



**Downtown Somerville Alliance, Inc.
August 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes
6:00 PM - In-Person Office Evolution**

Mike Kerwin called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm on August 14, 2023.

Natalie Pineiro conducted roll call the following Board Members were present:

Present: Theresa Bonner, Ed Rebenack, RanD Pitts, Sejal Sharma, Chas. Stevens, Kevin Sluka, Mike Kerwin

Late: Iris Frank

Excused: Alison Masick, Rick St. Pierre

Approval of July 2023 Meeting Minutes

RanD Pitts made a motion to approve the June meeting minutes. Rick St. Pierre seconded the same.

Yea: Theresa Bonner, Ed Rebenack, RanD Pitts, Sejal Sharma, Chas. Stevens, Kevin Sluka, Mike Kerwin

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Chairman Remarks

As we near the end of summer, the organization looks forward to the extensive lineup of fall and winter events.

Executive Directors Report

A. Old Business

a. Introduction of Event Coordinator, Daryl Stewart



- i. Daryl Stewart started as our part-time event coordinator earlier this month. He joins us with a wide range of experience and will continue to be a great asset to the Downtown Somerville Alliance as we continue to expand our roster of events.

b. Update on Public Art Initiatives

- i. Color Condition finished installation on Sunday. We are working on a promotion schedule to highlight the project.
- ii. Working on a fundraiser to close the funding gap for Paul Robeson Sculpture

c. Events Update

- i. Grand Openings, Artisan "Mini" Market, Jazz Festival, Hispanic Heritage Month, National Arts Month, Small Business Saturday, Holiday Jubilee (among others)
 - 1. Central Jersey Jazz Festival:
 - a. A digital marketing strategy to engage new audiences, increase attendance and connect to local restaurants and businesses. Collaborating with Marketing to ensure new ideas, innovation and creativity. Reaching new growth goals and markers for festival attendance.
 - b. Attracting top tier talent, acts and influencers who can help raise the profile of the festival.
 - c. Adding Friday Night programming in Downtown Somerville featuring David Caldwell Mason and The Rutgers Jazz Faculty Quintet
 - d. A new capsule collection and additional pointed marketing efforts to increase visitors, foot traffic and raise the profile of the festival, and Downtown Somerville.
 - e. Streamlined production and run of show elements to ensure top tier production and a smooth festival.
 - 2. Hispanic Heritage Month:



- a. A Hispanic Heritage Month Kickoff with cultural activities, food, music and cultural celebration honoring HHM.
 - b. Film Screenings of Disney's Encanto and Coco for families
 - c. Salsa classes, closing concert, & deals / promotions from HHM businesses
- 3. National Arts Month:
 - a. Remembering Robeson: Celebration in honor of scholar, athlete, activist, and artist Paul Robeson.
- 4. Spooktober:
 - a. Thriller Flash Mob
 - b. Zombie Bar Crawl
 - c. Spooktacular
 - d. Ghost / Haunted Walking Tour
- ii. Recap on County event: History on the Green and promotion of Somerville via Travels with Darley

d. Mid-Year Finance Review

- i. Implement new business model in order to increase organizational capacity
- ii. Facilitate/ Strengthen community partnerships
- iii. Diversify revenue streams for organization
- iv. Create a connected ecosystem via streetscape plan to support the Downtown Somerville experience (opportunity for more proactive and strategic visioning)
- v. Position the organization to qualify for grant funding with "Shovel Ready" projects outlined in documents like our streetscape and public art plans
- vi. Increase social capital through connectivity, public art, and event strategy
- vii. Research and plan strategically to position ourselves to be "Recession - proof"



e. Review of final draft of streetscape plan/ vote to adopt

Theresa Bonner made a motion to approve. RanD Pitts seconded the same.

Yea: Theresa Bonner, Ed Rebenack, Iris Frank, RanD Pitts, Sejal Sharma, Chas. Stevens, Kevin Sluka, Mike Kerwin

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

f. Vote to Amend By Laws re: Board Resignations/ Appointments

- i. Vote pushed to September meeting. Quorum not met

Other New Business

- RWJ to hold the annual Symposium on September 14th. All board members are invited and encouraged to attend.
- Special Council Meeting (October 30th) Visioning session for 24 S Bridge Street

Finance Reports

Kevin Sluka made a motion to approve the finance reports. Ed Rebenack seconded same

Yea: Theresa Bonner, Alison Masick, Ed Rebenack, RanD Pitts, Kevin Sluka, Rick St. Pierre, Chas Stevens, Mike Kerwin

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Payment Authorizations

Kevin Sluka made a motion to approve the payment authorizations. Chas Stevens seconded same



Yea: Theresa Bonner, Ed Rebenack, Iris Frank, RanD Pitts, Sejal Sharma, Kevin Sluka, Mike Kerwin

Nay: Chas Stevens

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Comments from the Public

No comments from the public.

Adjournment

Mike Kerwin made a motion to adjourn the meeting on Monday, August 14, 2023 at 7:30pm.