

METUCHEN DOWNTOWN ALLIANCE MINUTES

November 8, 2019

8:30 A.M.

In attendance: Eric Berger, Jay Muldoon, Stuart Schooler, Sue Fitzgerald, Leon Schwartz, Mark Harris, Gary Tilbor, Diana Callinan, Gary Wade, and Linda Koskoski. Guest: Mo Atzbi. Not present: Bobbie Theivakumaran. Staff: Isaac Kremer, Executive Director.

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

Chairman's Report

Eric Berger reported:

- Eric welcomed Gary Wade who is the Board member representing the Metuchen Parking Authority. He also introduced Mo Atzbi, new owner of Hailey's Pub, who will be joining the board in February.

Treasurer's Report

Stuart Schooler reported:

- MDA is a good cash position as we approach year end 2019.
- Any expense overage we have from the storefront grants should be covered from additional assessment payment from the Borough for added assessments.

Executive Director's Report

Isaac Kremer reported:

- The holiday decorating for the District is starting on Saturday, led by Bernie Hetzel.
- Storefront and signage work at Antonio's and Main St News is almost complete and looks great.
- Report to the State for the Main Street New Jersey Transformation Grant was submitted.
- The 2020 budget was distributed and reviewed. Motion was made to approve the budget and motion passed.
- The Nominating Committee will present nominations for two Board vacancies at the December meeting.

Public Art Team Report

Eric Berger reported:

- The Adirondack chair auction held on October 6, was very successful, raising \$3,117.95 for future public art projects.
- The team is reviewing accomplishments in 2019 and planning for 2020.
- Funding for murals is included in a Middlesex County Arts Grant the MDA received for 2020.

Tech Team Report

Isaac Kremer reported:

- No report.

Promotion Team Report

Isaac Kremer reported:

- Plans are set for small Business Saturday which include offers and specials from MDA businesses, the “Golden Ticket” promotion and a walk-through snow globe on the Plaza.
- The New Year’s celebration will be Saturday, December 28 this year, and not December 31.

Parking Team Report

Eric Berger reported:

- Parking team met on November 7. Gary Wade will be taking over reporting on the team’s activities.
- Linda Koskoski is working on a plan to improve availability of parking in the downtown.
- The Parking Authority is working on a project to improve utilization of parking spaces in their permit lots.

Communications Team Report

Jay Muldoon reported:

- Promotional videos for Small Business Saturday and the holiday season are being produced. The series of 3 will highlight Small Business Saturday, restaurants, and shopping local throughout the holiday season.
- Specials, offers, music, character appearances and the Nifty Gifty guide are being planned for each weekend in December (through New Year event on December 28).

Chamber Report

Leon Schwartz reported:

- Chamber is participating in Small Business Saturday Neighborhood Champion program.
- Winter Festival Parade and Tree lighting is on December 1.
- General membership meeting and election of new slate of officers will be on November 13 at Hailey’s.
- Ribbon cuttings planned for Amboy Bank and Club Pilates.
- Chamber holiday dinner and officer installation will be on December 12 at Metuchen County Club.
- Country Fair was a big success with good weather and big crowds.

Arts Council Report

Mark Harris reported:

- Gallery Walk was well attended.
- Cornerstone Jazz concerts will resume in January.
- Chamber Concert at Westerhoff will be on 12/16.

Old Business

None to report.

New Business

- Sue Fitzgerald asked if the MDA had an Instagram account. Yes, we do (<https://www.instagram.com/metuchendowntownalliance/>). She suggested we encourage businesses to post to the site to build awareness of businesses and what's going on. Mo said people should use an MDA hash tag when posting pictures. Isaac mentioned that he was looking into contracting for a service that would proactively and regularly do posting for the MDA. There was consensus the MDA should do more postings on Instagram.
- Next quarterly MDA meeting will be on November 16 at 2pm in Imagination Alley.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35am.

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

Submitted by Jay Muldoon