



## **Downtown Somerville Alliance, Inc. November 8, 2021 Meeting Minutes 6:00 PM - In-Person / Office Evolution**

RanD Pitts called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm on October 11, 2021. Kevin Sluka conducted a roll call. The following Board Members were present:

Present: Mark Aziz, Tony Brokenborough, Mike Kerwin, Jenn Pearson, RanD Pitts, Kevin Sluka, Iris Frank, Rick St. Pierre

Late: None

Absent: John Flores, Jenn Pearson

The assembly joined in a salute to the flag.

### **For Approval: October Meeting Minutes**

Natalie sought approval for the October Meeting Minutes.

Rick St. Pierre made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Tony Brokenborough seconded same.

Yea: Mark Aziz, Tony Brokenborough, Mike Kerwin, RanD Pitts, Iris Frank, Kevin Sluka, Rick St. Pierre

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Recuse: None

### **Vice Chairman Remarks**

RanD Pitts opened up the meeting with a few comments regarding a podcast he was a guest speaker on earlier in the morning. The podcast is called "Mind Your Business Podcast" and focuses on the "Power of the Pivot".

### **Executive Director Report**

## **Old Business**

### Update on Budget Process

Natalie reported the finance committee met two weeks ago where they discussed a preliminary budget. The budget will be presented at the next meeting in December. After presenting it at a DSA board meeting, the budget must be presented at a Borough Hall meeting, and then a public hearing must be held. If there is not an opposition at the public hearing then the budget is good to go.

### Update on Nomination Committee and Board Vacancies

Natalie gave an update on the nomination committee and board vacancies. The DSA will be filling 4 vacancies on the board. A press release went out on the nomination process and a constant contact email was sent out to the district.

### Update on ARP Round Table and Process for ARP Funds

Natalie had the pleasure of sitting on the panel for the roundtable regarding downtowns. \$56 million from the federal government overall concept "think big". We need to think about sustainability and use this as a "historic opportunity".

### Update on upcoming events: SBS and Holiday Jubilee

Traditionally both events were celebrated on the same day but this year the DSA opted to separate the events to give them both the individualized attention they deserve. SBS will take place on Saturday, November 27 and the DSA will be stationed at the top of Division Street. Natalie is also discussing a holiday themed walking tour with Haunted History Productions and a Santa Pub Crawl. More information to follow.

### Update on Div. St Cleaning/Repairing/Resealing

The DPW says the construction on Division Street will be done by Friday. The Christmas tree will be delivered on November 17th with the tree weight being dropped on the 15th or 16th. Once construction is completed we will have a smooth, sleek, and clean Division Street.

### Recap on IDA Conference

Natalie was able to attend a lot of breakout sessions while attending the IDA conference in Tampa. The most helpful were regarding homelessness and streetscape and design. The handouts provided in the meeting packing discuss successful aspects to a streetscape and more and placemaking.

### Update on audit

Natalie sent out the preliminary audit report on Wednesday to the board.

Mike Kerwin made a motion to file. RanD Pitts seconded same

Yea: Mark Aziz, Tony Brokeborough, Iris Frank, Mike Kerwin, Kevin Sluka, Rick St. Pierre, RanD Pitts

Nay: None

Abstain: None  
Recuse: None

## **New Business**

### Safety in the District

Natalie sought approval to table the discussion until the next meeting.

Mike Kerwin made a motion to table the discussion. Kevin Sluka seconded same.

Yea: Mark Aziz, Tony Brokenborough, Iris Frank, Mike Kerwin, Kevin Sluka, Rick St. Pierre, RanD Pitts

Nay: None  
Abstain: None  
Recuse: None

### Vacancy Report

Natalie gave an update on our vacancy report. We show a total of 21 vacancies but there are a couple of factors to note in this. Many of these vacancies are not true vacancies...Only Games in Town is using the space for storage. 194 W Main Street has been leased for one year to a chocolatier...it gives a perception of vacancy when it is truly not. This is a topic to be discussed at the infrastructure committee level. There is a suggestion to reach out to the planning board. The planning board can give us information about what they need to fill the space, etc. so we can find ways to fill vacancies easier.

### LetraPole Banner System

Natalie reported on a new system brought to her attention at the IDA conference. Not only do they offer the poles but they also create the banners which would essentially cut the cost of our current providers. Banner can go to 55 inches but you are not obligated to keep it at that length. Model is solar and would help with installation of banners.

Rick St. Pierre made a motion to approve the LetraPole Banner System (\*in approving this we need to understand the management aspect of the program). Iris Frank seconded same

Yea: Mark Aziz, Tony Brokenborough, Iris Frank, Mike Kerwin, Kevin Sluka, Rick St. Pierre, RanD Pitts

Nay: None  
Abstain: None  
Recuse: None

### Recommendation from the Infrastructure Committee for new Clean and Safe contract

The DSA sent out a RFP for a new cleaning service. Not only are we focused on clean and safe aspects but we also want to add an ambassador program. Costs are going up, especially if we want to continue with sanitization and overall cleanliness of the district.

Currently the DSA has ABS doing the cleaning and Sal Scalora doing the landscaping for the district. It would be a two-year contract with CDS...the first year would be a trial run where things could be tweaked (i.e. additional services or take away services).

Rick St. Pierre made a motion to approve the 2-year term with CDS. Tony Brokenborough seconded same

Yea: Mark Aziz, Tony Brokenborough, Iris Frank, Mike Kerwin, Kevin Sluka, Rick St. Pierre, RanD Pitts

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Recuse: None

### Bylaw updates

Natalie went through the updated bylaw amendments. Some updated changes:

- Section 1, Page 2: Add "creative placemaking"
- Clarification on corporate seat (i.e. one year term & 1 seat)
- Also add "up to 12" - we do not have to have 12 board members but we can have up to 12
- Combination of board is what they think best (i.e. at some point it could be all business owners, etc.)
- Typo (a1): Failure to
- In the event of tie chairperson would be the deciding vote

\*Conversation for a later date - expectations and roles of each board member.

## **Payment Authorizations**

Rick St. Pierre made a motion to approve the payment authorizations. Mark Aziz seconded same

Yea: Mark Aziz, Tony Brokenborough, Mike Kerwin, RanD Pitts, Iris Frank, Kevin Sluka, Rick St. Pierre

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Recuse: None

## **Finance Reports**

Rick St. Pierre made a motion to approve the finance reports. Mark Aziz seconded same

Yea: Mark Aziz, Tony Brokenborough, Mike Kerwin, RanD Pitts, Kevin Sluka, Iris Frank, Rick St. Pierre

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Recuse: None

## **Public Comment**

RanD Pitts opened up the meeting for comments from the Public. No public comments were made.

## **Adjournment**

RanD Pitts adjourned the meeting.

Meeting minutes recorded by Nicole Zaliwski, Program Coordinator on December 7, 2021.