

## **Minutes: Bethel Business Association meeting – December 3, 2008**

Chair Rick Benson called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Secretary's report was accepted as submitted. Treasurer's report was accepted as submitted; it noted a checkbook balance of \$1,831.18, and a total cash balance of \$5,103.90. Total membership is 64.

Before starting on the agenda, it was noted that the Bethel Area Rotary Club is going to fund repairs to the Peavine Park fence, so the BBA won't have to do so. Rick noted to those in attendance that the BBA sent a one-page update to members after the last meeting, and that the update will be sent whenever important information needs to be conveyed to members and others.

**Branliere Trail:** Rick reported that Richard Adams mapped out the town's property. Rick and Jamal attended a grant-writing workshop last month to find out the requirements for getting a state grant of \$15,000 to \$20,000 designated for community trails construction and improvement. Since the deadline for the grant application is January 15, 2009, the BBA won't be able to apply until the next cycle, as the grant application requires quite a bit of research and other legwork. In the meantime, Rick has spoken to a logger who is interested in harvesting timber from the town property in exchange for roughing in some trails that could serve as a good basis for the walking trail we have in mind. This sounds like a win-win, since trees need to be cleared for the trail itself and to open up some excellent views from various points along the proposed trail. The grant money could be used to put the finishing touches on the trail.

**Downtown holiday decorations:** Lights are up on the poles and the tree on the common is lit up as well. The trees between the parking lot and the street will be strung the weekend of Dec. 6-7. The garlands are getting rather old and will need to be replaced before next season. Funding methods for the replacements were discussed, including a coin drop.

**Business inventory:** Nothing new to report – maybe more information available after the first of the year; Green Mountain Economic Development Corporation is working on it.

**Downtown benches:** Rick showed examples of stone benches that could be used to replace the deteriorating iron and wood-slat benches. He noted that Barre has these types of benches, and each one is sponsored by local businesses that have their names engraved on the benches. Rick will get cost estimates from Phil Paini.

**School brochures:** Jamal asked those in attendance whether the BBA would be willing to provide funds to help defray the school's costs for two brochures about the school. The objective of the brochures is to attract more students from outside the Bethel Schools District in order to increase the student-count, thereby helping to reduce Bethel's per-pupil costs and taxpayer funds needed. Jamal also pointed out that the brochures have a dual purpose, in that they could also be used to help attract residents to Bethel, since quality schools is a major factor in a family's decision to locate in an area. Those in attendance voted to provide \$500 of the BBA's Economic Development funds toward the effort.

**Christmas party:** The celebration will take place on Dec. 18, and will be catered by Nick and Heidi Nikolaidis. Those who attend are asked to bring a donation of one or more items for the food shelf, which needs toiletries as well as food.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Jamal Kheiry, Secretary