

Indiana Main Street Council Meeting

October 30, 2023, 10-12 IGCS-Conf 15

Council Members Present: Amy Haacker, Andrew Carty, Brian Sheehan, Dean Vonderheide, Eva North, J.P. Hall, Keith Gillenwater, Marsh Davis, and Meagan Heber

OCRA Staff: Abby C., Abby H, Andrea K., and Denny Spinner

Meeting Minutes: Jana Heritier

Call to Order – Council Chair – Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch

- Monday, October 30, 2023, at 10:00am, the Lt. Gov. Crouch called the Indiana Main Street Council meeting to order.
- The Lt. Gov highlighted that the month of October was chosen to promoting Downtown Development. The month is an initiative of the IMS program to promote the importance of downtown development in Indiana Main Street communities. Lt. Gov. Crouch and the OCRA/IMS team have visited communities all month. Visits included: Irvington, New Castle, Goshen, and Terre Haute.
- November 3, OCRA Main Street staff and Denny will be attending the Community Exchange – City of Jasper
- Lt Gov Crouch noted that vibrant downtowns attract people and businesses. Main Street Communities contribute to the economic development and are recognized as a catalyst for Main Street Communities.

Welcome – Denny Spinner, Executive Director of Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs

- Denny's goal for the Main Street Council is to be an active and engaged board that share ideas with OCRA how OCRA can help other communities, recognize community challenges and what type of OCRA Main Street programs, services, trainings, we can educate others and learn from each other.

Introduction of IMS Council members

State Coordinator Report – Andrea Kern, Director of Strategic Initiatives

- Main Street 101
- Organization of the Council
 - The purpose of the IMS Council is to provide guidance to the Indiana Main Street Program to support the organization's goal of developing a healthier, stronger state Main Street Program. Members serve as the "eyes and the ears" in their communities, offer a feedback loop and sounding board for IMS staff, and looks ahead at potential threats, trends, and opportunities. The Council will serve an advisory position to IMS and OCRA and is not responsible for managing the IMS program nor its staff.
 - Three key roles of the Council:
 1. Strategic Program Development
 2. Public Support
 3. Expertise & Partnership Development
- Objectives for 2024: Andrea sending survey to Council members to gauge interest in various committees (including promotions, foundation development, conference etc.)

Open Forum – All

- Denny suggested that the Council can play a role in addressing common misconceptions of the IMS program. Members discussed importance of reaching new mayors and how they might play a role in introducing the program to newly elected officials.
- Keith discussed the importance of legitimizing the local main street staff director positions. Council discussed offering scholarships for the Main Street America Revitalization Professional credential (MSARP), and potential to fund that either through an existing economic development foundation or through the creation of an Indiana Main Street Foundation.
 - J.P. suggested that IMS might track data related to organizations with staff and those without to make a clear value proposition for funders.
- The Council Members shared that they would be interested in receiving the following information from the OCRA's Strategic Initiatives – Main Street:
 - Salary, Benefits, Survey
 - Main Street America Accreditation Standards
 - Main Street – Shop Small Indiana Business – 11/25

Adjourn

- Denny- motioned, Keith-seconded, meeting adjourned at 11:54 am (ET)