



**Wednesday, September 13, 2007**  
**City of the Village of Douglas – Dutcher Lodge**  
Meeting Called to Order: 5:20 pm  
Chaired By: Angela Holmes, Co-President  
Recording Secretary: Marilyn Starring

**Board Members Present:** Julie Abel, Angela Holmes, Kerry O’Donohue, Pat Lion, Frank Rojek, Fred Schmidt, Marilyn Starring, Fred Weber,

**Board Members Absent:** Lisa Lungaro, Scott Eilbes

**Membership in Attendance:** Tony Vettori – Saugatuck City Mayor, Kim Mannion - Metropolitan Title, Marsha Burd - Saugatuck Traders, Jim Lytle - Fennville Chamber of Commerce, Ray Diffenderffer, Todd White – Butler

**SECRETARY’S MINUTES:** Frank Rojek made a motion to approve. Fred Weber second. Motion passed.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:** Kerry O’Donohue, treasurer, reported that we are 10 months through our fiscal year. The activity for last month mainly pertained to Sidewalk Sale income. We took in \$3,520 with Saugatuck merchants contributing \$2,400, and an additional \$1,100 from Douglas merchants. Marsha did a very good job projecting expenses, we should have those figures at our next meeting – should be ahead of the game in regards to finances for Sidewalk Sale. There is an (estimated) balance of just over \$45,000 in the SABA checking account. Frank Rojek made a motion to approve the treasurer’s report. Fred Weber seconded.

**COMMENTS BY MEMBERS AND GUESTS:**

Tony Vettori (Mayor of Saugatuck) asked if he could receive a list of all the events that happened in Saugatuck this year, and persons who sponsored them. He would like to publicly recognize and thank those businesses in his column in the paper who contributed to these events within the community. Fred Schmidt should be able to come up with these names. Fred Schmidt asked Tony if he would be contacting the CVB as well. Fred Schmidt also suggested that Tony check with the clerks in each town, since special activity permits have to be approved prior to each event, which would have sponsors name on the form. Angela Holmes said she would help Fred Schmidt compile this information. Julie Abel also commented that this would be excellent marketing (p.r.) for us.

Tony Vettori also said he would like input back from the business community on how important the piece of boardwalk is to the community. He would like to know how businesses feel on having that 2,600 feet available to those who live here and visit (½ mile of boardwalk). Angela Holmes – When would you like those comments back? Tony – whenever. Angela Holmes mentioned that SABA is going to be doing another survey and could incorporate questions in regards to this into this survey.

**FENNVILLE RECYCLING ENTERPRISES** - Ray Diffenderffer gave a brief presentation on the recycling program he began with Fennville merchants. Two years ago he approached the Fennville School board to raise awareness of recycling – 50% of what we throw out is recyclable. He currently has recycling bins behind Huntington Bank in Fennville for their merchants, and has been quite successful. They have hit 1 million pounds of recyclable material. He would like to do something in Saugatuck mainly focusing on businesses. His initial proposal is to strategically place containers, that would be aesthetically pleasing, to put flatten cardboard out and collect on a regular basis at least once a week. What would it look like? It would be similar to a 20 bushel box – collection would be late in the morning or late at night. Pat Lion – Would you have any collection site(s) in Douglas? Ray – We currently pick up at the post office. Marsha Burd– Is there a cost? Ray – Yes, but not sure what it would be. Would be determined and presented at a later date. Angela Holmes – How do you feel about being a member of SABA? Jim Lytle - Fennville Recycling is a (501c3) non-profit. Angela Holmes – Are you just talking about cardboard? Ray – Cardboard, office paper, and plastic. Fred Weber - How will this dovetail with Saugatuck’s recycling program by the city garage? Ray – This is not a residential program – strictly for business. Angela Holmes – Can you get us some costs? Ray – Depends on how many businesses would benefit from this? He is currently working with Fred Schmidt to come up with projection cost. Money goes back into the schools for creative projects. Angela Holmes – We would be interested in proceeding with this.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

**NEW MEMBERS:** We have four new members: Steele Enterprises, Little Bohemia, Boys & Girls Club of Holland, and Fennville Chamber of Commerce.

**BROCHURE:** We currently have 20 boxes left, which should carry us through the rest of the year. If you need some please contact Fred Schmidt. Marilyn Starring has them stored at the Star of Saugatuck – call and arrange a time to stop by and pick up some.

**COMMUNITY MAP:** 2 Boxes left at the bank.

**BROCHURE VS MAP:** Fred Schmidt – There has been discussion on whether we should merge the community map with the SABA brochure. The feeling is we should ask membership whether we should integrate or keep them separate. This can be done when we do the membership survey. It was suggested if we keep the community map and brochure separate we could eliminate the maps inside the brochure and add some additional advertising spaces and add a calendar of events to the brochure. Frank Rojek

– Have you received a quote on what the cost would be to put the community map inside the brochure? No. Angela Holmes – The basic reason for doing the walking map was the ability to change it and keep it updated during the course of the year. Fred Schmidt – The brochure still needs to be wrapped up by the early part of February so it can go to press by early March then we can have it by the Spring Kick-Off in April. With the community map we can add additional members after the brochure has gone to bed. Angela Holmes – A simple survey would be best way to handle this – probably should be separate from the other survey we are going to do.

#### DRUG STORE WALL:

Marilyn Starring spoke with Pete the Painter and he said he would begin the Drug Store Wall this coming Monday, no later than Tuesday as long as the weather holds. She does have someone else in mind to do the project if he does not begin the work this week. Pete said he had been busy. (NOTE: 9/17/07 – wall was painted.)

#### EVENTS COMMITTEE:

Music in the Park – is a smashing success. Julie Abel had a band contact her on how to become involved. Pat Lion – Comment she received from a guest during a rain date – when we have a rain date for Music in the Park we need to have a large sign that states that the event has been moved, and where it has been moved to. Angela Holmes – I think this is something we can do.

Saugatuck & Douglas Sidewalk Sale Update – Marsha Burd – All things considered it went pretty well. Douglas was very pleased with the shuttle and people seemed to be using it. There didn't seem to be a lot of comments about Douglas participating in the sale this year from the Saugatuck merchants. Saugatuck merchants did comment that a lot of people didn't seem to be in attendance at the sale this year – not really sure why. Marsha also said there weren't a lot of comments – had one merchant felt we are missing the mark by not having a two day sale. This merchant was going to survey other participating merchants to get their feelings on the matter. Marsha said there would have to be a lot of dissatisfaction with the one day to move it back to a two day sale. Pat Lion – So many of the schools went back a week early in Illinois this year. Need to get more e-mail addresses signed up to receive SABA info via the website. Angela Holmes – Could we ask lodging if they would be willing to share their clients e-mail addresses to sign up for SABA newsletter? Comment: Maybe difficult as most businesses are very protective of their client lists. SABA members may be willing to promote the web site in their newsletters though. Marsha Burd – Kerry do you know where all the banners went to? No he doesn't - try checking with the city halls. Marsha would also like to have a commitment from Douglas earlier – would make promoting/advertising Sidewalk Sale a little easier. Kerry O'Donohue – From this point forward it will be easier to deal with since this was a first year program. Marsha Burd – How did restaurants feel? Angela Holmes – Felt it could have gone a little better. Pat Lion – Can we get them (restaurants) to fill out some sort of a small survey? Yes.

Winterfest: Marsha Burd - Only two persons were able to attend the Events Committee meeting last week – the committee will meet in early October and really get going on

this. Thinking of changing the name of Night Before Christmas – discussed at the end of the evening to have a drawing and meet at a central location and announce the winner of the “grand prize” possibly a \$1,000 shopping spree (estimated). Winterfest was scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of January but are considering moving it to an earlier weekend. Angela Homes – Possibly should consider revisiting Saugabuck’s or whatever we decide to call them. Need to coordinate that. Todd White suggested that we get a seal (raise mark) on the paper to make it difficult to duplicate.

Tony Vettori - Next week the city has a meeting with Lightastic, the company who decorated the city for the holiday last year. City has asked to have the decorations up in early November. Comment: Make sure lights don’t come down until the first week in February. Tony Vettori - We have two more years with the snowflake design. It would be nice to have businesses decorate with white lights.

Angela Holmes – Maybe SABA could sponsor a decorating contest.

Frank Rojek – Could we see if we could put parade at night during preview night and do lighting ceremony at the same time?

Angela Holmes– Whatever we can do to make it all mesh together.

Tony Vettori - Sparkle is going to decorate the parks. He will talk to Felicia Fairchild, CVB about a light sculpture contest.

Angela Holmes The next Events Committee meeting is on October 2<sup>nd</sup> at Saugatuck coffee at 4 p.m.

#### MEMBERSHIP FEE STRUCTURE:

Angela Holmes passed out a copy of a proposal that Fred Schmidt, Pat Lion, Marilyn Starring, as well as Angela drafted. One of the main reasons for changing the date for the membership drive is to catch more people when they are still in town and to receive membership dues on a timely basis.

#### Proposal:

Change dates of membership: Current: 2006/2007 November 1<sup>st</sup> to October. Proposed Change: 2007-2008 September 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>.

Yearly Dues: Current: \$175.00 Proposed Dues: \$200.00

Incentive: Pay your dues prior to October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007 and receive a \$25.00 reduction in dues – dues would be the same as this last year \$175.00. Dues received after the 25<sup>th</sup> would be \$200.00, and remain \$200.00 until July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Any new members joining after July 1<sup>st</sup> thru August 31<sup>st</sup> the dues would be \$200 which will take their membership through the following year – basically two months free.

Previously we offered a half price membership after the brochure had gone to press on February 1<sup>st</sup>. It was felt because of the extended benefits that SABA offers, which include the walking map, plus web site, kiosks that will be placed in both Saugatuck and Douglas in '08, adding/expanding events, web site, a web page developed for your business, and medical insurance to name a few key items.

Reason for a \$25.00 increase in the yearly dues: 1) Membership benefits continue to expand. 2) The new kiosks in both Saugatuck and Douglas to house the map project will be costly. 3) We are adding new events (i.e. Winterfest) and expanding others (i.e. Sidewalk Sale). 4) This winter we will re-visit the idea of hiring a marketing person to assist us.

In regards to changing the terms of membership: 1) Our membership year does not currently correspond to the seasonal nature of the majority of our membership. 2) The renewal payment at the end of the summer season should make it easier to collect dues than in the later winter/spring when merchant expenses are at their highest, and revenue at it's lowest. 3) By starting our membership drive in the fall we will be better able to evaluate and plan our budget for the upcoming fiscal year, beginning of November 1<sup>st</sup>. It was two years ago that we went from \$125 to \$175.

Fred Weber – There will probably be some resistance to change. Frank Rojek - Do we need a motion today? Angela Holmes - Would be nice so we can proceed. Julie Abel - Moved to approve the presented motion recommended by the committee. Frank Rojek seconded. Discussion: Fred Weber - Are we changing the fiscal year? Angela Holmes - Leaving fiscal year as is. Price break currently goes to ½ price after brochure goes to bed – proposing continue to be \$200 until July 1<sup>st</sup> then member would pay \$200 and that would entitle them for a whole year's membership plus two free months. Frank Rojek – How long before we see another anticipated increase? Angela Holmes – Think this is a good start for now. Pat Lion – We had such a huge jump just 2 years ago – felt it was sufficient at this time. Marilyn Starring – Had a concern about raising dues since we do have money in the treasury that hasn't been spent on projects that SABA had hoped to complete but weren't completed. Felt it was a good compromise to offer an incentive to pay early then dues would be the same as in '07. Also felt that there is sufficient projects scheduled, and hiring of a marketing person and that there would be follow through on these projects and money would be spent. Marketing/Advertising – Marilyn Starring will get a hold Tim from NPR – to discuss fall/holiday advertising program. Fred Schmidt – Initial expense on the community map was \$1600 to print \$1500 to design in '07 – felt it would cost approximately \$2000 to do the map in '08. To purchase the kiosks we are planning to put up in both Saugatuck and Douglas would be around \$5,000 each - \$10,000 total. Fred Weber – Are we going to need more money than what we are asking for. Fred's concern is that we are not asking for enough money for the projects that we want to complete. We need a commitment in the motion or from board that we hire a marketing person, and to at least budge \$5,000 for this person. What is the time we have for action on this? Would like to see this tied to the motion somehow. Angela Holmes - Don't have a problem with this. No one on the board has had time to do this – we need a job description for the marketing person which we don't have. Fred Schmidt

– Let’s keep these issues separate – we need to get renewal letter out, and then once we get their renewals back we’ll send out update info for brochure. Remember, we also offer our members an opportunity to for a separate listing in a second business category for \$75. Fred Weber is comfortable in doing this.

Julie Abel took minutes for rest of meeting – Marilyn Starring had to leave and host Music in the Park.

Membership campaign separate. Julie Abel revised her motion: October 25<sup>th</sup> drop dead date for this year. Julie Abel moved to approve the membership committee’s recommendation to change the fee structure as proposed (see above) with the only inclusion being that the increase in membership fees be committed to an expanded marketing effort in 2008 to be initiated by April 15, 2008. Frank Rojek seconded. Motion approved.

Membership Drive Party on September 26 – need a venue. Pat Lion offered the use of the Rosemont. Probably 70-80 persons would be in attendance. SABA has had a fall outing on the Star of Saugatuck the last few years. Spectator’s already has a band and wants to host something. Pat Lion will get back to Angela Holmes tomorrow.

Restaurant Menus to B&B’s online. Fred Schmidt will follow up after membership drive goes out.

Angela Holmes met with Tony Vettori about Harbor Planning Committee. A plan has been approved at the tri-community committee. Proposed looking at addressing some of the harbor master issues and will give a proposal according to Toni Vettori. Saugatuck and Douglas have allocated some small funds to a harbor fund.

Community Issues Forum. Angela Holmes met with Police Dept, three communities, school, CVB, etc. Another meeting needs to be initiated - we may need to instigate.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Nominating Committee. That was Angela Holmes. Angela asked the board if anyone doesn’t want to continue – everyone agreed to continue. Angela one more term as co-president. A letter will be sent to membership for suggestions for board members to be returned by September 14<sup>th</sup>, and to be returned by 19<sup>th</sup>. Ballots sent on 20<sup>th</sup>. Board will be chosen by October 3 SABA meeting.

Employee/Owner Parking. Incentive program is not done as in previous years by the city. SABA will look at offering it next year. Fred Schmidt suggested SABA pay the incentive. Douglas may have some parking issues as well in future. There needs to be better signage. \$50/day was the incentive that was paid in the past. Fred Weber remembered \$1600 paid annually in the past.

Dinner & A Movie. Bill Galligan would still like to head this up but Angela Holmes hasn’t talked to him about it yet. Its tough getting prizes in January. Event is the last

Friday in January. Angela Holmes will work on it - last year event was well attended and lots of fun. There may be an issue with an overlap with Winterfest. Let's ask Bill Galligan to get an update for our next business meeting – in person or in writing.

Saugatuck 5 Year Capital Improvement Plan. Fred Schmidt will send it to the board and then membership. Tony Vettori said there was a plan for Mason Street but it was \$1 million. There is a possibility of a bond referendum for some streets in Saugatuck according to Tony Vettori. This is the first year of the five year infrastructure plan. Will discuss at next meeting and see how to discuss sidewalks as part of it. The issue is really the maintenance of current sidewalks. Tony Vettori said he would bring those to the City Manager's attention. Marsha Burd said there's orange markings on one of the sidewalks – what are they for? Tony Vettori wasn't sure what those were – near Pumpnickels. It might be for grinding then. Good – Angela Holmes will call Kirk Harrier for an update on what's being done to improve the sidewalks. The board will look at the plan and make a recommendation(s) to the city.

Cook Park Waterfront Lease. The Butler is fed up with the City. Not getting anywhere. (Todd is one of the owners of the Butler). 20 years ago when leases were signed The Butler would own some of it but it wasn't stated in the leases. Land improvements, etc. were done. They've been paying property taxes on it. Todd talked to Kirk two months ago, and he will not budge from this position. Fred Weber asked how a lease can be silent. Todd White - It was a verbal agreement. The City did the agreement and protected their rights and not theirs. The City attorneys say that the City owns everything. Mark Bekken supports the Butler in their views. Angela Holmes suggested that perhaps Tony Vettori would be willing to talk to him as Mayor of Saugatuck. Conversation between Tony Vettori and the Todd White ensued. Tony Vettori will talk to Kirk Harrier.

Fall Get Together. Date set for September 26.

Frank Rojek said he was at Sam's Club and saw that they have grants. Match fundraising dollar for dollar. No limit that they could say. Some events they'll sponsor the whole thing and others will double the money. Frank Rojek will make a report at the next meeting. Tony Vettori would also like to find funding for the chain ferry – for repairs and operation (about \$16,000). We're the only ones with a hand cranked chain ferry now. Angela Holmes thought that Wal-Mart would be good to sponsor with other sponsors.

Angela Holmes wanted to point out that in Fall maybe businesses could do some decorations with hay bales, etc. Frank Rojek said there's a fire safety problem. We encourage businesses to decorate for the Harvest and Christmas. Perhaps send an e-mail. A scarecrow contest is a great idea that Marsha Burd suggested.

Meeting adjourned.