



Brunswick Downtown Development Authority Called Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 17, 2024

9:00am – Warwick Conference Room

Board Members & Staff Present: Whitney Herndon, Michael Kaufman, Julie Martin, Michael Torras, Susan Bates, Mathew Hill, Chelsea Hill, & Travis Stegall (via Zoom),

Absent: Shemeka Sorrells, Gracie Jordan.

Advisory Board Present: Lance Sabbe - Commissioner

Guests / City Staff: Craig Watkins – AB, Taylor Cooper – Brunswick News.

I. Call to Order:

W. Herndon called the meeting to order, J. Martin read the Mission & Vision Statements, a quorum was present. Introductions were made.

II. Approval of Agenda:

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

III. Citizen Comments: S. Bates spoke as a member of the Porch Fest organizing committee. She said that they had 60 porches, and 76 bands lined up for this year. Insurance costs have risen dramatically and they would like the DDA to consider a higher sponsorship amount. M. Kaufman made a motion to increase the sponsorship to \$3,200 for 2024, reallocating from personnel costs. M. Torras seconded, a vote was taken, all were in favor.

IV. Items of Business:

A. Minutes of the September meeting: Those present reviewed the minutes. J. Martin made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. M. Kaufman seconded. A vote was taken, all were in favor.

B. Treasurer's Report: M. Kaufman presented the treasurer's report. J. Martin made a motion to approve the report. M. Torras seconded. A vote was taken, all were in favor.

C. Incentives:

1. **1638 Norwich St (Façade Grant):** Those present reviewed the application. J. Martin made a motion to approve the grant for façade and signage in the amount of \$827.00. M. Torras seconded, a vote was taken all were in favor.
2. **1708 Norwich St (Façade Grant):** Those present reviewed the application. M. Kaufman made a motion to defer until November to get a better fence layout. M. Torras seconded. After discussion, M. Kaufman amended his motion to approve the sign portion (\$332.14) and they may start on the fence before the façade portion is reviewed in November. M. Torras seconded. A vote was taken, all were in favor.

V. City Manager's Items: None.

VI. Chairman's Items: W. Herndon mentioned that School District rezoning could impact investment in Old Town. Families have purchased homes knowing that their children will go to SSI or Oglethorpe Elementary, a change to Burroughs Molette may decrease interest and affect funding for Island schools. J. Martin said that the NPA is working on the issue. Herndon also said that the trash cans were full at First Friday, S. Bates said if the additional cans aren't open, people won't use them. C. Hill said there was a different team working the event. J. Martin said the Outdoor Stewardship Grant application had been submitted. M. Torras gave an update on Becklin Tower and asked that the URA attend the next meeting for an update.

VII. Economic Vitality: M. Hill mentioned that parking issues have come to the forefront and he will be working with the City Managers office on them.

VIII. Promotion: The social media report was reviewed, along with upcoming events.

IX. Board Member's Items:

- A. **S. Bates – Bar / Restaurant Association:** S. Bates said the topics have been homelessness and trash.
- B. **M. Torras – Event:** BLM hosted a pub crawl that was very successful. He suggested that a similar event be done by others (DDA?). He also said that a group of boat owners was interested in Caroling this year.

X. Advisory Board Member's Items:

- A. **C. Watkins – small streets:** C. Watkins said that a focus area should be Grant & Richmond Streets. There was a discussion to incentivize building improvements by attaching a set amount for rear facades to any grant on Newcastle Street.

XI. Organizational Report:

- A. **Main Street Report:** M. Hill reviewed the Main Street summary report.
- B. **Staff:** M. Hill said he and G. Jordan have not had a chance to fully develop the job descriptions due to the storms and vacation.

XII. Adjourn: S. Bates made a motion to adjourn the meeting, M. Torras seconded. A vote was taken, W. Herndon adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted:
Mathew Hill, Executive Director