

## **METUCHEN DOWNTOWN ALLIANCE MINUTES**

**December 13, 2019**

**8:30 A.M.**

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

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

### **Chairman's Report**

Eric Berger had no report.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Stuart Schooler reported:

- MDA received the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter SID assessment payment from the Borough.
- After paying for all year end obligations and bills, we should end up with a \$20,000 surplus.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Isaac Kremer reported:

- The storefront and signage work at Antonio's Brick Oven Pizza, Pyramid Vitamin, Jewelry Doctor and Main Street News is complete. Contractors have been paid and the report submitted to the Department of Community Affairs who provided the grant.
- Isaac will have a "cleanup" meeting with Bobbie and Diana to review the process and make adjustments for the Storefront Grant program in 2020. We need to find additional sign and awning contractors for the program.
- He attended the International Council of Shopping Centers Deal Making show in NYC where he met with broker and agents to position vacant properties in the district. He came back with valuable information to share with district owners.
- MDA Annual Member meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 1, 2020 at Nauti Cajun Crab, 7 New Street at 7:30pm.

### **Public Art Team Report**

Eric Berger reported:

- The "Portal" in Imagination Alley has been taken down. Bobbie and Ian paid to have it moved to their house and will maintain it.
- The Public Art Team is planning for 2020.
- A \$5,000 Middlesex County Arts Grant was awarded for new murals in 2020.

### **Tech Team Report**

Isaac Kremer reported:

- No report.

### **Promotion Team Report**

Bobbie Theivakumaran reported:

- Plans are set for holiday activities and promotions through New Year's Eve including downtown caroling, photos with Santa, pop-up shop at Cai's, Santa visits downtown, performances by Yuletide Brass, and breakfast with the Grinch. The Nifty Gifty Guide was completed and will be posted to website and social media.
- The New Year's celebration will be Saturday, December 28 from 4pm-8pm.

### **Parking Team Report**

Eric Berger reported:

- Parking Team met yesterday. Nexus will be doing a study of public and private facilities to identify ways to optimize and maximize parking in the lots. Once their recommendations are made, they will be provided to Linda Koskoski for consideration by the Parking Task Force.
- Nexus reports that the deck has been filling up Tuesday – Thursday mornings due to demand, but spaces become available later in the morning.

### **Communications Team Report**

Jay Muldoon reported:

- Nifty Gifty Guide will be promoted across MDA platforms.
- Suggestion was made to tweak some of the promotional videos to use for Valentine's promotions.

### **Chamber Report**

Leon Schwartz reported:

- Chamber holiday dinner and officer installation was held on December 12.
- Winter Festival Parade was cancelled due to rain, but Tree Lighting on the Plaza was held.
- General membership meeting and election of new slate of officers was November 13 at Hailey's.
- Ribbon cuttings were held for Amboy Bank and Club Pilates.
- Membership renewals are underway.
- In 2020 the Chamber is planning for a new website, and a magazine with business directory and ads.

### **Arts Council Report**

Mark Harris reported:

- Art Cycle event will be held on January 4, 2020 at Westerhoff.
- The Arts Council is planning to use the Senior Center for art classes during the non-senior hours, Classes will be for the general public on a wide range of topics excluding painting and music lessons.

### **Nominating Committee**

Stuart School reported:

- Jay and Stuart will contact candidates for the business and property owner Board openings.

### **Old Business**

Stuart reported on the liquor license and delivery initiative. Retail liquor stores sell beer and wine to customers at BYOB restaurants. The stores must deliver wine and beer to the restaurant. Restaurant can't charge a corking fee, but can charge for mixers (e.g. Sangria). Although not a revenue stream for restaurants, research shows that the food bill increases when wine and beer are available. Volume is the real question – will demand be enough to warrant a liquor store having a delivery person for this?

### **New Business**

None to report.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20am.

The next Board meeting will be Friday, January 10, 2020, 8:30am at Hailey's.

The MDA Annual Meeting will be Tuesday, January 21, 2020, 7:30pm at Nauti Cajun Crab, 7 New St.

Submitted by Jay Muldoon