

**METUCHEN DOWNTOWN ALLIANCE MINUTES**  
**May 13, 2022**  
**8:30 A.M. – The Hangout and Parlor at Hailey's, 15 Station Place**

In attendance: Eric Berger, Jace McColley, Diana Callinan, Bobbie Theivakumaran, Stuart Schooler, Jenny Lai, Lynne Mueller, Jason Delia, Moshe Atzbi, Gary Tilbor, Joanne Cruz. Guest: Dan Cea. Not present: Jay Muldoon, Jacquie Zuvich, Aaron Mandel. Staff: Isaac Kremer.

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

**Chairman's Report**

Eric Berger reported:

- Member meeting well-attended. Mayor thanked for attending and speaking. Jace and Innovation Team thanked for presentation.
- Yiftee program live. Need more merchants to participate. Mo suggested promotions to sell more gift certificates which is possible through Yiftee.
- NJEDA presented new funding opportunities at member meeting. Aaron Mandel, Jace and either Lorraine or Armando will form a team to assist MDA member businesses to get EDA funding.

**Treasurer's Report**

Stuart Schooler reported that EIDL funds are the only funds currently available which will change upon receiving funds from Borough for Second Quarter and for annual contribution.

**Secretary's Report**

No report.

**Executive Director's Report**

Isaac Kremer submitted written report. Isaac reported:

- There are a large number of retail promotions in June and that the Promotions Team would benefit from volunteer assistance.
- Isaac, Todd Pagel and Jason Delia will present at the Main Street Now conference in Richmond on the Lean Start-up Approach to Getting Stuff Done on Main Street. This includes a section on pandemic response.

**Borough Update**

Jason Delia reported:

- Borough Council approved MDA budget this past Monday.
- New Street Parking Lot has been repaved.

**Arts Council Report**

Lynne Mueller reported:

- **Art Cycle Greenway Gallery Call for Artists extended through May 31, 2022.** Juried unique outdoor show. Artists will use old traffic signs provided by Metuchen Arts Council to create artwork which raises awareness of the importance of local land preservation for recreation. Art on display at the Main Trailhead of the Greenway in Metuchen starting October 22, 2022.
- **Rotunda Gallery Artist's Reception May 15** -- 2 to 4 pm at Borough Hall. Topic: "Are we FIDDLING while the World Burns?"
- **Sound and Soul FREE Concert May 15 at 3:30 PM** at- Metuchen High School. Presented by New Jersey Symphony Chamber Players and Count Basie Center Gospel Choir. Funded by PSEG Foundation Register at [www.njsymphony.org/soundandsoul](http://www.njsymphony.org/soundandsoul)
- **Wildlife Stories and Arts May 21 at 2 PM** at the Metuchen library Photographer and story teller Gary Westerhoff presents his three animal photo U tube books for children. Includes an interactive painting/coloring session.

## Team Reports

### Grant Team

Gary Tilbor reported:

Met May 3, 2022

- Marketing campaign of before and after on MDA funded projects
- Matching grants for 2022 - \$67,000 of requests and \$89,250 of funding available.
  - o Permits for Suite Metuchen and Needle and Thread cleaners secured.
  - o Painting for Suite Metuchen, New Pearl, Dante Zeller, and Orchid is being scheduled for a weekend before end of month.
  - o Newmarket, Runner's High and possibly Carpet Maven blade signs – finalizing design and getting permits.
  - o Working with other prospects.

### Promotion Team

Bobbie Theivakumaran reported:

- Upcoming promotions:
  - o Spring Bazaar, May 21
  - o Pre-Prom, May 26
  - o Breakdancing Competition, Sat, June 4
  - o Juneteenth, Sat, June 18 or 19
  - o Kids Take Over, June 21
  - o Pride event, June 25
  - o July Restaurant Week, dates TBD

### Communications Team

Dan Cea reported:

- Video for Downtown Dollars gift card well received. Explains Yiftee program and how to use it.
- Recap for 'Love Metuchen' Campaign: Video, Advertising, social media push, etc.
- Recap for National Small Business Week campaign.
- Eventbrite service being used so MDA events searchable on Google.
- 08840 magazine advertising ongoing to promote Downtown. Favorable articles.
- Patch advertising package being considered.

### **Innovation Team**

Jace McColley reported:

- Innovation grants were announced at Member Meeting and applications will go live on website today.

### **Public Art Team Report**

Isaac reported:

- Public Art Team met last Thursday.
- Angie's Café mural will be installed next month with unveiling event.
- Public Arts Team in touch with Manasquan Bank about decorating temporary construction wall on New Street.
- Public Art Team looking into new projects to pursue this year.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 am.

The next Board meeting will be Friday, June 10, 2022, at 8: 30am at Hailey's Parlor at 15 Station Place.

Submitted by Eric Berger.