



**Downtown Somerville Alliance, Inc.  
December 12, 2022 Meeting Minutes  
6:00 PM - Office Evolution**

Mike Kerwin called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm on December 12, 2022.

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

Present: Theresa Bonner, RanD Pitts, Ed Rebenack, Kevin Sluka, Rick St. Pierre, Mike Kerwin

Late: Iris Frank, Sejal Sharma, Alison Masick

Excused:

Absent: Tony Brokenborough

**Approval of November 2022 Meeting Minutes**

Kevin Sluka made a motion to approve the October meeting minutes. Mike Kerwin seconded same.

**Yea:** Theresa Bonner, RanD Pitts, Ed Rebenack, Kevin Sluka, Rick St. Pierre, Mike Kerwin

**Nay:** None

**Recuse:** None

**Abstain:** None

\*Iris, Sejal, & Alison not present for this vote

**Chairman Remarks**

The Holiday Jubilee was a huge success for the Downtown. The ice skating rink was a fantastic addition to the event that drew in even more people. Our open house with Arterial was also another success. The board looks forward to hearing from Arterial Streets and continuing to streamline this process.



### **Recognition: Outgoing Board Member, Tony Brokenborough**

Tony was not present for the meeting but the board thanks him for his service and dedication to the Downtown Somerville Alliance. Natalie will invite Tony to the next meeting and the year end review to present the award to him.

### **Executive Director's Report**

#### **A. Update on SBS and Holiday Jubilee**

- a. Earlier in the fall the board discussed the importance of keeping the jubilee and SBS separate. The DSA had over 200 raffle entries which means over 200 people visited the Downtown and shopped at minimum, two businesses in town. Each year the DSA registers with American Express to be a "neighborhood champion" and in past years that sent boxes of merchandise for us to hand out to the businesses. This year we received one box with 10 tote bags and a few posters. After hearing feedback from the businesses, moving forward we will not rely solely on American Express for promotional materials. For next year the DSA will provide the business community with a wide variety of promotional materials. The holiday jubilee was successful this year and possibly the largest crowd the Downtown has ever seen for this event. Visitors were elbow to elbow on Division Street while on the East end of town others were ice skating and shopping at the vendor village.

#### **B. Recap of Streetscape Open House/ Next Steps**

- a. The open house with Arterial Streets brought in around 50-55 people. We had a range of elected officials, police officers, and many residents eager to voice their opinion. Once we receive feedback from Arterial, Natalie will plan for a second open house.

### **Vote to Approve Nicole Zaliwski Professional Development**



As part of Nicole's salary adjustment, the DSA will be sending her to the National Main Street Conference in Boston as part of her Professional Development. The second part is for her to take two classes followed by an exam to receive the certification. All travel will not exceed \$2000.

Kevin Sluka made a motion to approve the professional development program. Mike Kerwin seconded same.

**Yea:** Theresa Bonner, Alison Masick, RanD Pitts, Ed Rebenack, Sejal Sharma, Iris Frank, Kevin Sluka, Rick St. Pierre, Mike Kerwin

**Nay:** None

**Recuse:** None

**Abstain:** None

### **Organizational Chart Review and Process for New Hires (Marketing Coordinator and Events Coordinator)**

- Assistant Downtown Manager reports to Executive Downtown Manager
- Assistant and Executive Managers work together to manage Marketing and Event Managers
- Marketing and Event Managers report daily to Assistant Manager unless there is an issue that needs a larger authority
- Natalie is working on creating job descriptions for the Assistant Downtown Manager, Marketing Manager, and Event Manager roles.

### **Discussion on DSA Reorg Meeting & Stakeholder Mixer**

Natalie would like to host her annual year end review meeting on January 9th. Iris offered to open Village Brewing on Monday to host the event to hold more attendees. Natalie will send out a save the date to the business community tomorrow.



## **Budget Presentation & 2023 Visioning**

This is the preliminary budget for 2023. Once approved by the board, Natalie and Mike will present the adopted budget to Council at their next meeting. 28 days later, the DSA will hold a public hearing of the budget.

### 2023 Opportunities:

- Increase staff
- Facilitate / strengthen community partnerships
- Diversify revenue streams for the organization
- Streetscape plan = opportunity for more proactive and strategic visioning
- Creating “Shovel Ready” projects to qualify for grant funding
- Increase social capital through connectivity, public art, and events strategy

### Debt Service:

- The DSA paid off the loan for Lots 1& 2 in 2022
- The Borough forgave the loan for Lot 1A which is now Lot 8
- \$40,000 allocation to the state. We have 6 years left on that loan

### Infrastructure:

- We will continue to work closely with CDS to ensure our Downtown remains clean and safe for 2023.

### Events & Event Advertising:

- Record number of patrons at our events this year

### Marketing & Advertising:

- Grass roots word of mouth communication
- Trending mediums like Instagram, Facebook, and Tiktok will receive more money this year as more people seem to utilize those tools the most
- Targeted digital advertising



Economic Vitality:

Continuing and expanding on the following:

- Data collecting
- Grant programs
- Public art
- Grant Writing
- And more

Management:

- This includes rentals, office supplies, salaries, offices, etc.

Mike Kerwin made a motion to make edits and adopt the preliminary 2023 budget. Alison Masick seconded same.

**Yea:** Theresa Bonner, Iris Frank, Alison Masick, RanD Pitts, Ed Rebenack, Sejal Sharma, Kevin Sluka, Rick St. Pierre, Mike Kerwin

**Nay:** None

**Recuse:** None

**Abstain:** None

### **Finance Reports**

Rick St. Pierre made a motion to approve the finance reports. RanD Pitts seconded same

**Yea:** Theresa Bonner, Iris Frank, Alison Masick, RanD Pitts, Ed Rebenack, Sejal Sharma, Kevin Sluka, Rick St. Pierre, Mike Kerwin

**Nay:** None

**Recuse:** None

**Abstain:** None



### **Payment Authorizations**

RanD Pitts made a motion to approve the payment authorizations. Rick St. Pierre seconded same

**Yea:** Theresa Bonner, Iris Frank, Alison Masick, RanD Pitts, Ed Rebenack, Sejal Sharma, Kevin Sluka, Rick St. Pierre, Mike Kerwin

**Nay:** None

**Recuse:** None

**Abstain:** None

### **Comments from the Public**

Brittany Burton from Revive Consignment thanked the DSA for the events and expressed her excitement for the upcoming streetscape plan.

### **Adjournment**

Mike Kerwin made a motion to adjourn the meeting on Monday, December 12, 2022 at 7:30pm.