

METUCHEN DOWNTOWN ALLIANCE MINUTES

July 14, 2016

7:30 P.M.

In attendance: Eric Berger, Chris Flynn, Margaret Inglese, Jan Margolis, Ruchir Mewawla, Jay Muldoon, Grace Shackney, Bobbie Theivakumaran, Deb Zupan. Not present: Joe Cascio, Chris Crane, Allison Inserro, Mirjana Novkovic, Dorothy Winhold.

Board President Eric Berger opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the Second Floor Conference Room, Metuchen Borough Hall.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JUNE 29, 2016:

Margaret Inglese moved that the minutes from June 29, 2016 be approved. The motion was seconded by Jay Muldoon. The motion carried and the minutes were approved by those present.

JUNEBUG DISCUSSION:

Margaret Inglese expressed the displeasure of several Main Street business owners about the closure of Main Street on June 18th for the Junebug Artfest. Grace Shackney agreed to bring this concern to the Junebug Committee meeting on June 21st.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT:

Several candidates have been interviewed. The Search Committee will decide soon who to bring back for a second interview.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT:

Margaret Inglese stated that the Committee had nothing to report at this time.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE - OFFICE CLEAN UP REPORT:

Deb Zupan reported that a clean-up of the Forum Theatre office space was accomplished with help from Allison and Grace. Paint supplies have been bought. Joe Cascio has the air conditioner which Chris Crane will install. Dorothy Winhold and Peter Loewy are arranging for a handyman to repair the hole in the ceiling. Painting is scheduled to begin around 3:30 p.m. on Friday, July 15th and continue over the weekend. Deb asked everyone to let her know if and when they can be available for painting. The furniture move is scheduled for Tuesday, July 19th.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

This Committee will meet for the first time on August 10th. Steve Santola of Woodmont is meeting with Dorothy Winhold to identify types of businesses we would like to see brought into town. The Committee will work on creating a pitch to new businesses and will assess the needs of current businesses. It was suggested that Jay Muldoon contact Leon Schwartz from Carpet Maven to join the Committee.

DESIGN COMMITTEE REPORT:

Annabelle Clemont gave a PowerPoint presentation about public art projects that she has been researching. Grace Shackney reported that the Design Committee met on June 29th. The Borough's Zoning Officer, Chris Consenza, attended the meeting. He is working on a mural ordinance. Short term goals of sidewalk cleanliness, holiday decorations and opportunities for

murals were discussed. Grace is setting up interviews with outside vendors to get pricing for maintaining sidewalk cleaning so that we have something to compare with DPW figures. The idea of projecting holiday lights from a single source at different locations in the shopping district is being researched. The first “mural” project will be the MDA’s logo and slogan on the wall of the old Danford’s building on the corner of Main and Middlesex Avenue. Another idea was to collect banners from previous Metuchen events and hang them on the fence along the Woodmont development as an exhibit of past Metuchen happenings.

PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT:

Bobbie Theivakumaran outlined the Pokémon Go tie-in promotion for Restaurant Week wherein business owners can buy locations so that their businesses become part of the game. The MDA will provide Poke toys to be in the stores/businesses. She will go for a feature story in local papers. The Committee is gearing up to spotlight fitness business during “Fitness” month in the fall.

501(c3) FILING STATUS:

Eric Berger reported that he is meeting with Aaron Katz about the filings.

STRATEGIC PLANNING:

It was agreed to move the due date for the 2017 budget from September 1st to the end of the year in order to have adequate input from the executive director.

ELECTION OF TRUSTEE TO FILL NELSON LI’S SEAT:

A motion was made to elect Mirjana Novkoic to fill Nelson Li’s unexpired term as a Trustee in the “resident” category. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Business Parking Concerns: Jay Muldoon announced that there will be a Parking Authority meeting on July 19th. He will ask that the first 15 minutes of the meeting be set aside to hear from the MDA about business’ parking concerns. He encouraged the Trustees to attend.

All business being completed, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Submitted by

Grace Shackney