



CITYWIDE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2023
CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM A, 6 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. in City Hall Conference Room A.

Present committee members: Elaine Apatang, Peter Somssich, John Tabor, William Gatchell, on ZOOM Larry Cataldo, Kathleen Boduch and Lori Soloway. Community members were also present.

The co-chair (Peter) opened the meeting by introducing the primary speakers, Valerie Rochon, Managing Director of Portsmouth NH 400th Anniversary celebration and Trevor Bartlett, Team Lead of the 400th celebration Grand Parade. Valerie began her presentation by summarizing the events in order by month. The activities have already begun, with the first being the grand opening on 1.6.23.

In April and May the organization has arranged to have special tours of the Shipyard Museum. It will be open from April until October with tours available daily.

In June there will be a Seacoast Pride event, celebrating the progress of the LGBTQ community during the past 50 years. June will also see a Vintage Baseball game at Leary Field, with teams playing using old-time rules. And Juneteenth (June 19th) will showcase a music festival at the Strawberry Banke Museum. . The Anniversary Parade will step off on June 3rd and will potentially cover the Holiday Parade route from Islington Street to Junkins Avenue.

July will welcome a Masquerade Ball, the proceeds of which will help defray the costs of the Little Italy Festival that will be held on August 6th and will celebrate the Italian community of Portsmouth. The Athenaeum will host a town-wide exhibit entitled Then and Now, which will highlight the changes in Portsmouth with photos of times past.

July will see a Tall Ships Parade, with a flotilla of crafts that will welcome the ships to the harbor. There will be a Blessing of the Fleet on Peirce Island.

August will celebrate the lost Italian neighborhood of Little Italy with a day-long, free music and oral histories event. That month will also be the time for the Anniversary Party, a food festival that will occasion a table stretching from Jumpin' Jay's Fish Café to Market Square, with a

surprise ending. The Music Hall will turn its stage around and host a number of music events on the street. There will be room for 700 people. Tickets will be available through the organization's website.

In September, the two-day Air Show at Pease will be a special attraction. Also in September: Portsmouth Peace Treaty Day on the 5th and the BIPOC Fest on the 24th. The Alliance for Greater Good will sponsor a Lantern Festival on South Mill Pond on the 30th. Participants will buy, decorate, and launch biodegradable lanterns at dusk.

October will welcome "Westival" a celebration of the English and Irish cultural contributions to Portsmouth. There will also be, of course, the annual Halloween Parade.

During November the Strawberry Banke Museum will host People of the Dawnland, a historical look at the contributions of the Native Americans in our area. On November 5th the Music Hall will host the ProMusica for an orchestral concert.

December will see the Candlelight Stroll at Strawberry Banke Museum. There will be the dedication of the newly installed (by then), etc. sculpture "Endeavor" in the Bohenko Gateway Park. It will also be the time for a planting of a Time Capsule to commemorate all of the year's events.

At some point in the year J. Dennis Robinson will release his new book, a graphic novel, meant for 5th to 10th graders. It tells the story of two kids who go back through time and show the influences of Portsmouth.

Valerie summed up her report saying anyone can volunteer or find information at the event website portsmouth400nh.org.

Trevor Bartlett, Team Lead of the Grand Parade spoke next. Trevor had coordinated the Portsmouth Halloween Parade for years, so he was a logical choice for this position.

The Grand Parade will gather on the route (TBD) at 10 a.m., yes, a daytime parade, and step off at 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 3rd. The hoped-for route is approximately 1.5 miles long. They anticipate 80-100 units. Arrangements are being made for marching bands, musical groups, neighborhood groups, dogs, horses, cars, trucks, etc. Some ideas that were floated: Children could decorate bikes, dance groups could perform, floats (adhering to specific rules) could be entered, whole neighborhoods could create a marching unit. Neighborhoods are invited to participate. Information and sign up (coming soon) can be done at the portsmouth400hn.org website, or email the committee at cncportsmouth@gmail.com.

OLD BUSINESS—PETER SOMSSICH AND ELAINE APATANG

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT--Following a meeting with committee members and the Portsmouth Police Department, the decision was reached to keep the current format for National Night Out.

It will be held on Tuesday, August 1st in the neighborhood locations of record, not at any new combined space. The committee and first responders will collaborate closely on developing a schedule for neighborhood visits that would prevent overlap. It's important to note, due to the number individual parties, this strategy may result in fewer resources being available for each party. NNO is a national endeavor started 40 years ago in Philadelphia to enhance the connection between local police and the neighborhoods. Portsmouth has been participating with these picnic/events for at least 25 years.

WARD FORUMS—The next Ward Forum will be held in Ward 4 at the Dondero School on April 6th, starting at 6:30 p.m. Lori Soloway will coordinate. Panel members include city officials and first responders. Questions should be specific to Ward 4

GRANT FOR RECYCLING FACILITY—Peter and Elaine signed on to support the City's vision to maximize recycling efforts and to reduce solid waste generation.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen M. Boduch, Secretary