



UNIQUE DOWNTOWNS MEETING NOTES – November 7, 2018

Meeting began at 4 pm at Beacon Organizational Consulting. Thank you, Theresa, for hosting.

Mary Maurer and Dean Halverson provided a general update on the current state of Vision 2022, post the September summit. In general, Mary and Dean have been meeting with the leaders of key community organizations to determine their interest in serving as an Organizational Champion or Partner for the tactics identified within each of the 5 Work Group Action Plans.

The following bullets represent key points from robust meeting conversation:

- Lengthy discussion ensued about downtown city of Manitowoc. The current leadership group, Downtown Manitowoc, consists of volunteer downtown business owners who are doing their best to plan and provide activities, promote downtown and get new downtown business owners to be a part of the organization. It is a difficult task to keep things going and interest high.
- Some expressed need to welcome new owners to the downtown more consistently.
- Some expressed frustration with trying to be a member of the organization plus run their business.
- It was shared that April Kroner, the new City Development Director, has shared with the group that there is consideration being of City of Manitowoc hiring a person devoted to downtown development.
- People reflected on the previous organization, Mainly Manitowoc and why it was not successful.
- Much discussion ensued about the need for refreshed energy and assistance for the downtown, given that downtowns show up as important to people, regardless of the place they reside, according to the Vision 2022 community study.
- Discussion took place on the fact that Vision 2022 obtained names from people who are keenly interested in downtowns, which could be a source of volunteer assistance for the group.
- The idea of convening a summit of county-wide downtown leaders was discussed with the idea of having a social mixer only and/or a social with a guest speaker such as Brian from downtown Green Bay.
- The city of Duluth was noted as a prime example of downtown rebirth, we could learn from.
- Julie Reimer volunteered to assist Mary and Dean with getting the youth survey into the Valders and Reedsville school districts. This assistance is appreciated.
- The team tactic of improved/central resource for county – wide downtowns was discussed as being a likely part of the brand team when the brand is formed.

- Discussion took place on establishment of an online Manitowoc pridewear store. It was noted that Heart and Homestead currently does sell Manitowoc pridewear.
- Consistent store hours were discussed, and it is problematic. Some have remained open late, to catch night time guests such as those leaving a CCC show, with little to no business. This could be something the downtown group discusses.
- An update was given on the status of the downtown Manitowoc plan and its comprehensiveness of input and content.
- It was felt that best practices and learning could occur from a once/twice meeting with all downtown leaders. Ideas could be shared, and events planned in unison to benefit all.
- The group felt it would like to meet again to discuss the above ideas.

A future meeting date for December will be determined.