

Metuchen Downtown Alliance Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
Friday, June 14, 2024, 8:30am
Metuchen Senior Center 15 Center Street

In attendance: Eric Berger, Diana Callinan, Joanne Cruz, Jason Delia, Linda Koskoski, Jenny Lai, Sean Massey, Jay Muldoon, Angie Quinonez, Meg Loftus Suchan, Gary Tilbor, Bobbie Theivakumaran. **Not attending:** Dan Cea, Jace McColley, Amar Singh **Staff:** Dawn Mackey

Welcome:

Meeting was called to order by Mr. Delia at 8:37am.

Chairperson's Report

No report

Secretary's Report

There was a correction to the May minutes. There are 16 performers lined up for Porchfest. With that correction, motion to approve by Ms. Theivakumaran, second by Ms. Loftus Suchan.

Treasurer's Report

No report

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Mackey informed the committee that the Economic Vitality Committee is actively working on the Storefront Grants program. We have received six applications thus far. She is happy to have an active committee in place. She is pushing to add the Design Committee as well. We do currently have an "Art Team" which is useful and will continue to exist but they will have different responsibilities from the Design Committee.

The resource fair with the NJ EDA took place on Wednesday. Mr. Berger and Mr. Tilbor both commented on the great turnout. ED Mackey had made personal calls and had gone door to door prior to the meeting to encourage people to attend. The idea for this resource fair came about after Ms. Mackey had attended a panel that featured the EDA. One takeaway that Mr. Berger wanted to convey was that if you apply for these programs and you qualify, you will receive the benefits. It's not a competitive process.

Working with multiple landlords with prospective businesses. Eric commented on a vacancy that dawn is helping to fill and thanked her.

Borough Update

Mr. Delia spoke about the bike racks that have been installed around the district recently. He also informed the Board of the potential for a new bike lane that would potentially connect to the downtown at Hillside Ave. Also on Hillside, the Borough recently installed a new historic district marker which could bring people to town to visit. Finally, Mr. Delia reminded everyone of the upcoming "Summer Sounds" concert series in July.

Arts Council Report

Ms. Loftus Suchan reported that the Arts Council continues to work towards the Jazz Fest and Porchfest. Applications have been closed for Porchfest and planning is underway for the various acts. Vendors are coming together for the Jazz Fest.

Promotion Team

Chairperson Theivakumaran was happy with the Pride event and thanked the Board for their support. This was the biggest Pride since we began running this program. This weekend is our Juneteenth celebration. Theme for that is both 60 years of funk music and 60 years of the Civil Rights Act. There will be a funk band, DJ, step dancers, drumline, etc.

Kids Takeover will be happening. Ms. Theivakumaran thanked Mr. Massey and Mr. Delia for the idea of Slow Streets and for working with the Borough to implement. The structure of the event will be a little different with the activities housed mostly in the Plaza and not encouraging circulation for safety reasons.

This July is the summer Olympics. The Promotions Team is working on fun ideas to incorporate that and promote Metuchen businesses. Looking for our businesses to lean in to that theme as well. This is a good opportunity to showcase our many international businesses.

Economic Vitality / Organization Team

Next meeting will be immediately following the Board meeting.

Communications Team

No report

Public Art Team

Starbucks mural work should be commencing within a few weeks.

Ribbon Cutting Team

Ribbon Cutting took place last Wednesday for Rising Hearts Studio. Discussion was had about the new business.

Old Business

No old business to report.

New Business

No new business.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:11am.

The next Board meeting will be Friday, July 12, 2024, at 8:30am at the Metuchen Senior Center 15 Center Street.

Submitted by Jason Delia