



Strong Community. Strong Economy. Vibrant City.

DOWNTOWN MERCHANT COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, February 21, 8:30 a.m.
The Ware Center at Millersville University – Lancaster

MINUTES

57 in attendance!

MEMBER INTRODUCTION HIGHLIGHTS

- Heather Dighe, Marketing & Development Manager for Lancaster Recreation Commission talked about Open Streets Lancaster that is happening this year on Sunday, May 20th. Your business can be part of the exciting community event this year with sponsorship levels from \$500 - \$10,000, your business can reach more than 6,000 people in one day. If you are interested visit www.OpenStreetsLnc.org/Sponsors or contact Heather directly at: HDighe@LancasterRec.org
- Laurie Moir, Director of Development for [Lancaster Housing Opportunity Partnership](#) visited with us today to tell us about their FREE [“All Things Home Fair”](#) for anyone interested in learning more about homeownership. It will be held on Saturday, April 7th at Brightside Opportunities Center (515 Hershey Avenue) from 10am until 2pm!
- Tim Smith from The Gallery of Modern Masters invited all to their special event [Gallery Art Wine & Done with Franz Fox](#) on Sunday, March 4th from 1 – 4pm. Enjoy an incredible, prix fixe, farm-to-table meal, prepared by the chefs at the Penn Square Grille. While you enjoy the tastes of Lancaster County, you will hear about the techniques and stylings of a true master artist, Franz Fox, who will also be available to discuss his technique one-on-one.
- Larry Keating of SCORE Lancaster – Lebanon let the attendees know that Chapter 16’s client base is now 50% established businesses and so if any members would like the assistance of an experienced, professional mentor contact SCORE at: (717) 397-3092, or: office@score16.org
- Brendan Stengle, Assistant Executive Director of Music for Everyone was excited that the kickoff for Keys for the City would be Thursday, February 22nd at The Pressroom Restaurant. He is also hoping everyone will save the date for the Keys For The City Great Big Piano Party on Saturday, April 28th. The GBPP will be at pod 2 in Lititz. All the pianos will be under the same roof for one evening before they are placed on the streets. Tickets will include drinks, food, and top-notch entertainment per usual MFE fashion. Invites will be sent shortly. You can become a C-Note Sponsor! Donate \$100 and your name will be placed on a MFE C-Note piano! To sign-up email: MFELancaster@gmail.com
- Matt Johnson, Chief of Staff, Mayor’s Office, stopped by to let us know that due to a conflicting event Mayor Danene Sorace was unable to be with us today, but that she appreciates, and supports our efforts on behalf of the business community. Matt also wanted all present to know that “his door was always open” to anyone with a question, or an issue. He left a stack of his business cards to be distributed, and so for those that might not have stopped to request one, or could not attend in person, the contact for Matt is: mjohnson@cityoflancasterpa.com
- Derek Smith of Good Three Design wanted everyone to know that a February day that hit 72° was the perfect day to stop by GoodThree at 210 W. Grant Street for “Whiteboard Wednesday” and get creative! Leave your latest lightning bolt idea. You never know where it might lead.
- Tara Hruschka talked about Selga’s second Spring Collection that will launch on Sunday, March 18th at The Iris Club at 1:30pm. The runway show will be followed by pink champagne & shopping a few blocks away at Festoon’s Duke

Street location. Reservations are \$20 per person and can be purchased in person at Festoon, or by calling 717-299-2232.

- Krin Kirchner of PPM Realty was passing out coupon cards for [Owl Chiropractic](#) that offer individuals from the business community a complimentary new patient exam and x-ray (if needed). The offer is valid through Wednesday, February 28th. To redeem this offer call 717-517-21845 to schedule an appointment.
- Sherry Harry of VisionCorps was pleased to let the group know that they have now expanded to 5 counties and they are subsequently able to hire more staff, including individuals with disabilities.
- Jodi Martin Pabon of The Scarlet Willow described this year's [Sips & Bits Stroll](#) hosted by the [300 Block of North Queen Street](#) that occur on 3rd Fridays from May through September. These evenings of exploring Downtown Lancaster shops, sampling local food & drink and supporting 2 great community organizations, [Power Packs Project](#) and [The .918 Club](#) are very popular. They are looking for local food & beverage vendors to participate in the event. Anyone interested should contact Jodi at: scarletwillowvintage@gmail.com
- Eric Garman, committee member for [Lancaster City Restaurant Week](#) let everyone know that #LCRW2018 will start on Monday, February 26 and run through Sunday, March 4th. There are new specials for breakfast, lunch, dinner & brunch from \$10, \$20, \$30 & \$40 from 51 Lancaster City restaurants. Visit the [website](#) to plan your week!
- Kellie Pederson, manager of [Season Lancaster](#) added that Seasons will be participating in Restaurant Week by once again offering 10% OFF to all customers who bring in a receipt from any participating restaurant. Offer valid February 26 – March 4 only.

Monthly Spotlight – Escape on Queen presented by Melanie Rice and Heather Hess

- **Lancaster Office of Promotions (LOOP)**

- Downtown Lancaster Visitors Guide for 2018**

- Amber Strazzo, Communications & Marketing Manager for City of Lancaster was eager to bring everyone up to date on the 2018 Lancaster City Visitors Guide. The LOOP office distributes 200,000 guides each year. NEW FOR 2018! For an additional \$100 you will be in a special section of the May issue of Susquehanna Style magazine. It will mirror the Visitors Guide and be included in the magazine's May print issue, digital issue, email blasts, social media coverage, reaching 150,000 readers. The deadline for this year's guide is Wednesday, February 28th. Sign up [HERE](#).

- Upcoming LOOP events**

- The [42nd Annual Red Rose Run](#) in Downtown Lancaster on Saturday, June 2nd from 8am til 11am. Proceeds benefit [The Lancaster Central Market](#) and future City of Lancaster events. Register early! Entry form available [here](#).

- Open House**

- Annie Weeks, Director, Lancaster Office of Promotion wanted to remind everyone present about the Small Business Open House on Thursday, February 22nd from 9am until 4pm at the Visitor's Center. An opportunity to meet the City of Lancaster Office of Promotion staff and tell them about your business! The more they know, the easier it is to promote what you do. Tourism picks up in the spring, and they want to know what they can do to drive more business to you, and throughout the City of Lancaster! There will also be an opportunity to sign up for the 2018 Lancaster City Visitor Guide.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Lancaster Restaurant Week – February 26th – March 4th
- Lancaster Roots & Blues Festival – March 9th – 11th
- American Quilter's Society – March 21st – 24th

- Launch Music Conference – April 12th – 15th
- YWCA Race Against Racism – April 28th

- **Merchant Advocacy Discussion**

- **Extended Outdoor Dining Season**

- There was a general consensus that outdoor dining should be extended further in the seasons to take advantage of warmer weather trends with reasonable restrictions and oversight.
 - The group would like to see a committee formed to study the ordinance and make recommendations to the City on possible changes
 - It was agreed that al fresco dining is a very desirable amenity that needs to be both flexible, and mindful of city regulations.

- **Allowance for Sidewalk Sales**

- Sidewalk Sales would add promotional opportunities to many small businesses that do not have street facades.
 - There was concern that there be regulation regarding the day & times of the week these events would be permitted.
 - Some mentioned that Sidewalk Sales could appear City-wide in the spring, and fall.
 - There is a concern that only the business owner at the property holding the Sidewalk Sale can hold the event, and not offer the space to a third part that has no relation to their business.
 - It was clear that, if permitted, these events would require a permit, and clear guidelines.

- **Liquor License Advocacy for Small Restaurants**

- Small entrepreneurs seeking to open a new restaurant and purchase a liquor license in PA are now facing a tremendous obstacle due to the huge jump in the cost of those licenses since major chains began purchasing them. Just a few years ago a license sold for about \$120K. There are now averaging \$320K.
 - State Representative Mike Sturla joined us for the discussion to share his thoughts on this issue. He observed that there is pressure to create more licenses due to this, but there is push back from the existing “Mom & Pop” restaurant owners who see this huge increase as both a windfall that can be used as a family legacy, or a retirement fund.
 - Representative Sturla described a possible solution. Each county gets 2 Economic Development Licenses each year. They cost \$50K, but you do not own it, you only have use of it for the life of your business. This provides an opportunity for an enterprising entrepreneur, or two, to succeed each year. However, as of yet, Lancaster County has not taken advantage of this program.
 - It was suggested that a sub-committee of the MIM be formed, with the assistance of the local hospitality community, to study this issue in deeper detail. We were also advised to reach out to the [PA Beverage & Tavern Association](#) & [The Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association](#).

We are very interested in any and all feedback that you have on these topics. if you have any additional questions, comments, concerns, please contact Dave Aichele at daichele@teamlanc.org

- **Member Intra-Marketing Committee Report**

- **Member Spotlight March** – Buzz with Michael Siranni presenting.

January Welcome Packets

- **Big Five African Cuisine** – 630 N. Plum Street *Kris B*
- **SAAT Boutique** - 14 S. Duke Street *Kris B*
- **Savannah House, LLC** – 222 W. Chestnut Street *Olé*
- **Caribbean Wave** - 701 E. Chestnut Street *Anja*

- **Anthology Salon & Style Bar** – 135 E. King Street **V**
- **DiCarlo's Pizza – Lancaster, PA** – 155 E. King Street **Carla**
- **Tsunami Express** – 255 N. Queen Street **Scott**
- **inkCREDIBLE Tattoo Factory** – Place Marie 52 N. Queen Street Suite 8A **Matt**
- **Dough & Co** – 46 N. Prince Street (opening in January) **Sammi**
- **Good Taste Chinese** – Plaza Centro 910-930 S. Duke Street **Olé**

February Packets

- **Cabalar Meat Co.** – 325 N. Queen Street
- **247 Sneaker** – 601 S. Prince Street **KCS**

MIXER – Thursday, January 25th at Catalina's on Orange was a success. Other venues being explored.

MIM Committee SPECIAL Projects

Small Business Saturday 2018 – Recap

- A survey requesting merchant feedback on the event was prepared by Lancaster City Alliance Director of Communications, Anne Williams. The response was very minimal, and not enough to gather any real data, so notes were taken for a new survey to be released in the new year, now that there is time for merchants to respond thoughtfully.
The result of the new survey will be discussed at the March meeting
- **Feedback from group**
 - o Group discussed way to get the arts community more involved in future. Consensus that there needs to be more of an emphasis on all City of Lancaster businesses, not just retail, but to include our many fine restaurants & cafes on Small Business Saturday.
 - o Lancaster City Alliance, in the role of Neighborhood Champion will relay this feedback to American Express.
- **Downtown Dollars Record Sales!!**
 - o Anne Williams gave a brief report on the Downtown Dollars marketing campaign she launched for Lancaster City Alliance at the beginning of January. It included media coverage, print mentions, and a budget for social media campaign.
 - o Downtown Dollars saw an increase in sales of 175% in 2017!
 - Downtown Dollars education – the committee expressed an interest in seeing a single Downtown Dollar info sheet that can be shared at Merchant Meetings, on the LCA website, and distributed to participants, and prospective merchants, that completely explains the program. Communication Director Anne Williams is working on a comprehensive version for release soon.
- **Red Rose International Film Festival**
 - o Anne Williams introduced the committee to Ryan Shenk's proposal to bring a film festival to Lancaster that models the one that he currently stages in Iowa.
 - o The committee expressed interest in the event but was clear in a request that any scheduling for this event be mindful of the existing, and longstanding local artists who have spent years building local film festivals.
 - o The committee also was clear that any promotion of film festivals would need to be equitable and offer the exact resources to the existing local film community.
- **Lancaster Shops Late recap**
 - o This inaugural event was an enormous success with over 50 merchants participating. There were record cold temperatures on December 14th, but there were still shoppers, eager to support Downtown Lancaster, out for this event.
 - o There are hopes for an expansion of the musical acts for the evening.
 - o Feedback from Merchants:
 - Art & Glassworks is hoping there might be a designated advertising budget next year.

The committee would like to see the ad that LCA runs for Small Business Saturday be a combined promotion to feature both events. There should also be a mention of Lancaster Shops Late (including logo) in the Holiday Issue of Fig Lancaster

■ Spice & Tea Exchange report that their customers suggested that having 3 hours of FREE parking in Lancaster City garages would be a big draw.

The committee members were very supportive of this proposal and would like some direction from Marshall Snively on how best to move forward on implementing it. One strong suggestion was that the 3 hours of FREE Parking be tied to showing a receipt from a Downtown Lancaster business that has a time stamp for that period.

The committee has this topic on the March agenda

- **Directory Subcommittee Report**

• Olé would like an assist in learning more from the City Director of Public Works regarding the cost estimates for this project, and how the sub-committee would access the software. It was decided to approach the new administration's Chief of Staff, Matt Johnson for some direction on next steps, and support for this initiative.

**Date and Location for March MIM Meeting – Wednesday, March 7th at The Loft from noon until 1pm.
All are welcome!**

Next Meeting – March 21st

Please let us know the Anniversary of your business by completing the following short [survey](#).

Add value to your business with Downtown Dollars Gift Certificates!

Merchants interested in participating in the program should contact the Lancaster City Alliance via email at info@teamlanc.org or by calling 717-394-0783.