

Mainstreet advances agenda

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
Friday, 07 April 2017 03:43



Group finally making some headway

Liz Hannum, the executive director of MainStreet, briefed the Gallup City Council on the progress of MainStreet at the March 28 city council meeting. And, Rose Eason, the executive director at GallupArts, briefed council members on the progress happening at GallupArts at the same meeting.

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Neither subject called for formal council votes. They were listed on the meeting agenda as information items and were introduced via visual aids.

Hannum told council members that for the past five months there is growth at MainStreet. MainStreet, per se, is part of New Mexico's Economic Development Department. Hannum said becoming accredited by New Mexico MainStreet is the top priority of the organization.

Accreditation and making the organization available for grants and other financial opportunities, is something that is a priority within MainStreet, Hannum said.

MainStreet combines historic preservation with asset-based economic development to work with local affiliates and partners in rebuilding Main Streets. Gallup's MainStreet must attain three goals in order to be certified as a program: Those goals are hiring an executive director, participating in fundraising, in which the city is a primary sponsor, and organizing a board of directors with established goals, Hannum said during the presentation.

Regarding fundraising, Hannum, who came to Gallup from a job in Massachusetts, said a Kentucky Derby party is planned in May. Hannum has also put together a Gallup MainStreet for Downtown Dinners event for the remaining Wednesdays of the month of April. The dinners rotate among Gallup's downtown restaurants.

GALLUP MAINSTREET(S)

Gallup has had two prior MainStreet executive directors over the years, which date back to 2006: They were Sarah Luginbuhl and Lindsey Mapes. The city's early Mainstreets ultimately lost their designations.

Gallup is the sole entity in New Mexico with MainStreet and Arts and Cultural District designations, officials have said.

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Eason, the executive director at GallupArts, briefed the Gallup City Council at the March 26 regular city meeting, also. Like Hannum, Eason said her organization has been making some big strides.

“In the past ten months, GallupArts has grown tremendously and we have accomplished a lot,” Eason told council members. “We went from an all-volunteer organization to one with a part-time executive director.”

Eason said the organization has grown by 17 percent, and has involved more than 550 creative partners and has seen a 30 percent increase from businesses. Eason said Art123 has exhibited the works of 51 local artists with some 6,500 annual visitors.

Some future plans for the organization, Eason said, include more back-end support for area artists, like business management and online directory programs. More art education opportunities for the public are an organizational goal, too, Eason said.

Art123 and ArtsCrawl are GallupArts’ two major programs, Eason said. ArtsCrawl is held downtown twice a month and carries different themes.

“You’re doing a fantastic job,” Mayor Jackie McKinney said of Eason’s roughly 10-minute council presentation. McKinney made the same remark to Hannum.

The annual salaries of Hannum and Eason weren’t immediately available. Referencing a professional services agreement, Gallup City Clerk Alfred Abeita said the city pays Gallup MainStreet and Arts and Cultural District \$40,000 for fiscal 2017.

***By Bernie Dotson
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