

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE ST. ALBANS CITY DOWNTOWN BOARD
& BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF ST. ALBANS FOR THE FUTURE
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET
6:00 PM, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22ND, 2024

APPROVED

Members of the Board Present: IN PERSON: Maureen Brown, Chair; Emily Richards, Vice Chair; Shannon Smith; K.F. Samandari; Sharon Holcomb; Debra Morton; Jeremy Read

Members of the Board Absent: Jackie Hawkins, Secretary/Treasurer; Donna Howard; Ashley Cleare; Valdemar Garibay; Lauren Bode

Members of the SACA Committee Present: None

Members of the SACA Committee Absent: Jennifer Kostuck; Nichole Cunningham

Members of City Staff Present: Arleigh Young, Coordinator of Planning & Development; Katie Haseltine, Minute Taker

Members of the Public Present:

1. Begin Recording and Call to Order.
 - a. Attendance and introductions. - None
 - b. Public Comment on items not on the agenda - None
 - c. Additions or Deletions to Agenda - None
2. SAFF Financial Report
 - a. A. Young provides a quick summary
 - i. The first vibrancy grant funding has come in, and that will come down as we prepare for Festival of Trees with some supply orders.
 - ii. Now that Downtown Broodhaha is over and she has some more time, A. Young will look into what investment opportunities may be available for some of the Downtown Dollars.
 - iii. The T-Shirt Fund is in the negative, which doesn't make sense given that sales were pretty high with the Eclipse. A. Young will look into that.
 - iv. The Fundraising Events line item is high from the Downtown Broodhaha. Once final checks are mailed out, that amount will go down. The committee feels the 10% that the Downtown Board will receive from helping with that event should stay in that fund for use with future fundraising events.
 - b. M. Brown asks why the Summer Concert Series is negative. A. Young explains that the City usually funds some of it so she will bill them to address that.
3. Discuss events/programs/committees
 - a. Events
 - i. Downtown Broodhaha 9/2-9/27 (Hen House Party 9/27), Spooky Saturday 10/26, Festival of Trees 11/30-12/8, etc.
 1. Downtown Broodhaha (Hen House Party 9/27)
 1. A huge success and raised so much money for charities. People are already asking what will be done next year.
 2. Spooky Saturday

1. The Nightmare in City Hall will not be happening because of the construction happening on the steps. There will be a haunted house at 14th Star though, so at least there will be something similar in the City to go to.
2. S. Smith asks if any consideration has been given to reducing congestion along Main Street by spacing out candy tables for trick or treaters. A. Young explains that there are a lot less groups tabling along Main Street in addition to the businesses so believes that congestion may not be as large. A. Young will keep that in mind though as plans progress.
3. Festival of Trees
 1. M. Brown asks if businesses will do trees again. A. Young confirms they plan to do that again this year and if any businesses would like help decorating a tree, they can reach out to Arleigh and she knows a few people who would volunteer their time and materials to decorate a tree.
 2. S. Holcomb asks what the theme is this year. A. Young shares it is "Monte Carlo"
 3. A. Young adds that the gala (December 6th) is benefitting not just Josh Pallotta this year, but also Care Partners Adult Day Center and Manahan Feeds a Family. Additionally, Franklin County Rescue partners with Josh Pallotta on pairing veterans with dogs, so some of the funds raised will go towards that.
- ii. Downtown Holiday Raffle - Help Please
 1. E. Richards shares that her and A. Young are looking for help getting the initial information out to businesses, dropping by to pick up gifts, and picking up the materials after the raffle is over.
 2. S. Smith asks about restaurant involvement and that the QR code was the way to go.
 3. November 30th is the start date of the raffle. E. Richards shares dates around when help would be needed (November 20, 21, 22 and December 18, 19, 20). S. Holcomb, D. Morton, S. Smith, and M. Brown can help. If anyone else could help, reach out to A. Young or E. Richards.
- iii. Last Night Fireworks - what is the value to downtown?
 1. A. Young shares Matt (Fire Department) and Maurice (Police Department) wondered what the value to the downtown the fireworks are. S. Smith believes it is something the community loves and looks forward to. S. Holcomb agrees and notes that it doesn't really bring any business to shops because they are closed. A. Young mentions they had floated the idea of doing them earlier, at 5 PM, instead of at 7 PM.
 2. E. Richards wonders what their reasoning is behind changing the time. A. Young believes it was partly due to allowing for businesses to be open during that time, but also for the concern around public safety and needing to staff the event. S. Smith strongly believes that this needs to happen because people are starting to not decorate and does not want to take away the things that brings joy to the community.
 3. A. Young asks if the board would be open to using some funds from Unencumbered to help fund the fireworks or offset the cost to increase staffing. S. Smith would only be open to that if the city was truly needing help with funding. S. Holcomb asks how much it costs. A. Young can check and get back to the board on that.
- b. Programs - None
- c. Fundraising/Appeals - None

- d. Marketing
 - i. Winter/Holiday Ad Program with Hall Media - January (AIR/Eloquent 2 Spots)
 - 1. A. Young shared that D. Howard had asked about bringing this back into the conversation (advertising on Star 92.9). A. Young looked back at when this was last done and realized the board was never involved with this. It was something businesses did on their own.
 - ii. East Coast Traveler
 - 1. A. Young got a reminder that this is due October 31st, so she will work on that.
 - e. Arts
 - i. SACA Update - None.
 - f. Social Media/Website - The RFP is in progress.
 - g. Organization
 - i. Downtown Manager Official!
 - 1. A. Young is officially the Downtown Manager. She's recently welcomed Gratia Rowell, Planning & Development Assistant, to help with projects, permitting, and data entry in the office.
 - ii. Downtown Board Make Up - Who are we?
 - 1. A. Young wanted to be sure we are thinking of who makes up the board. Currently, A. Young believes the board currently has a good mix of business owners and community members.
 - 2. S. Holcomb asks how many board members we have. A. Young shares that the board is 14 members. S. Holcomb wouldn't mind a slight reduction in board members given there is rarely a time that all 14 members are in attendance. K. Samandari has no opinion on the size of the board, but does think a good mix of businesses owners and community members is important to have on the board.
 - 3. S. Smith asks why the city is advertising an open call for members if we feel the board size is at capacity or could use a reduction. A. Young believes that they are required to post when seats are expiring.
 - 4. S. Holcomb would like to see more business owner involvement because that always feels less represented.
 - iii. Expiring seats and roles
 - 1. Lauren Bode (12/31/2024), Valdemar Garibay (12/31/2024), Emily Richards, Vice Chair (12/31/2024). A. Young just wanted to mention in case anyone would like to take a break or has thoughts on expiring seats and roles. Discussion will continue at the next meeting.
 - h. Other
 - i. S. Smith would like to see a boost/campaign for the community to get out and decorate. A. Young will look into that and mentions having the mayor potentially include something in his report that goes out with the water bill.
 - ii. E. Richards brings back the positive post campaign discussion and how they could involve social media pages to help buy into this.
4. Other Business
- a. Approval of Minutes 8/27/24 & 9/24/24
 - i. 8/27/24 - E. Richards motions to approve. S. Smith seconds. Motion passes with all in favor.
 - ii. 9/24/24 - E. Richards motions to approve. S. Smith seconds. Motion passes with all in favor.
 - b. December Meeting - scheduled for 12/24-change date?

- i. A. Young wanted to get ahead of it, noting that the last couple years the December meeting has been cancelled. A. Young doesn't mind either way, but needs to allow for time to prepare some end of year conversations with the board, specifically member seats, roles, and term expirations.
 - ii. M. Brown suggests cancelling November meeting and scheduling a meeting December 3rd or 10th and having a blended November/December meeting. A. Young will check the room schedule and touch base via email with the board about firming up a date.
 - c. Next meeting November 26, 2024 at 6PM
 - i. Since it is the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, may want to reschedule. Pending room schedules, this date may change.
 - d. Other
 - i. J. Read asks how the Tattoo Event went. A. Young shares it went really well. There were more tattoo artists this year. There was some great news coverage on the event as well.
5. Adjourn. M. Brown adjourns meeting at 7:08 PM.