



**Downtown Somerville Alliance, Inc.  
November 14, 2022 Meeting Minutes  
6:00 PM - Office Evolution**

Mike Kerwin called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm on November 14, 2022.

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

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

Late: Iris Frank

Excused:

**Approval of October 2022 Meeting Minutes**

\*Note: Correct vote of watering apparatus. Alison Masick is nay

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

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

**Nay:** None

**Recuse:** None

**Abstain:** None

\*Iris not present for this vote

**Chairman Remarks**

NJAW sewer referendum passed 72%. Mike was able to visit Louisiana where there are many downtowns but nothing like Somerville. Many of the downtowns are lackluster and dull so we should be proud of the vibrancy of Somerville.



### **Annual Goal Review**

- Branding Project: New logo has been used for 2023 branding projects. Website is gradually being updated

- Public art plan: utilization of grant funds for public art installation on courthouse
- Infrastructure: use of better connecting ecosystem and streetscape
- Marketing: Influencer content, tiktok, geo-targeting, social media and instagram advertising
- Revitalization: NJEDA & UCEDC partnering with them to figure out how to bring life to E Main Street

### **Project Updates**

- Streetscape: Started working with Arterial Streets to design streetscape plans. They were here earlier in the month to do a walkthrough. On Thursday, December 8th, Arterial Streets will be hosting an Open House at Alfonso's to better understand the needs / wants from the community. Capital Plan to be finalized by the end of the first quarter of 2023. Once we receive the plan Natalie will reach out to our grant writers for funding.
- Website/Marketing: Natalie gave a quick review of the website updates and will send the link to the rest of the board to submit any feedback. Target is the end of the year.
- Public Art: Working with Chiaoza to create a custom sculpture piece for the courthouse lawn art installation. We have approval from the state historic preservation for installation. We are also working on the Cre8 bench project that will be kicking off this week as well as the RWJ mural project.
- Budget: Finance Committee has started with a draft budget. The draft will be presented to the board at the December meeting if approved the budget will then be presented to Borough Council. Alison made a comment regarding finding a way to cover the costs for the banner programs - would like to provide at no cost.

Alison Masick made a motion to evaluate the budget to cover the costs of banners. Theresa Bonner seconded the same.



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

**Nay:** None

**Recuse:** None

**Abstain:** None

- Event Recap/Updates: Spooktacular was our most heavily attended event even before COVID times. We thank the county for their support and for helping the DSA support our vision of creative placemaking. The DSA had their very first Native American Heritage Event. It was heavily attended, educational and fun for all attendees.
  - Small Business Saturday: Hot cocoa sales, chair massage therapists, gift wrapping station. Raffles & live music
  - Holiday Jubilee: happening december 2nd

### **Discussion on Statute Enabling the DSA to navigate DOT**

- Communities like Cranford essentially use this statute to be able to say to DOT “this is our street and we will use it as we want to”.

### **Conferences/ Speaking Engagements**

- Natalie will be representing Downtown Somerville Alliance at NJLOM on a DNJ panel with Arterial Streets, hosted by Downtown NJ.
- Natalie will also be moderating a Panel, representing Downtown Somerville at the Downtown NJ Conference Virtual Session on the morning of 12/2 on Arts and Economic Vitality

### **Other New Business**

- Contract for NJAW goes to New Jersey Water. Borough will most likely be running the sewer until September



## **Finance Reports**

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

**Yea:** Theresa Bonner, Tony Brokeborough, 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**

Mike Kerwin made a motion to approve the payment authorizations. Kevin Sluka seconded same

**Yea:** Theresa Bonner, Tony Brokenborough, 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**

None

## **Executive Session Begins**