

METUCHEN DOWNTOWN ALLIANCE MINUTES

September 13, 2019

8:30 A.M.

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

Eric Berger opened the meeting. Motion was made to approve the August board meeting minutes. Motion was approved.

Chairman's Report

Eric Berger reported:

- Eric made the Board aware that Jamie Gordon has not been attending the MDA Board meetings. The MDA By-laws state that a Board who misses three consecutive Board meetings can be removed. Jamie has only attended one meeting in nine months. It appears Jamie has little interest in serving on the Board due to his lack of involvement and attendance. A motion was made to notify Jamie that he has been removed from the Board. Motion passed. A new property owner will need to be named to replace Jamie. Several names were suggested.

Treasurer's Report

Stuart Schooler was not in attendance, so Isaac Kremer reported:

- Isaac shared and reviewed the proposed budget for 2020.
- Projected total revenue of \$335,000 from SID assessment, Borough contribution and grants/fundraising.
- Expenditure items will be adjusted to address MDA priorities.
- Reserve goal is 5% of gross revenue.
- Board to review the budget and come prepared to vote on the budget at the next Board meeting.

Executive Director's Report

Isaac Kremer reported:

- Representatives from the National Main Street Center will be visiting Metuchen on October 3 and meeting with the MDA Board and members. They will be doing a day long assessment and four meetings are scheduled.
- The team will provide a report and recommendations following their visit.
- The next Board meeting will be that evening with the National Main Street folks. Isaac will send details to the Board.
- The Storefront and Public Spaces grant report was distributed and reviewed. \$7,337 in grants were approved since the last Board meeting.

- A question was raised regarding the \$5,000 limit per grant since the report indicated a couple grants that exceeded the limit. Isaac indicated those were part of the Main Street New Jersey grant.
- The Board later agreed to form a Storefront Team made up of three Board members to work with Isaac on all grant applications and approvals. The team is made up of Chris Flynn, Diana Callinan and Bobbie Theivakumaran.

Public Art Team Report

Eric Berger reported:

- The Adirondack Chair auction will be held October 6 at 4pm at Borough Hall.
- The Portal will remain in Imagination Alley through the end of October.
- The next Public Art meeting will be on September 25 at the Sportsplex.

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:

- Downtown Rumble wrestling event is September 21 on the Plaza.
- Poltergeist movie on the Plaza Saturday, October 5.
- Haunted Downtown is October 26 from 12-5pm. Offers from business owners are needed.
- Team is working on events for Small Business Saturday. There will be an inflatable walk-through Snow Globe on the Plaza.
- Discussion around when to hold New Year's Eve event – on New Year's Eve or on the Saturday before New Year's Eve.

Parking Team Report

Eric Berger reported:

- Besides Isaac and Eric only representatives from Nexus Parking attended. A new representative from the Parking Authority is needed since Glenn Gawronski has stepped down from attending the meetings.
- Looking at an integrated parking plan that incorporates use of private lots with the public lots and spaces.
- Nexus is willing to work with the Parking Authority on ways to increase turnover of parking spaces which will help businesses, shoppers and all users of parking. It would also maximize revenue for the Borough and Parking Authority.
- They did discuss Sue Fitzgerald's suggestion of bagging some meters for short duration parking for errands, drop off, and pickups. They support the idea of making spaces available for these

situations but thought the bag solution would be confusing and hard to enforce. The goal is more frequent turnover of space which would provide spaces for pickup and drop off.

Communications Team Report

Jay Muldoon reported:

- The “Back to School and Family Activities” video is in final editing and will be released in a week or so.
- The Communications Team will meet on September 20 to plan the campaign which will focus on Small Business Saturday and Holiday shopping.

Chamber Report

Leon Schwartz reported:

- The final Cruise Night was held on September 11.
- Chamber membership meeting will be held on September 25.
- Country Fair will be on October 5 and registration ends next week.
- Chamber will be participating in the Small Business Saturday Neighborhood Champion program and MDA businesses are welcome to be part of it.
- The Holiday Tree Lighting and Parade will be held on December 1. Sponsors are needed and the Chamber is looking for help and involvement from MDA businesses.
- Upcoming ribbon cuttings are Tiny Town on September 27 and Sentirsi Pilates on October 10.

Arts Council Report

Mark Harris reported:

- The opening of the gallery at the Westerhoff School will take place on Sunday, September 15.
- The final Metuchen Rocks on the Plaza concert will be on Saturday, September 14.
- The Gallery Walk will be on October 13.

The regular meeting was adjourned at 9:30 am when Isaac Kremer left the meeting and the Board discussed Isaac’s annual performance review.

Old Business

None to report.

New Business

None to report.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55am.

The next Board meeting will be Thursday, October 3, 2019 at 7:00pm at Phattra Thai, 426 Main St.

Submitted by Jay Muldoon