



Downtown Somerville Alliance, Inc.

July 11, 2022 Meeting Minutes

6:00 PM - Office Evolution

Mike Kerwin called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm on July 11, 2022.

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

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

Late: Iris Frank

Excused: RanD Pitts

Approval of July 2022 Meeting Minutes

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

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

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

NOTE* Iris Frank was not present for this vote

Chairman's Remarks

Downtown Somerville is getting attention from other towns, specifically New Brunswick. Other towns are looking to capture the same kind of energy that Division Street offers.

Executive Director's Report

Old Business



Update on Grant Applications submitted by Greener by Design

- 2 applications have been submitted by Greener by Design
 - **First application:** State Tourism Cooperative Marketing Grant in order to get \$15,000 of marketing for our Central Jersey Jazz Festival (for 2023). Expected to hear back before October.
 - **Second application:** Bank of America Grant based on Public Art Plan. Applied for a total of \$125,000. Expected to hear back before December (for 2023)
- County has finally released the RFP. Deadline to submit is July 20, 2022 - Natalie will hand deliver applications to the county. (RE: Public Art Plan)

Update on CDS/ Clean & Safe Program

CDS has been hard at work since our last meeting.

- Planters have been put out and are being properly maintained with water every three weeks.
- Our banner system has been installed. Making it easier to put up and take down banners
- CDS team has been weeding, sticker removal, event setup, picking up residential trash on Division Street
- Clean up of area behind Division Street stage (powerwash?)
- Camera might be able to be eliminated due to our community police officers consistently on foot in town

New Business

Audit Update

Our audit began a few months ago. They are close to being finished and hope to have a draft of the audit within two weeks.

- A recommendation was made to reclassify some of the items on the ledger to 2021 expenses



Meeting Cancellation for August

Mike Kerwin made a motion to cancel the August meeting. Alison Masick seconded same.

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

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Update on Upcoming Events

- **Summer Stage** is off and running
- **Starlit Cinema:** First movie was last Thursday and the turnout was greater than expected
- **Artisan Market:** Market will take place on August 7th on Division Street
- **Central Jersey Jazz Festival:** Lineup has been confirmed
- **Family Pride Night:** The event will most likely be rescheduled for August

Tent for stage?

- Our current rental company does not have a stage that offers a tent or a tent to put over the stage
- Other thought is renting a larger stage for next season

Division Street Trash Can Recommendation from Infrastructure Committee (Lease of 4 Big Belly Compactor Cans)

It was decided that the Big Belly Cans are not a good fit for Main Street due to the fact that our garbage removal provider would not pick up the trash from the Big Belly Cans.

- As Division Street continues to grow in popularity, trash has become a major issue.
- Recommendation is to move forward in purchasing / leasing 3-4 Big Belly Cans

Mike Kerwin made a motion to authorize Natalie to negotiate a contract for the Big Belly Cans. Rick St. Pierre seconded same



Yea: Theresa Bonner, Tony Brokeborough, [redacted], Alison Masick, Ed Rebenack, Sejal Sharma, Kevin Sluka, Rick St. Pierre, Mike Kerwin

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Mid-year Review

I. Mid-Year Review of Budget

- Income: 43.75% used
- Debt Services: 88% used
- Infrastructure 32% used
 1. Potential to have remainder from CDS.
 2. We stopped working with ABS in March and did not start with CDS until May
- Events: Approximately 99% used we need to pull about \$20,000-\$30,000 from somewhere else
- Marketing: 53% used
 1. We pull from here for marketing softwares, speedpro, influencer marketing programs, etc.
- Economic Vitality Expenditures: 36% used
 1. RWJ Healthcare Hero Program
 2. Valentine's Day Gift Boxes - Program
 3. Potential to negotiate with retail consultant (bring down price or cancel contract)
- Staff: 50% spent
 1. Right on track for this
- Office Support: 80% used
 1. Much of this was heavily used in the beginning of the year
 2. We shouldn't have as much of a heavy use for the end of the month



- Contingency: 75% used

Committee reports

A. Marketing Committee:

- a. Contract has been signed with Three Summers Creative to begin work on our website
- b. Oxford Communications has finalized our assets
- c. Currently going through content analysis for website

B. Infrastructure Committee:

- a. The infrastructure committee met with Arterial Streets
- b. Arteria gave the committee a presentation on previous work they have done and future work to be done in Somerville. Natalie is anticipating a proposal for a Capital Plan for our Streetscape.

C. Public Art Committee:

- a. RWJ Mural project will be executed by the end of this year. Theme is diversity
- b. Giardina Walkway - working with the community to find a vision for the walkway

D. Finance Committee:

- a. We are essentially right on target for our budget. We want to try to evaluate next years funding earlier than usual as this is a learning process.

Other New Business

Theresa discussed her upcoming event on September 9th. The event is Women's Self-Care Night that is focused around overall wellness. It is an event that can be beneficial to the whole town, not just retail and restaurants.

July 30th - the county will be hosting an event called History on the Green.

Finance Report

Rick St. Pierre made a motion to approve finance reports. Theresa Bonner seconded same.



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

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Payment Authorizations

Tony Brokenborough made a motion to approve the payment authorizations. Theresa Bonner seconded same

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

Nay: None

Recuse: None

Abstain: None

Comments from the Public

Chas Stevens

- Would like information for community officers. The train station has become an issue
- South side of Main Street, particularly East, is no longer wheelchair accessible due to sandwich boards and sidewalk cafes.

Adjournment

Mike Kerwin adjourned the meeting at 7:15pm on July 11, 2022.