



**Downtown Somerville Alliance, Inc.
February 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes
6:00 PM - Office Evolution**

Mike Kerwin called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm on February 13, 2023.

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

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

Absent: Iris Frank

Excused:

Approval of January 2023 Meeting Minutes

Kevin Sluka made a motion to approve the December meeting minutes. Rick St. Pierre seconded same.

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

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Chairman Remarks

Mike discussed the process of planning the budget for 2023.

- Planning originated in November
- Draft budget presented to DSA board in December
- Draft budget was adopted by DSA board
- Budget presented to Council in January
- 2/13 DSA will have a public hearing on the budget and hopefully adopt it this evening.



Public Hearing 2023 Budget

A. Opening of public meeting

- a. Mike Kerwin opened the public meeting for the 2023 budget
- b. Natalie reviewed 2023 opportunities and goals for the DSA including (adding additional staff, facilitating community partnerships, diversifying revenue streams, etc).

B. Opening of public comment

- a. Mike Kerwin opened the meeting for comments to the public
- b. Note: there was no public comment

C. Closing of public hearing

- a. Mike Kerwin closed comments from the public

D. Vote to adopt budget

- a. Kevin Sluka made a motion, Alison Masick seconded same

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

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Executive Directors Report

A. Old Business

a. Recap on Stakeholder Event

- i. First year DSA has been able to host the event since COVID. The event was very well received and helps our community engage on a deeper level.

b. Recap on NJ Conference of Mayors

- i. Winter session was held in the first week of February. Downtown Somerville was asked to discuss lessons learned from COVID.



Update on Art Initiatives

ii. Recap on Art Installation (insights)

1. Art installation was installed at the end of January. We had our first influencer visit the installation and her post had close to 11,000 impressions.

iii. Bench Project Update

1. Benches will be debuted later this month and will be strategically placed throughout Main Street.

iv. Update on Robeson Grant

1. The DSA mural with RWJ is set to display within the next two weeks. The DSA was notified by Somerset County that we received a grant to complete our Paul Robeson sculpture. It does not cover all costs but it will give us the opportunity to get additional funding and sponsorship.

c. Update on Streetscape Capital Plan (Date for Virtual Open House)

- i. Two meetings have been held to discuss data and recommendations of the capital plan. Both sets of data are available in packets to review.
- ii. Second open house will be held March 2nd. Data will be presented to the public.

d. Committee Assignments

- i. All initial meetings have been scheduled for the next week and half
- ii. Events committee meeting was held on 2/13
 1. We discussed the opportunity of having an open house for sponsorship.
 2. We discussed our next big event Girls Night Out & Restaurant Week in April
- iii. Marketing Committee will meet on Wednesday
- iv. Nicole to send committee lists to board

e. Zoning for New Uses/ Vacancy Remediation through Small Scale Manufacturing

- i. Natalie reported information from National Main Street webinar regarding vacancy and zoning



- I. Creating a plan and presenting this to the planning board will help us in our vacancy issue as well as free up our zoning officer.
- II. Put on agenda for recruitment and retention committee

B. Other New Business

St. Patricks Day Parade

- \$2500 sponsorship as well as banners that will replace the Black History Month banners

Mike Kerwin made a motion to approve the sponsorship for St. Patrick's Day Parade. RanD Pitts seconded same.

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

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Liquor License Reform

- Natalie included a summary of the reform in everyone's packet to be an FYI.
- Bill was introduced and needs to be approved by committee

Update on Website

- Domain is not available so we will be purchasing .org or .net
- Setup .org or .net

Proposed Businesses

- Women's boutique & french bakery coming to town.



CDS Weekly Reports

- CDS has been sending weekly reports to the DSA
- The reports are light but we anticipate more detailed reports as the season starts up

Finance Reports

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

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

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Payment Authorizations

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

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

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Comments from the Public

No comments from the public



Public meeting closed

Adjournment

Mike Kerwin made a motion to adjourn the meeting on Monday, January 9, 2023 at 7:30pm.