



OTBA General Meeting  
*Thursday, February 18, 2016*  
8:30 am

Meeting began at 8:30 at Meat and Potatoes restaurant with 16 in attendance. Thank you all for coming.

**Treasurer's Report**

Patty Dooley reports that the Post Office account balance remains unchanged at \$5,800 and some change. The main account has deposits for the period \$845, with some residual deposits coming from Country Christmas, and withdrawals are \$8,074, plus there are several outstanding checks. Some of the higher payments made this period being the Luau Prize at a couple of thousand dollars, and Valerie's decorating during the Holiday Season being a little higher at \$1,800.00 (normally \$1,500.00).

She indicates that cutting costs is imperative at this time, but we will be getting BID funds in March, as well as vendor registration fees for the Antique Street Fair in May.

**Event Report**

Linda Robinson has no new business to report...the Event Committee met a couple of months ago and reviewed what is already in process. Linda is stepping away from her duties on the event committee.

Cinco de Mayo : She reports that Ruben had asked her about the status of the Cinco de Mayo event, wondering if it was still happening. There has been some discussion about possibly moving the event to the fairgrounds, and if that happens, we will lose another event in Old Town. She urges the Board to step in and communicate with Ruben. Kristen Marquis indicated that we really just need someone to step in and run the event, possibly even Ruben. Linda has talked to him about this possibility, but there is no indication yet whether or not he would be interested in stepping into this role. Patty indicated that one of the biggest concerns with this event is that it does shut down the street and inhibits the other restaurants and businesses from being able to conduct business as usual. Linda responded with the barricade locations, and the hours (5-9 pm, with street closure at 4), and the event brings in 350-400 people on that day. She doesn't agree that there is an obstruction for other businesses, that the added foot traffic

is good for all business. Garry Moffat also agreed with Patty that every time there is a street closure it impacts their businesses, and that visitors when they see a street closure will just leave the area. Nell Curran suggested that there may be a better way to run the event, and that this event is not what it used to be. Linda added that the salsa contest used to be a big draw, but someone needs to take it over.

Easter Event : Kristen reports that this event will be held on the day before Easter (Saturday, March 26), and she is changing up the activity for kids to a color by number puzzle that hopefully will keep the participants and their families longer in each business. She will be reaching out to all Merchants for participation information.

\*\*\*Nell introduces Michael Fanoni, owner of 299 Commercial Street. He is remodeling the structure, and hopes to get underway within the next year. He's attending today's meeting to learn more about what is going on in Old Town.\*\*\*

### **Art Walk**

Rose Stillwell from the Art Walk notes that they are still located at 808 Lincoln Way, in the Gomez Art & Event Center. They are looking to revitalize this event to draw more attendees and participant venues. In 1997 they joined with the Arts Commission to expand the event to include more entertainment, then later adding a shuttle bus, partially funded by OTBA. She extended her appreciation to Linda for always including the Art Walk in our Old Town ad.

For 2016, after conducting a survey of participants, they have ascertained that having the event on the first Fridays, from 6-9 pm is how they will proceed, with adding more interactive events and children's activities, plus they have commitments from three wineries in Placer County to conduct wine tasting during the event.

She states that even business without adequate wall space for displaying could participate by featuring live music, or other small draws for people into Old Town.

There will be an artist orientation meeting on Thursday, March 3, 6:30 pm at City Hall, in the Rose Room. Artists or venues that wish to participate are welcome.

The Art Walks will be held every other month, starting on April 1, then June 3<sup>rd</sup>, August 5<sup>th</sup>, and October 7<sup>th</sup>.

Fees for artists to participate are \$35 (plus \$10 participation fee), and for venues it is \$75 (plus \$10 participation fee).

Gary expressed that his business cannot possibly participate on Fridays, due to that being their busiest night of the week. He expresses concern that Fridays may not be the best day for any business, and suggests having the event on an evening when parking isn't an issue. Rose indicates that it is too late to change for this year. Concern was expressed that there may be fewer

attendees/participants due to this issue. Suggestions were made to possibly make it earlier in the evening, or change the day of the event altogether.

Rose will take our comments and report back to the Art Walk.

### **Web Report**

Mike O'Brien reports that the website had 5,284 unique visitors in January, and now has 5,745 "Likes" on Facebook, grows by approx. 55 per month. We also had 880 views on mobile devices. With the new marketing service, Single Platform, we are now using their mobile device service with better statistic reporting and integration with social media.

He expresses a lack of events to post and advertise, and would like to start featuring a Merchant of the Month showcase on Facebook. St. Patrick's Day is coming up, and he is looking for things to promote. It was recommended to promote the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

\*\*\*Kristen notes that we have a bunny suit for the Easter event, we just need someone to wear it\*\*\*

### **City**

Daniel Berlant not present

### **Auburn Chamber of Commerce**

Dave Johnson reports that after attending an event with law enforcement encourages us to call in with any issues we may encounter. They would like to see our involvement to help with law enforcement.

The Chamber hosts a luncheon at the Maidu Center on the first Wednesdays of each month, with networking from 11:30 – 12 and a catered lunch using local restaurants at 12 noon. There is always a business-focused featured speaker.

There is also a regular Mixer on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month from 5:30 – 7:30 pm, there is no charge to attend. Be sure to sign up for the Chamber email to be informed of upcoming networking opportunities.

There is a Chamber-hosted Celebrity Chefs event that is calling for cooks. You only need to provide food samples for 60 people. This is a non-profit event and will benefit Seniors First and the Sugar Plump Fairies, with the Fairies collecting raffle prizes and selling tickets. Tickets are available at Sun River Clothing and the Chamber office. If you would like to participate see Dave. Event will be held March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5:30-7 pm, at the Fairgrounds in the Placer Building.

### **Museums**

Ralph Gibson not present

### **APD**

Officer Hamelin not present

## **General Business**

Wine and Food Festival: Nell Curran reports that they have held their first meeting. The name of the event is being changed to the Auburn Wine, Ale and Spirits Festival. This three day event is held Friday, Saturday and Sunday October 7, 8 & 9<sup>th</sup>, and is held in various locations. Friday's event will be in Downtown Auburn and is a Farm to Fork type community meal and street dance; Saturday is a Wine, Ale and Spirits event; and Sunday will be a brunch in Old Town. They are looking for at least three major sponsors, and there are still many details to work out. There are approximately 20-25 venues slated to participate, with a \$100 rebate to participating restaurants to help defray costs.

Gary asked what the benefit for us (as business owners in Old Town), with the answer being 1) increased foot traffic and 2) part of the proceeds from the event are used to market Auburn as a whole (\$6K). A committee will decide where the funds will be allocated.

Registration is available online. The next event meeting will be held on March 15<sup>th</sup>, and they are looking for more Old Town volunteers. Registration is currently available online.

Post Office Update: Linda Robinson reports that there is still working on the new contract from West Sacramento, but we expect that the contract will likely remain unchanged at \$650 per month. She also indicates that the Native Sons may become involved to help reallocate funds to the post office. Details need to be finalized.

A request was made to purchase all of your postage and/or rent a PO Box from this location in support of our Old Town Post Office.

Antique Street Fair: Patty Dooley reports that we now have web based registration. She has been updating our database information for past participating vendors, and she is only missing email information for 18 vendors out of 250. Registration will first open to Old Town merchants to reserve spots in front of their businesses if they wish, then will become open to all other vendors.

Permits are the next item of business.

Linda is concerned that some of the vendors that have been participating for years may not get the spaces that they've always had, and that many of them do not use the internet and may be alienated by the new process. She recommends that we do our best to walk these vendors through the new process to make it as easy as possible for them. Patty assures that every effort is being made to help them with this transition, but site selection is first come, first served, so if there is a site they want they should not delay in registering for the event. It was decided that for this year's event, we will reach out to help some of the long-time vendors that may need extra help navigating registration. There is no way to reserve a booth space unless you are actually registering.

Concerns were raised about space reservation, and getting permission from the owner of the parking lot next to Auburn Alehouse.

Kristen will drop off handbills to potential new vendors.

Michael Smith wants to know if it's possible to extend events like these to include Maple Street (and Commercial Street). While it is not possible to cordon off more of Old Town for this event, it was suggested that individual businesses can have off-site flea market type events on that day to bring people up to these areas.

Kristen commented that merchants on Commercial Street are left out of events because of street closures, and no one walks up this street, and these merchants would love to be included in all events. Maybe we need to think of more events...it was suggested that we would love to have events every month.

Linda Robinson suggested a progressive dinner for the restaurants. Ideas were discussed, and it was agreed that this would be a good event for Old Town.

She also suggested having a Chamber mixer in Old Town.

OTBA Board Vacancies: We have a temporary At Large position available on the Board that needs to be filled until the next election. The position has no specific duties, but you do have to attend the monthly Board meetings. If you are interested, please see a Board member.

### **General Discussion :**

Matt Wozniak asked if the reason we don't have monthly events in Old Town is because we don't have a volunteer dedicated to the task. His question was answered with, yes, that is a big part of it. It's usually the same few people stepping up to volunteer for all of the events. We don't want a lot of tiny events, we would like to have fewer, better run, quality events that bring a lot of people into Old Town. We are always looking for more volunteers. Patty brings up that we are in competition with other events in Auburn, for instance, events at the Fairgrounds, and we don't want to saturate the area with too many events. She recommends taking the few more successful events we have and growing them into larger, more quality events. Linda indicates that events with Merchant participation are the best for our locale, so the more Merchants that participate the more successful the events seem to be.

Kristen extended her appreciation to Mike for his hospitality for hosting our meetings and always preparing a delicious meal for us.

Next meeting March 17<sup>th</sup> at Meat and Potatoes.