

Multi-Use organizing committee to move forward

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POSTED: October 19, 2008

By April 2009 it should be a go - or no go - for the Chautauqua Multi-Use project. Period.

The committee listened to the findings by Dr. John Earshen of The Mattison Group during its September meeting, findings that essentially said, find a large partner.

The Board of Directors of the Chautauqua Multi-Use Organizing Committee, Inc. (CMUOC) voted unanimously at its Oct. 8 monthly meeting to adopt the findings of Dr. John Earshen in his final report of the Fundraising Study.

"We came into the meeting because the OBSERVER ... took a pretty good shot at us (on the editorial page) saying it's time to quit and we came into the meeting and pretty much asked that question, is it time to quit?" said committee President Don Horton. "We went around the table and everyone in the room was in favor of going on, there was no one who wanted to quit. There is the very real possibility that there are partners who would want to hook up with us and we'd regret it later if we didn't attempt to find out who they would be."

The group created a Partnership Exploration Committee (PEC) to explore the idea of having partnerships with other groups in an attempt to build a new sports complex in Northern Chautauqua County.

"We're meeting Monday night, Oct. 20 which will be our first meeting and when we do that initially we'll brainstorm to identify who the potential partners are. Who do we feel the people are who we want to get together with?" Horton said. "Once they're identified we have to decide how best to approach them. Do we call them for a meeting, prepare? Some members on the committee are there because they have a contact with a potential partner so they'll run with that ball."

The members of the PEC will be President Don Horton, Vice-President Ned Divine, Treasurer John Olsavsky, General Board Member Jim Enser, Advisory Members Ellen Luczkowiak and Mark Maytum, as well as community member JoAnn Niebel. They have been given a six-month time limit to see if a partnership(s) can be found with other groups and organizations in this area.

"We're going to go after all the potential partners all at once because John Earshen recommends a six-month timeline and we're going with that to fish or cut bait after six months. If we don't find a partner then we'll fold our tents and go home," Horton said. "If we do then we're going to pursue it as aggressively as we can to try and make this go forward. Anyone whose interested is going to have to step to the plate right now, we won't wait beyond six months. If no one is interested then this project is dead. We'll take them as they come."

The Business Plan for the organization had been recently endorsed by The Mattison Group as well as by Irene Dobies of the Small Business Development Corporation at Jamestown

Community College. Ms. Dobies did made some recommendations to the group and the Finance Committee will meet soon to work on those recommendations according to Horton.

In the Business Plan, and at several meetings over the past years, the Board of Directors have stated that their goal is to hire a professional management company to run the new sports facility.

"The board recognizes the importance of having good management of any such facility, and the Board fully intends to take an advisory role should the complex be built," Horton said.

At the monthly meeting the Board of Directors was reorganized and have added Mark Maytum and Greg Lorenzo as advisory members and Valerie Pawlak for Special Events. They meet the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m., and continue to accept new members. For more information, contact Don Horton at 640-7457 or dhorton625@roadrunner.com. You can also get information at the group's web site at www.cmusf.com.

Don Horton will also be speaking before the Dunkirk Rotary on Tuesday, Oct. 20 at 12:15 p.m. at the Shorewood Country Club.