

**West Jefferson Business Association**

Regular Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2013

A joint meeting of the West Jefferson Business Association (WJBA) and West Jefferson Community Partnership (WJCP) was held at West Jefferson Town Hall on Tuesday, February 12, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. Those attending included Bill Bishop, Wesley Barker, Rex Goss, Lisa Willingham, Keith Woodie, Mayor Dale Baldwin, Alderman Stephen Shoemaker, Becky Stragand, John Smyre, Linda Sloan, Stacy Maye, Jesse Campbell, James Howell & Cliff Clark.

Keith stated the purpose of this meeting was to discuss tourism in West Jefferson. Keith said he felt lately any ideas that are brought up to promote tourism in West Jefferson are shot down by the Aldermen. Keith asked why the Town is spending money on beautification with the bump outs and streetscape if they are not going to promote West Jefferson through special events. He said he felt it was time to tell the Aldermen the importance of these events such as the Antiques’ Fair for the Town and its businesses.

Keith said Dana Little, owner of the Cutter’s Edge in downtown, has single handily asked business along Jefferson Avenue from Main Street to the intersection at First Baptist Church if they would have a problem with the Antiques’ Fair being held in this area. Keith said Dana had told him that all businesses are supportive of the fair being held at this location with the exception of two that had yet to be talked to. Keith said this stretch of road was a DOT maintained road and DOT had shown no opposition for the road closure given all alternatives routes are in place.

Keith said he felt the purpose of the WJBA and WJCP was to help the Town. Particular businesses that oppose these special events should not deter the thousands of dollars of revenue these events bring into the Town. He continued to say it is important to let the Aldermen know that the WJBA and WJCP are supportive of this festival and how important it is for the Town.

Becky Stragand said events such as the Antiques’ Fair were good for the Town because industry is drying up and the Town needs this revenue from events like these to survive. She also said events like these are usually one day out of the year and it shouldn’t hurt to have these events in downtown. Lisa Willingham said she feels every business could connect to the Antiques’ Fair one way or another.

Town Alderman Stephen Shoemaker said the Board of Aldermen are working toward tourism with all the bump outs, landscaping, street lights and new traffic patterns. He said there is no way to make everyone happy with any event or its location. Stephen said he feels the Antiques’ Fair is a good opportunity for the Town.

Farmers Market manager John Smyre said the Farmers Market is in support of the Antiques’ Fair as last year’s event was very beneficial for the market.

Further discussion took place on locations of the fair along Main Street compared to Jefferson Avenue. Pros and cons were discussed. Keith said there is always going to be opposition no matter what location is deemed best. All in attendance felt Main Street was still the better choice for the fair’s location. The next step discussed was to go back to the Board of Aldermen with the location deemed best for the Fair with good reasoning as to why the Fair should be at that particular location.

Alderman Shoemaker recommends WJBA and WJCP representatives attend the next Board of Aldermen meeting in March to voice their support for the Antiques’ Fair to the Aldermen. A consensus was made to have members of each committee in attendance for the next Board of Aldermen meeting and to be placed on the agenda because planning and marketing needs to begin for the Fair and the location needs to be set soon.

With nothing further, the meeting was adjourned.