

Metuchen Downtown Alliance Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
Friday, August 8, 2025, 8:30am
Metuchen Senior Center 15 Center Street

Board in attendance: Dan Cea, Joanne Cruz, Jason Delia, Ian Fawcett, Laura Feibert, Sean Massey, Amar Singh, Sean Yan.

Not attending: Dawn Mackey, Frank Assuncao, Jace C. McColley, Luisania Moronta, Angie Quinonez, Jennifer Zhu.

Guests: Linda Koskoski, Jay Muldoon

Staff: Linda Levine

Welcome:

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by Chairperson Joanne Cruz.

Chairperson's Report

Ms. Cruz reported that she has been working closely with various committees and with Dawn on ongoing initiatives. She noted that Mr. Cea will provide further details on upcoming marketing efforts later in the meeting.

Secretary's Report

It was noted that there were not enough attendees for a quorum at the July meeting. Therefore the meeting minutes for June were circulated prior to the meeting. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Massey, seconded by Mr. Cea. Motion, approved unanimously.

Executive Director's Report

Ms. Cruz updated the Board on behalf of Ms. Mackey on the following:

- **Downtown NJ:** Hosted the President of Downtown NJ for a tour of Metuchen. The President was particularly impressed with the Spark storefront and plans to feature it in an upcoming article.
- **Upcoming businesses:** Acting Out, Fresh Twist, and Dukes are all progressing toward opening.
- **Garbage Can Cleaning:** The supplemental downtown cleaning service is working well, and the Borough is pleased with the results.
- **Speaking Engagement:** Ms. Mackey has been invited to speak on a panel in Dover to share insights on downtown revitalization.

Borough Update

Mr. Delia and Ms. Koskoski

- **Bike lane survey:** Proposed bike lane for Hillside Ave which connects to the downtown is live. Encouraged businesses to participate
- **Master plan:** Process remains ongoing with community survey being finalized. Plans for a soft launch of the survey mid-August.
- **Main St Project:** Bid specifications are with Local Aid. Once approved, the project will go out to bid. While the County's earliest start estimate is the end of 2025, the more realistic timeline is spring 2026. Will be communicating with businesses in the Downtown as this project includes all of Main St in the district.
- **HoneyStash:** Hosting a promotional event on Saturday from 4–7 p.m. Possible protests are anticipated.

Promotion Team / Organization Team

Ms. Theivakumaran reported

- **Wrestling:** Scheduled for September 13.
- **Metuchen Pops:** Scheduled for September 27.
 - Possible collaboration with Chris Pastras, famous skateboarder from Metuchen. Exploring the idea of hosting a forum/talk.
- **Holiday 2025 Planning:** Will be a truncated season again which means it is even more important to make the most out of the planned promotions.
- **Downtown Summer Sounds:** Jersey Beach Boys to perform Tuesday.
- **Additional Summer Promotion:** Exploring an August sidewalk sale similar to Red Bank's model.

Organization Team

Ms. Theivakumaran & Mr. Delia

- Reached out to committee chairs for organizational updates.
- ED's annual review process is coming up and planning is underway.

Economic Vitality

Mr. Muldoon reported that no July committee meeting was held.

- **Spark Downtown Update:**
 - Spark continues to grow as a retail incubator.
 - Portside Swim completed a successful June–July run, exceeding expectations for a seasonal pop-up.
 - That's Adornable (custom embroidery) began August 5 and will operate Tuesday–Saturday through September.
 - City Workshop (menswear) is confirmed for October.
 - Actively seeking a strong vendor for the holiday season. Board members are encouraged to share leads.
 - Spark is fulfilling its goal of rotating high-quality vendors to create excitement, draw foot traffic, and test concepts for potential long-term locations.

Communications Team

Mr. Cea reported:

- **Rita's spotlight video:** Featured both the catering service and owners to personalize the brand.
- **Acting Out:** Posted a reel showcasing their journey toward opening.
- **Social Media Engagement:** Reels are consistently overperforming, with improved strategies to capture viewer attention.
- **Joey Fatone Media:** Now cleared for release following approval from his management.
- **Choose NJ Photo Shoot:** State initiative to attract businesses to New Jersey. Multiple downtown businesses were profiled, with content to be shared with large corporations considering relocation.
- **Next Concert:** VIP tent and event for influencers, rescheduled from the Joey Fatone concert.
- **Spark: how to promote. Work with Jason**

Discussion was had on the proper way to promote Spark. Will be collaborating with Mr. Delia on marketing strategy.

Design Team

Ms. Feibert

- **See More Mural Repair:** Design approved and blends seamlessly with existing work while adding brighter elements. Work scheduled to begin Friday.

Ribbon Cutting Team

- **Bonney's:** Ribbon cutting was held August 5.
- **LMNTS Dance:** Scheduled for Wednesday, August 27 at 5 p.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:25am.

The next Board meeting will be Friday, September 12, 2025, at 8:30am at the Metuchen Senior Center 15 Center Street.

Submitted by Jason Delia