

METUCHEN DOWNTOWN ALLIANCE MINUTES

September 15, 2018

8:30 A.M.

In attendance: Jay Muldoon, Chris Flynn, Stuart Schooler, Michelle Schutz, Eric Berger, Leon Schwartz, Peg Inglese, Dottie Winhold, Bobbie Theivakumaran, Diana Callinan, Linda Koskoski, Gary Tilbor. Not present: Bob Diken. Staff: Isaac Kremer. Guest: Elaine Edgcomb.

Eric Berger opened the meeting. Motion was made to approve the June board meeting minutes. Motion passed.

Chairman's Report

Eric Berger reported:

- Update on public artist - Steve Powers project:
 - Won't paint on parachute material or use vinyl so we need to talk with Nexus and Woodmont. The Montessori School won't give us permission to paint on their wall. We will move forward with the mural on the Bagel For You building. Request was submitted to PSE&G to place banners on the utility poles on New St.
 - Robot mural was completed last week on the Harp-cade wall.
- Parking Team meeting – the Parking Authority approved the plan to offer reduced afternoon employee parking in some of their lots. Eric visited downtown restaurants to inform them of the program. Question was asked for a timeline for the installation of the new meters. Jay Muldoon stated that he has a request into the Parking Authority. Question was asked if the meters are enforced on Saturdays. Answer is no.

Executive Director Report

Isaac Kremer reported:

- Handed out samples of downtown map from Ithaca featuring public art & bike trails. He also handed out a Lime Bike flyer.
- Brandon Uhlig produced a well received 60 second spot featuring MDA businesses. Next project is a feature on Cai's Café followed by features on Gardenia's, Boyt's and Small Business Saturday.
- Isaac has lined up several marketing and advertising opportunities available in the 4th quarter if funding is available.
- He announced that the MDA is receiving a \$2500 grant from Metuchen Savings in support of the mural being painted on Imagination Alley.

Treasurer Report

Stuart Schooler reported:

- Stuart provided a draft of the 2019 proposed MDA budget which was reviewed by the Board. There was a discussion of the Reserve Balance. Suggestion was made to establish a separate

account and line item for the Reserve. The Board was asked to review the proposed budget and come to the October meeting with suggestions and changes.

Communication Team

Chris Flynn reported:

- No report.

Promotion Team

Bobbie Theivakumaran reported:

- WrestlePro event is Saturday night 9/15 on the Plaza. Four local food vendors will be at the event.
- Metuchen Moves fitness event with Bollywood Dancers and Ninja Warriors is 9/22.
- Metuchen After Hours is 9/29.

Innovation Team

Elaine Edgcomb reported:

- Marketing dinner was held last week to wrap up the Interactive Marketing Workshop, a series of three supported by a grant from SCORE, which were held over the summer. The dinner was held at Bishop's Bistro with 40 attendees including most of the 17 businesses who participated in the workshops. Seven businesses will receive matching grants to implement marketing strategies developed at the workshops. Metuchen HS students will continue to help some businesses improve their marketing.
- MDA accepted as a local partner in Google's Get Your Business Online program. Free Google training, delivered via live streaming and in-person, will be promoted to members. Next up is Holiday Shopping livestream on Wednesday, October 17 at noon. To be held at 2 Chicks, 19 New St.
- Isaac presented Innovation grant requests received for consideration. Board members affiliated with the businesses being considered left the room while their requests were considered and voted on. The following businesses were awarded Innovation grants:
 - Hailey's Harp & Pub and Hailey's Harp-Cade - \$1750 grant for website redesign
 - See-More Appliances - \$2500 grant for referral marketing program and social media with Google analytics
 - What's The Scoop - \$900 for a media buy and production of television commercial

Getting it Done Team

Isaac Kremer reported:

- Cleaning contractor was downtown last week and power washed the bus stops and cleaned up the garden area at Main & Penn. They will also make some repairs to the bus stops.
- Melissa Karlovitch, volunteer, will be setting up Volgistics, a new volunteer management system. We need a volunteer to work with the Team chairs to use the software.

- Isaac also asked Board members to consider or think about someone to chair the Getting It Done Team.

Old Business

None to report.

New Business

Linda Koskoski announced that the Human Relations Committee will be offering a workshop on Employee/Employment Law to help business owners better understand issues in this area. The workshop will be offered in the fall and she hopes the MDA and the Chamber will publicize the event with their members.

Jay Muldoon shared an update on the Main St sidewalk replacement project.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30am.

The next Board meeting will be Friday, November 9, 2018 at 8:30am at Hailey's.

Submitted by Jay Muldoon