



Brunswick Downtown Development Authority Meeting Minutes

**Thursday, November 16, 2023
9:00am – Warwick Conference Room**

Board Members & Staff Present: Whitney Herndon, Michael Torras, Michael Kaufman, Julie Martin, Susan Bates, Mathew Hill, Chelsea Hill & Gracie Jordan

Absent: Travis Stegall, 1 vacancy.

Advisory Board Present: Craig Watkins, Lance Sabbe.

Guests / City Staff: Regina McDuffie – City Manager, Jeremiah Bergquist – Assistant City Manager, John Hunter – Planning, Development, Codes, William Bilancio - IT, Pam Sherling.

I. Call to Order:

W. Herndon called the meeting to order, a quorum was present.

II. Approval of Agenda:

Those present reviewed the agenda. M. Torras made a motion to accept the agenda. M. Kaufman seconded. A vote was taken, all were in favor.

III. Citizen Items: W. Bilancio commented on the success of Porch Fest.

IV. Items of Business:

A. Minutes of the October meetings: Those present reviewed the minutes. S. Bates made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. M. Torras seconded. A vote was taken, all were in favor.

B. Treasurer's Report: M. Kaufman presented the treasurer's report for November. There will be a corresponding expense for the string light donations. M. Torras suggested a \$1,000/year budget for string light maintenance. M. Torras made a motion to approve the report. S. Bates seconded. A vote was taken, all were in favor.

C. Grants:

1. Facade Grant – Altman building (1402 Grant St) M. Hill reviewed the application. M. Kaufman made a motion to approve the grant in the amount of \$1,000.00. M. Torras seconded. A vote was taken, all were in favor.

2. Façade Grant – Brad Brown (1330 Newcastle St) M. Hill reviewed the application. M. Torras made a motion to approve the grant in the amount of \$1,000.00. M. Kaufman seconded. A vote was taken, all were in favor.
3. Facade Grant – Vivenzio (1519-25 Newcastle St) M. Hill reviewed the applications. M. Kaufman made a motion to approve the grants in the amount of \$4,000 for the six addresses. J. Martin seconded. A vote was taken, all were in favor.
4. Enterprise Zone – Biron Tea Factory (1615 Reynolds St) M. Hill reviewed the application. M. Kaufman made a motion to recommend approval of the incentive package as presented. J. Martin seconded. A vote was taken, all were in favor.
5. CPE Grant – 1608 Newcastle St (Liberty Building) M. Hill presented the application. M. Kaufman made a motion to approve the grant with a match of \$13,825.00. M. Torras seconded. A vote was taken, all were in favor.

V. City Items: R. McDuffie reiterated what a great event Porch Fest was. Anytime people are brought to the community for an event, it's a good thing. The fitness court on Parkwood has been completed. Planning for the Ritz Theatre upgrades/repairs is in process and the City will have a float in the parade.

VI. Board Member's Items:

- A. String Lights:** M. Torras gave an update on the string lights. There has been a change in the design so that pavers will not need to be disturbed, thereby reducing cost. C. Hill gave an update on the fundraising effort, M. Hill said that the URA will be funding the 1600 block.
- B. Causeway Anniversary:** M. Torras gave a quick update on the 100th anniversary of the Torras Causeway to be held in July of 2024.

VII. Chairman's Items: W. Herndon said she has the paint and will work on stenciling the Mansfield lot as soon as the weather clears.

VIII. Promotion: G. Jordan reported that Porchfest attendance was 9,800, up about 2,000 from last year. The date for 2024 is November 10. She reviewed the upcoming events. C. Hill gave an update on fundraising for the holiday lighting.

IX. Organizational Report:

- A. Main Street Report:** M. Hill reviewed the Main Street summary report.
- B. Board Vacancy:** M. Hill asked those present to think about candidates for the seat vacated by L. Jordan. He would like to have 2-3 candidates to suggest to the City Commission.

X. Advisory Members Items:

- A. L. Sabbe:** The Forward Brunswick Farmers Market has been doing well and will continue year 'round. Phil Graciter is stepping back, and Forward Brunswick will be hiring a coordinator.

XI. Adjourn: M. Kaufman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. W. Herndon adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted:
Mathew Hill, Executive Director