

METUCHEN DOWNTOWN ALLIANCE MINUTES

August 13, 2021

8:30 A.M. – Station Place parking lot, and GotoMeeting

In attendance: Eric Berger, Stuart Schooler, Bobbie Theivakumaran, Jace McColley, Lynne Mueller, Diana Callinan, Moshe Atzbi, Gary Tilbor, and Aron Mandel. Not present: Linda Koskoski, Jacquie Zuvich, Jay Muldoon, Jenny Lai, and Mansi Khandelwal. Guest: Dan Cea. Staff: Isaac Kremer.

Eric Berger opened the meeting. Minutes were reviewed and a motion was made to approve the July meeting minutes. Motion passed.

There were no additions to the agenda.

Chairman's Report

Eric Berger reported:

- Performance review for Isaac will be held in closed session at the Board meeting next month.

Treasurer's Report

Stuart Schooler reported:

- Financial statement was distributed.
- The 2020 audit is underway and all materials have been submitted to the auditor.

Secretary's Report

No report.

Executive Director's Report

Isaac Kremer reported:

- A Community Thrives contest to end at noon following the meeting. MDA is eligible for some of \$2M of additional funding being given out.
- Completed the Community Navigators grant for \$1M on July 23 and awaiting decision.
- Continues to monitor for a notice from Main Street NJ regarding their 2021 grant program.

Parking Authority Report

Aron Mandel reported:

- MDA will be ordering new meter bags to replace the current ones to better identify the 15-minute free parking for pick up and drop off.
- Parking Authority has formed a sub-committee that will be looking into improvements at the New St lot and other parking lots.

Chamber Report

Jacquie Zuvich reported:

- Not holding the Country Fair this year, but will have the Town Wide Garage Sale in October.

Arts Council Report

Lynne Mueller reported:

- Classical Concert in planning stages
- Central Jersey Jazz Festival – Metuchen-- on Town Plaza –Saturday, September 11 at 6 PM
Trumpeter Marcus Printup Band featuring Harpist Riza Printup. Also includes Family Jazz Education Presentation by Riza and Metuchen High School Jazz Ensemble (Big Band).

Organization Team Report

Bobbie Theivakumaran reported:

- Volunteer Orientation for new MDA volunteers was successful. Around a dozen attended. Several already are helping with different teams.

Public Art Team Report

Eric Berger reported:

- Piano project – Performances on Saturday evenings will continue through September. Request was made to have piano out through jazz concert on September 11.
- Angie's Café mural project –getting close to having an agreement with artist Raul Ayala.
- Isaac has applied for a Middlesex County Arts Grant to fund the mural.

Promotion Team Report

Bobbie Theivakumaran reported:

- The return of Downtown Rumble wrestling event is scheduled for September 18 on the Plaza.
- Raiders of the Lost Ark movie is scheduled for October 2.
- Plans are being made for Haunted Downtown around Halloween as long as the pandemic levels remain low.

Communications Team Report

Dan Cea reported:

- Had a good meeting. Discussed ad spend in Criterion Sentinel for September.
- Brandon produced video to support A Community Thrives campaign. Facebook group in Highland Park commented on the video and how they want to do similar work.
- Preparing for Small Business Saturday and holidays.

Innovation Team Report

No report.

Storefront Team Report

Isaac Kremer reported:

- Blade sign project is progressing, led by Bernie Hetzel. Final design and specs being completed for Nauti Cajun Crab, 7 New St; Metuchen Liquor & Wine, 431 Main St; Pastry Lu, 397 Main St; and What's the Scoop, 457 Main St.

- Question was raised about DiCosmo not getting funding for blade sign. Responded that they did the work independent of the pilot project, and asked for funding after the work was done.
- Other questions were raised about the process and why application was not online. Given limited funding we need to work with each business and guide through process.
- Working now on a sign for Tribos Peri Peri which plans to open in August.

Old Business

- None to report.

New Business

- None to report.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 am.

The next Board meeting will be Friday, September 10, 2021 at 8:30am in the Lotsa Balls tent.

Submitted by Jay Muldoon