

Argyle Community Enhancement Team
Meeting Minutes

November 10, 2011

Meeting opened at 5:30.

Those present: Diana Eggleston, Carrie Meerwarth, Bob Webster, Pat Sullivan, Bob Henke, Lynn Kiaer, Jan Jehring, Steve McLean, Kevin Jablonski, Michelle Armstrong, Margie McDougall and Joanne McDowell.

The minutes for October were accepted as written.

The treasurer reported a balance of \$1060 in our account with no changes from the last meeting.

Front Porch Forum. We wanted to share the FPF project with folks in our town. We invited people who we felt would be interested in the project, to find out more and ask us questions.

The Front Porch Forum would give Argyle an online meeting place for Argyle residents to discuss subjects of general interest to those living in Argyle. The goal of the site is to build the community by sharing information and raising awareness of what is going on in our area. The site will only be visible to those living in Argyle that have signed up to use the site.

Use of the site will be free to the residents of Argyle. Residents would have to sign up using their first and last name. This ensures we are talking with fellow towns people. And it also holds us each accountable for our words. FPF will provide a monitor who will randomly check the site for bullying, taunting, finger pointing and similar types of posts are counter productive to the community building focus. Such posts will be deleted. Repeated offenses will result in the poster being blocked from the site.

Examples of uses: Residents could post a messages regarding a lost dog/cat. Maybe someone needs a ride to Glens Falls on Thursday. Organizations could post messages regarding cancellations due to bad weather. Someone might like to borrow a chainsaw to get that fallen tree off of their shed. Town and village leaders could use the site as a secondary path for spreading information about village water, meetings, up coming events etc. The school could get utility from the site by posting relevant schedules, meetings, events and so on.

Computer users could share relevant messages with non-computer using neighbors and friends.

We will need to raise a ONE time payment of \$5,000 to Front Porch Forum. The payment is for the set up of the site, the programming for the site, a monitor, and internet security/privacy. After that the site is funded through advertisements.

Bonus: Argyle businesses and organizations can advertise on the site for FREE.

The question has been posed. "We could do this ourselves! Why do we need to pay FPF this much money?" Yes, it is true we do have the talent residing right here in Argyle to make this site for us. But we haven't yet. It is not just a matter of making the site. There are on going activities that will need attention. FPF would procure advertisers for us, keep the ever changing security issues up to date, and pay people to monitor the site for fair and respectful conversations. FPF will handle the behind the scenes work for us. And we can go to the main focus of caring for our community.

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Brief history: Front Porch Forum was established as an answer to the lack of community connections and community awareness that one couple observed. Mike Wood Lewis created the first Forum in Burlington, VT. Now there are 60 towns in Vermont that use FPF. The towns have an average of 45% of their residents within the first year using the FPF site. Argyle will be the first town outside of Vermont to use FPF. Mike gets requests from as far away as Texas to set up Forums in their area.

How you can help:

- 1) Tell people about this project.
- 2) We are seeking donations for this site. We will be using the ACET Community Account at Glens Falls National Bank to collect funds. Folks can stop by the bank. Please be sure to indicate the funds are for the ACET's Front Porch Forum project.
- 3) Once the site is up and running, you can help by starting online conversations, or post your organization or upcoming event.
- 4) You can let folks know they can advertise for free on this site, if they are in the town of Argyle. Non-profit organizations and for profit organizations can take advantage of this freebie.

Our goal is to have the site live and working in the early spring of 2012.

Continuing Education in Argyle. Tentatively, the plan is for classes in Tai Chi, Cardio and Strengthening classes. Starting early next year these classes will be a good way to beat the mid-winter blues and cut cabin fever.

Old Fashioned Christmas in Argyle. We worked on finalizing the schedule for the days' events.

There is still time to reserve a table at the business showcase on December 10. We will not be able to sell products inside the school, however this is a great opportunity for -business and organizations to meet with people, answer questions and pass out brochures and business cards. People are in Christmas shopping mode and the local economy can benefit. Gift memberships in volunteer organizations can provide the recipient with new and rewarding experiences all year. Alternatively, seeking local products and services to give as gifts adds meaning to the thoughtfulness of the gift. Not only does the recipient receive benefit of the product or service but the both the giver and the recipient have the satisfaction of knowing they have contributed to the over all well being of the local economy and those around us.

If you have questions or if you need another reservation form please contact Diana Eggleston, Allison Wilshire, Bob Webster or Joanne McDowell.

Our next meeting will be December 8th, at the Auction Barn on Rt 40 for our holiday meeting and dinner. All are welcome to join us, please let us know you are coming so we can plan accordingly.

Submitted by:

Joanne McDowell
Secretary for ACET