Erdmann- Berlin Area Historical Society, Benny Rubio- El Charro Mexican Grill, Marie Reilly- BCDC, and Tim Ludolph- City of Berlin

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 A.M. by Tim Ludolph.

The November meeting notes were reviewed and discussed, a couple of changes in time and location were discussed and these were deemed appropriate for publishing.

Bobbie Erdmann discussed the Historical Society's most recent meeting's activities and how they had put up a display at the library. They received a generous donation of materials to display from a prominent family from the area. An effort is being launched to solicit donations and spread the awareness of the effort to repair the Fortnum Building so exhibits can be stored and showed there- the museum in effect completely moving there. There are other ongoing efforts to maintain the other buildings the Historical Society owns and operates.

The group discussed the ABC group's A Christmas Melody themed parade's outcome noting it was a major success with record setting attendee quantities, trees in the park, and communication of these annual events. The ABC Group is shifting to their other major event, the Third of July "Let Freedom Ring" festival for 2024.

The Lions Club Cheese Box sale is ongoing.

Emmett Durtschi reviewed the Berlin Area School District's current events including concerts coming up, the School Musical was a major success as was the High School Choir Concert. The School district is having a new Social Worker start later in the month. They are also going to absorb many of the Community Recreation functions to now be staff funded by the school including swim class for the entire year and building this into the Schools functioning as community centers as opposed as narrowly for education of children.

Michelle Cassidy discussed the outcomes of the Berlin Blitz, they were able to raise over \$4,000 to be split among the families in need. Save the Pool and Friends of the Aquatic Center were discussed as successful for both outreach and fund raising by participating in both Small Business Saturday events.

Michelle Cassidy also discussed the Berlin Farmer's and Artist's Market is finalizing the musical acts and the dates for Non-Profits to sponsor the Market. If any groups want to participate and are not in contact, they should reach out soon.

Chris Kalupa emailed: *The Berlin Library will be hosting Santa Storytime this Thursday at 6pm.*

*Letters to Santa are now available at the library. Kids can fill out a form letter at the library and the library elves will help Santa send a reply. Letters must be turned into the library by Dec. 12.*

*There is an adult craft night on Tuesday, Dec. 19 at 6pm – Registration is required by calling the library. Registration is required.*

*The library will be hosting a family game day during the Christmas break on Friday, Dec. 29 from 1-4pm.*

*The library participated in the GL County Angel Tree. Over 75 angels were distributed. Unwrapped Angel gifts are due back by Friday, Dec. 8.*

*After the Angels, we will be sponsoring a Paws tree, with the gifts benefiting the GL County Animal Shelter.*

Jenn Moen reported the Extravaganza group was, similarly to the Blitz, very successful and growing the capacity to build on next year. The first 75 bags sold out within 15 minutes.

For the Banking sector, Fortifi Bank will be having Hot Cocoa at Fortifi Bank.

Benny Rubio discussed El Charro was celebrating the 1-year anniversary of opening on Friday December 15<sup>th</sup>. Tim Ludolph added information about upcoming Business Welcomes of New Hong Kong King Buffett, Beiser Realty, and Sandi's Deals and Discounts to be forthcoming by email in the next month.

Marie Reilly discussed the upcoming River Shores event to help families with needs and kids obtain Christmas Gifts in partnership with Sandi's Deals and Discounts.

Marie Reilly reported that Berlin Community Development Corporation has been busy with USDA Revolving Loan Fund Small Business Loans and is actively bringing some new businesses to Berlin as well as retaining one. They are having to be more creative with matching prospective businesses with businesses and dedicated to facilitating opportunity in Berlin.

There was discussion of the Veteran's Foundation meeting Saturdays at the Senior Center.

The Rotary was discussed as having a successful Citrus Sale.

Going back to the 2024 Goals for the CommUnity team, discussion took place about setting up some type of common Spreadsheet for contacts, events, and other (calendar) information in a location independent of City Hall and that website. A possible event to discuss was something to encourage Manufacturers to be aware of this group and provide value in the form of information and networking to them. The people present emphatically want to see this group continue and maybe consider less frequent regular meetings but having sub-committees for focused and shorter meetings on special topics, not unlike how the ABC group operates.

For the next meeting date, Wednesday January 3<sup>rd</sup> was confirmed and the time of 10 AM. The group discussed how 10 AM and 11 AM work for the people present, though early morning was meant to facilitate small businesses as something prior to their opening/work day.

The meeting adjourned around 12:35 AM