

## **CommUnity Team**

September 4<sup>th</sup> 2024

AJ's Riverside Coffee

Members Present: Sue Trampf, Sue Kiener, Marie Reilly, Matthew Stepniewski, Chris Kalupa, Allison Gohlke, Bobbie Erdmann, and Tim Ludolph

The CommUnity Team meeting was called to order at 10:05 A.M. by Tim Ludolph.

### **Approval of the Agenda and Minutes**

Tim Ludolph formally said that Sue Kiener would serve as the City representative for this group, a position she had held before. After her warm welcome, Bobbie Erdmann made a motion to approve the agenda format and the minutes from August 7th. Marie Reilly supported that motion, and it was approved through a voice vote.

### **Discussion and action on the group's objectives**

The meeting's first item was a discussion about the objectives in general for the group and how the items included on this agenda item were just possibilities and not required for all meetings.

### **Discussion and action of the mission of the CommUnity Team**

The first topic of the meeting focused on the overall goals for the group, emphasizing that the items on the agenda were merely suggestions rather than mandatory for every gathering.

The members talked about their history and commitment to being a hub for community information, fostering a positive yet genuine atmosphere while discussing upcoming events and initiatives like Operation Backpack, where they could recruit volunteers and boost their efforts.

This group aims to highlight the positives and create a welcoming environment for those dedicated to supporting educational and service-oriented organizations.

The conversation then turned to the possibility of being more adaptable with meeting times and locations, considering a return to the previously successful practice of lunchtime meetings or other times that might accommodate more participants who are employed.

They also explored the idea of refreshing the group's narrative on the City's Website, showcasing examples that have made a difference.

### **Group Updates**

Allison Gohlke provided a brief update about the Berlin Area School District. A new community tab has been added to the school's website, showcasing various events and programs. If you want something posted, just email Allison. Community Education Recreation Coordinator Carey Metras is doing a fantastic job launching their recreation programming!

Marie Reilly provided a brief update about the Berlin Community Development Corporation's recent activities. They have partnered with the City to approve a loan for a large corporation that could generate 35 to 40 jobs, which will require hands-on facilitation. WC Russell Moccasin is planning a boot sale, ribbon-cutting ceremony, and an open house for their new facility in the upcoming months, and they have sold their old building for a food-related use. Alex White is

working on updating the old Fox River Family Dentistry building to enhance the front commercial space while relocating the Boys and Girls Club storage to the back. The Truesdell project is still in progress, but a local developer may be interested in revitalizing that building, and discussions are ongoing to attract Wisconsin's favorite fast-food restaurant.

In other news, Reilly mentioned that River Shores Church will be hosting Moms + Tots every other week starting the second Tuesday of the month, along with monthly community dinners on the first Wednesday of each month at 5 PM. These are open to the community and it is not necessary for someone to be a member of River Shores.

Chris Kalupa provided an update to the group by distributing the September newsletters. There's an ongoing initiative to encourage people to sign up for library cards and settle any outstanding fines. They are also coordinating with the Boy's and Girls Club and the Community Education and Recreation from the School District to implement programming for tweens and teens.

Sue Trampf shared updates from the ABC Group, which has already held two meetings to plan for the upcoming Christmas parade. They are focusing on how to collect food, personal hygiene items, and diapers, all in line with the theme "Celebrate Kindness and Giving." Additionally, they are coordinating ATV collections for the food pantry and participated in tree planting at Riverside Park on the 25th. Bootify, a member of the ABC group, is set to host their themed crawl event on October 19th.

As for the Lion's Club, they will be holding their Cheese Box fundraiser in September, followed by their annual coupon sale in October. **Correction by Trampf: Both events are in November & December.**

Sue Kiener provided a brief update about the City's initiatives. The Common Council is considering options for ARPA (American Rescue Plan- Federal) funding, which may include refreshing some city signage and performing necessary maintenance at Nathan Strong Park.

Matthew Stepniewski provided a brief update from Farmer's and Merchant's Bank, highlighting their small business lending programs aimed at residents in Berlin. They are currently gathering detailed information online about this initiative. The Bank also will contribute to the tree planting event at Riverside Park on the 25th at 10 AM.

Bobbie Erdmann provided an update about the Berlin Area Historical Society noting that they received unexpected volunteer help to restore the front door and paint at Clark School. She encouraged everyone to visit and see the impressive progress. The Society also received a memorial in honor of David Olson, a long-time member. Furthermore, they are collaborating with Pat Grahn from the Ripon Historical Society to maintain signage that highlights the achievements of Historic Women, including the Lucy Morris Sign in Berlin. **Correction by Erdmann: strike last sentence in the paragraph.**

Tim Ludolph provided a brief update on efforts to address vacant buildings in downtown. The group emphasized the importance of maintaining the community's appearance to attract residents and businesses, noting that dilapidated or neglected properties can hinder these efforts.

The meeting concluded informally at 11:17 AM.