

FREETOWN PARADE & FIREWORKS COMMITTEE

Thursday, February 8, 2024 - 4:00pm

Community Room - Police Station

FREETOWN CLERK
REC'D MAR 15 2024 AM9:11

Present: Samantha Downs, Linda Remedis, John Remedis, Pat Wilbur, Bob Gregory, Judy Gregory, Bob Adams, Amanda Farmer, Karen Facchiano, Ellen Lima, Ashley Emery
Absent: Carlos Lopes, Jean Fox
Guests: Chief Scott Rose, Todd Adams

Minutes of the last meeting were received.

Judy made note of the dates confirmed (so far) in 2024 for P&F meetings. All to be held on Thursdays in the Community Room — Feb 22nd at 6pm, Mar 14th at 4pm, Mar 21st at 6:30pm, Apr 4th & Apr 25th at 6pm, May 2nd & May 23 at 6pm, Jun 6th at 6pm, Jun 13 at 4pm, Jun 27th at 6pm, and Jul 25th at 6pm.

Thanks to the hard work of our committee and the generosity of our sponsors in 2023, P&F's finances are in good shape for 2024.

Since the fireworks are completely paid for by our donations/sponsorships (and not by Town funding), this allowed us to increase the cost of 2023's show to \$12,000. Last October we voted to increase 2024's show to \$15,000. Also, P&F will request \$3,000 from the Town at the Annual Meeting in June, to pay for other expenses (such as parade prizes, t-shirts, flags & bunting, portapotties, and more.)

Fundraising for sponsors on P&F t-shirts will start late March/early April. Prior to that, we'll go over last year's list to confirm who'll be responsible for talking to which sponsors, so there's no overlapping on requests. Judy will also have forms to fill out when asking for sponsorships to make sure of correct spelling of names (for listing on the t-shirts) and contact information for thank you letters. Sponsors will be approached either in person, by calls, or by mail; plus we'll make sure to "get the word out" on social media.

Talked about conversations with Ocean State Pyro for our fireworks show this year, along with 2025, and in 2026 (for our country's 250th). We've received contracts for all 3 years, but can only sign for what we currently having funding for, so we'll submit our signed contract for 2024; and have agreements set for 2025 and 2026.

Everyone was reminded of the email they received regarding the State Ethics Commission on-line training for Conflict of Interest laws. Since we all took this course in 2023, this year we'll only need to acknowledge receiving a current summary of the law.

Judy will contact various businesses who are involved with our events (Beaupre Electric, Borges Bros, Russell Frade Enterprises, Cool Licks Concessions, End of the Road Tees) as well as the "vendors" at our Fireworks Festival to confirm their help and/or participation. Also, the East Freetown Congregational Christian Church is interested in being a "vendor" this year and selling desserts, so Judy will be contact with them.

We had discussed the possibility of P&F sponsoring Freetown's Man & Woman of the Year (or couple, or group) beginning this year. We would ask for nominations and then have P&F pick the winners, present them with a plaque/trophy and have them participate in the parade (possibly on a float built by Bob A and Carlos). Judy asked for volunteers to head this sub-

FREETOWN PARADE & FIREWORKS COMMITTEE

Thursday, February 8, 2024 - 4:00pm

Community Room - Police Station

committee. She also asked for members to think of possibilities for a Grand Marshal so we can extend an invitation and plan accordingly.

We will need some flag and bunting replacements before putting them up in town (which will be scheduled for May 20th). Judy would also like to have brackets and flags put up on poles by Memorial Park. We're always grateful to Beaupre Electric for their crew and truck putting up the majority of our flags and saving us such a huge amount of time and labor. (We still however, have 20+ flags which need our crew to use a ladder to put up and take down, due to their location.)

We talked about the need for communication via social media and keeping people updated on P&F happenings.

Judy stressed (again) the hope our parade line-up being moved to Ridge Hill Road, rather than it forming up at three different locations. It was noted the lack of spectators in past years south of Ridge Hill Road, as well as marching participants not wanting to march from the ByPass road all the way to Hathaway Park. Chief Rose said that safety-wise and permit-wise, it would really help the police department to have the parade start on Ridge Hill. P&F will need to meet soon with those "in authority" to see if we can work out having Ridge Hill Road for our complete parade line-up. Chief Rose reiterated it would be a great help to his department to have the parade start there. He also said his budget and personnel are set for both events.

We went over parade issues to be worked on - keep it moving, unloading at Hathaway Park, parking, and more. This will be discussed at future meetings. Sam already has had requests from people/businesses about participating in this year's parade.

Chief Rose talked about the use of Freetown Flash and surveying people on-line for nominations (or other information) for P&F. All were appreciative of his offer, and assured him we would contact him first if we decide to do this as well as ask for his help and expertise.

Ashley said she and Carlos will work on P&F's Facebook process and keeping it current in the coming months.

Judy asked Ellen about who to contact regarding P&F's request for a booth at the Strawberry Festival. Ellen said to email her.

Everyone was reminded to be thinking about the list of Pro's & Con's discussed after last year's events. We'll work on those at our next few meetings.

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 22, 2024 - 6:00pm - Community Room

Meeting Adjourned: 5:07pm

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Gregory - Clerk