



**Downtown Somerville Alliance, Inc.
February 15, 2022 Meeting Minutes
6:00 PM - Virtual via Zoom**

Mike Kerwin called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm on February 15, 2022.

Kevin Sluka conducted roll call the following Board Members were present:

Present: Tony Brokenborough, RanD Pitts, Kevin Sluka, Rick St. Pierre, Mike Kerwin, Ed Rebenack, Alison Masick, Theresa Bonner, Sejal Sharma

Late: None

Absent: Iris Frank

Motion to close budget - "public session" closed

Vote to approve the budget

Kevin Sluka made a motion to approve the 2022 preliminary budget. RanD Pitts seconded same

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

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Approval of January Meeting Minutes

Kevin Sluka made a motion to approve January meeting minutes. Tony Brokenborough seconded same



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

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Chairperson Remarks

Things we need to work on in 2022

- How do we handle events
- Streetscape
- Establish relationship with largest employer (county)
- Public art plan
- Committee structure (mini think tanks)

Update from Sejal on COVID-19

We are in the same place we were the last time the board met in January. COVID continues to be on the decline. Individuals are still visiting to receive antibody testing. Fewer critical cases, increase of boosted individuals. As more people get boosted and vaccinated we will move towards a positive scale. RWJ still encourages wearing masks, social distancing, etc.

Executive Director's Report

Update on Support for St. Patrick's Day Parade

St. Patrick's Day is coming up and is an outdoor event. Typically St. Patrick's committee asks for the DSA's help. This year they asked for new flags in the district. The flags we currently possess have run their course - half this year and half next year. We gave a \$2,000 sponsorship in 2020. Pat Mannion said last year's sponsorship will be applied to this year. Garbage clean up will possibly be high school students but DSA will have two people working to confirm garbage is not all over. RWJ Somerset will be recognized and will do their best to get people to be a part of the parade.



Update on ARP funding

Initial funding for grants will be longer than expected. Kevin Sluka was told by the county that the majority of applications were related to sewer projects. They are trying to navigate whose sewer project is better or greater than the other. It looks as though the DSA is the only municipality that has submitted something close to economic development. The DSA and DSA board is looking forward to getting word on these projects as these are some of our major projects for our committees.

Update on Public Art with WAG

The project we are working on is a large-scale installation on the courthouse lawn which is to be installed this year. Lea from the Weingarten group came out from Houston to do a walk through of the courthouse lawn. The DSA is hoping for an installation no later than June. A call is being scheduled to talk to the judiciary and county and courthouse this week to discuss any possible limitations of installation.

Insights from DNJ Conference

Natalie is on the board for Downtown New Jersey. She spoke on the Thursday morning panel regarding minority owned businesses.

Update on Sponsorship Documents

Wizdom Media is working on a sponsorship packet for all of our events.

- Girls night out, starlit cinema, movie nights, etc.

Update on Branding Project

Natalie and Nicole met with Oxford Communications and they showcased possible taglines. Marketing committee is set to meet later this week to discuss the taglines. Next steps for rebranding include redesigning banners, marketing tools and more. Once rebranding is complete it calls for a celebration.



Update on Clean and Safe Program

Commercial District Services will be starting on March 1st. First round of interviews were held in the DSA office on Friday. A walkthrough of the district followed. Rick took the initiative to get together with volunteers to clean the district as we await the start of CDS.

New Business

Proposal for Board refresh

Natalie is looking to set up a board refresh / training for all new and current board members. We will be contacting the company we used to do the initial board training.

Rick St. Pierre made a motion to approve the board refresh. Sejal Sharma seconded same

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

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Proposal for Boardable

Traditionally we share board information via email which is not always the safest way. Many non-profit boards are using a software called boardable. It's an easy to use software that includes meeting scheduling and access to meeting documents Once a meeting is scheduled it will be linked right onto everyone's calendars. \$2500 a year.

Sejal Sharma made a motion to approve Boardable for a 3-year contract. Alison Masick seconded same

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

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None



Committee Reports

We have had almost all of our first committee meetings. Those meetings focused primarily on appointing a chairperson and secretary.

- **Infrastructure Update:** Discussion of projects that haven't made it to the table yet, trucks on main street (rerouting to veterans memorial)
- **Events Update:** approval of event schedule

Other New Business

Kevin reported that the DOT sent out letters opening a public information center regarding a local project. Community members have been able to voice their opinion on the project on Bridge.

Warren street will be turning into a one way street.

Finance report

Kevin Sluka made a motion to approve the finance reports. Mike Kerwin seconded same

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

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Payment Authorization

Kevin Sluka made a motion to approve the payment authorizations. Rick St. Pierre seconded same

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

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None



Public comment

Councilman Fred Weid thanked the DSA board for their budget presentation to council.

Mike Kerwin adjourned the meeting.

Meeting minutes recorded by Nicole Zaliwski, Program Coordinator, on March 8, 2022.