

METUCHEN DOWNTOWN ALLIANCE MINUTES

July 12, 2019

8:30 A.M.

In attendance: Eric Berger, Jay Muldoon, Stuart Schooler, Bobbie Theivakumaran, Leon Schwartz, Mark Harris, Gary Tilbor, and Sheri Rose Rubin (for Linda Koskoski). Not present: Michelle Schutz, Chris Flynn, Linda Koskoski, Jamie Gordon, Diana Callinan and Sue Fitzgerald. Staff: Isaac Kremer.

Eric Berger opened the meeting. Motion was made to approve the June board meeting minutes with one correction to include the Arts Council report by Mark Harris. Motion passed.

Chairman's Report

Eric Berger reported:

- Mark Sher suggested that the MDA support the delivery of wine & liquor to district BYOB restaurants. No individual liquor store can afford the expense of delivery to restaurants, but if a shared delivery service could be established it might support the liquor stores as well as the restaurants and their customers. Discussion was had regarding the challenges and benefits of this kind of a program. Stuart Schooler agreed to look into starting a pilot delivery service.

Treasurer's Report

Stuart Schooler reported:

- The 2018 audit was given to the Board. A copy was provided to the Borough. Checks from the Borough for the 2nd quarter assessment and the balance of the Borough's contribution are ready for pickup.
- Stuart continues to work with the Accountant to review changes in financial reporting processes.

Executive Director's Report

Isaac Kremer reported:

- Demand for Storefront & Public Space grants continues to be strong with less interest in Innovation grants this year. It was suggested that the \$20K budgeted for Innovation grants be moved into the Storefront grant budget line, not changing the total amount budgeted for grants which remains at \$50K.
- A grant request for \$2990 from What's the Scoop for a new storefront awning was approved by the Board.
- Work is underway on the 2020 MDA budget. Isaac asked for input from the Board regarding funded activities that should continue, be eliminated, increased, etc.

Public Art Team Report

Eric Berger reported:

- Language project in Imagination Alley will kick off on June 28 where the 11 Adirondack chairs created by local artists will be revealed.
- Poetry, public reading, and other performances will take place each Friday in July.

Tech Team Report

Isaac Kremer reported:

- The Google in person training on June 27 at Mangia Toscano was well attended with 56 attendees.
- Some businesses have started to implement things they learned at the training session.

Promotion Team Report

Bobbie Theivakumaran reported:

- Very busy June with several events including: 6/15 – Downtown Loves Dads on the Plaza with Beer Garden, 6/21 – Kids Takeover Downtown, and 7/5 - Movie Night on Plaza.
- Movie Nights on the Plaza will continue through September.
- Encourage people to upload their photos from the Portal at Imagination Alley to #townportal. Images are made into a trailer video which is shown on Movie nights.

Parking Team Report

Eric Berger reported:

- Nexus Parking offered 20 free parking passes in the Pearl Street parking deck for the month of July for employees of downtown businesses.
- The offer was announced at the Grow with Google event on 6/27, but there have been no takers at this point.
- Councilmembers Linda Koskoski and Jason Delia are looking into several things including new meter rates, rates by time and location and possible elimination of the 10-minute free button due to continued abuse.

Communications Team Report

Jay Muldoon reported:

- The Communications Team will meet to plan the next video. They will also discuss the role and prioritization for the video services provided by Brandon Uhlig.

Chamber Report

Leon Schwartz reported:

- Two Cruise Nights continue through September.
- Yoga on the Plaza was held on 6/23 and was well attended.
- Restaurant Week will be from 7/15 – 7/21.

Arts Council Report

Mark Harris reported:

- Swing Dance on the Plaza on 7/3
- Arts Re-Cycle event on the Plaza on 7/21
- Cornerstone Jazz Concert on 8/3. First concert attracted 70 people.

Old Business

None to report.

New Business

None to report.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32am.

The next Board meeting will be Friday, September 13, 2019 at 8:30am at Hailey's.

Submitted by Jay Muldoon