

**Metuchen Downtown Alliance Board of Trustees**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Friday, July 14, 2023, 8:30am**  
**Metuchen Senior Center 15 Center Street**

**In attendance:** Eric Berger, Diana Callinan, Joanne Cruz, Jason Delia, Sean Massey, Jace McColley, Jay Muldoon, Angie Quinonez, Meg Loftus Suchan, Gary Tilbor, Bobbie Theivakumaran. **Not attending:** Dan Cea, Jenny Lai, Stuart Schooler, Amar Singh **Staff:** Dawn Mackey

**Welcome:**

Chairperson Theivakumaran called the meeting to order at 8:32 am and declared a quorum of the Board was present.

**Chairperson's Report**

Ms. Theivakumaran updated the Board on two OPRA requests that have been received.

**Secretary's Report**

Minutes from the June board meeting were reviewed, and a motion was made to approve the minutes by Ms. Theivakumaran, seconded by Mr. Massey. Motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report**

No report

**Executive Director's Report**

Ms. Mackey informed the Board that the quick turnaround grant opportunity she mentioned at the last meeting was sent in and we were awarded grant funds in the amount of \$26k. The project submitted was for activation of the alley between Menya and Tribos Peri Peri. A signed agreement by the property owners has been obtained. There will be stamped concrete and Ricardo Roig has been commissioned to paint a mural on the buildings. Looking to begin work by the end of July. In addition to the mural, Mr. Roig will have a collection of his work at Papillon.

The Seward Johnson sculptures that are on loan have been installed. This is being done in a partnership with the Borough. The Borough will be adding five more in January and will be in place for about a year.

The sandwich board grant project is going well. About 7 or 8 businesses have taken advantage thus far. We expect to get more requests once other businesses see them throughout town.

A District meeting will be held Monday, July 31st. At the meeting there will be discussion on parking solutions, cyber security, and a new app for taking online orders that is no cost to businesses unless they use the more advanced features.

The Downtown Summer Sounds Concert series is a Borough initiative that the MDA is capitalizing on. A flier was created and distributed with information on the three concerts and suggestions of how to run promotions on each theme.

Ms. Mackey is looking to hold a volunteer appreciation night soon.

ED Mackey and the Board thank Vice Chairperson Tilbor and See-More Appliance for donating the BBQ which was auctioned off. The promotion was very well received in the community.

**Borough Update**

Mr. Delia provided an update on how the parking changes are progressing. He also discussed an upcoming change to zoning in the central business district that he is planning on proposing at the next regular Council meeting. Finally, he also informed the Board of the \$250,000 for the pocket park that was earmarked for the Borough in the 2024 NJ State budget.

**Arts Council Report**

Ms. Loftus Suchan discussed the programming being worked on for the fall including a Jazz fest on September 30th. This has been well attended in years past and brings a lot of people in from the surrounding area.

**Organization Team**

No Report.

**Storefront Team**

No report.

**Promotion Team**

Chairperson Theivakumaran reported that the annual wrestling event is scheduled for October 7th. The team is also working on firming up dates for the Hispanic Heritage event. June was a really busy month and was by all accounts a huge success.

The promotion team is supporting the summer concert series has been great. Tiffany concert already took place with the next concert being a Taylor Swift dance party and two weeks after that the theme will be Broadway.

Ms. Callinan was thanked for allowing the acts to utilize Party on Pearl as a green room.

**Communications Team**

Mr. Cea updated the board that an article will go out in Middlesex Magazine about the downtown. These opportunities are being supported by the County Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Mackey gave an interview with NBC NY to air on the 19th. Marketing for the three concerts is well underway through the usual channels. Brandon will be producing a video with various residents talking about what they love about the downtown.

**Innovation Team**

No report.

**Public Art Team**

The first installment of the poster contest by the Forum is complete with an official unveiling. Mr. Berger thanked Beans and Bread for providing refreshments. The plan is to switch out the posters every 2 months. Mr. Berger is excited as each poster is very different from the last.

**Ribbon Cutting Team**

Ms. Callinan reminded the Board of the upcoming ribbon cutting for Hair Loft on August 12th.

**Old Business**

No old business to report.

## **New Business**

Meeting was adjourned at 9:41am.

The next Board meeting will be Friday, August 11, 2023, at 8:30am at the Metuchen Senior Center 15 Center Street.

Submitted by Jason Delia