



DIA Board of Directors Meeting

10/17/2022

Executive Board Members Present: John Guttridge, Abby Peterson, Terri Tarshus, Benjamin Sandberg

Executive Board Members Absent/Excused: Ashley Cake, Megan Vidler

Board Members Present: Nathan Lyman, Larry Hochberger, Lisa Swayze, Dustin Patte, Robert Cantelmo, Jen Demarest, Jodi LaPierre, Cathy Hart, Susan Riley, Emily Petrina, Bryan Warren, Jason Sidle, Tom Knipe, Elsa Hyde, Dean Zervos

Board Members Absent/Excused: Amy Cohen, Greg Conard, Laura Lewis, Jan Norman, Susan Salahshor, Henry Granison

Staff Members Present: Gary Ferguson, Galen Morehead, Hannah Bistocchi, Darlene Wilber, Kristina Thelen

Guests Present: Jeff Githens

Meeting called to order at 6:03PM

Presentation of 401 E. State Street Project:

-Jeff Githen presented on the progress of the 401 E. State St. project. He presented drawings of the proposed project and advised the board that they are seeking an easement from the city to add an additional floor to one side of the building.

Secretary's Report:

-No suggested edits to the September 12th, 2022, minutes. Cathy Hart motioned to approve the July minutes as written. Vote was unanimous with no abstentions.

Treasurer's Report:

-September financials were presented for review – no questions. Nathan Lyman motioned to approve the September financial statement, vote was unanimous, no abstentions.

Executive Committee Report

-The Executive Committee is asking for suggestions to fill the board's vacant Class B seat and fill the transportation committee chair position. Several suggestions were made: Laura Larson from Odyssey Books, Brett Bossard from Ithaca College, etc.

-The Executive Committee will return in November's meeting with a recommendation.

-Board retreat poll results were discussed

-The DIA added a new staff member: Adam Kokoni is the new Senior Graphic Designer at the DIA

City of Ithaca/DIA MOU:

-Gary Ferguson presented the various changes that are now highlighted on the DIA/City of Ithaca MOU. He stated that there are very few changes and nothing major to note. He also advised that many of the items listed within the MOU are "aspirational" and may not necessarily come to fruition.

-Tom Knipe motioned to empower Gary Ferguson to finalize the MOU and to bring the MOU back to the board if substantive changes are made to it. The vote was unanimous, no abstentions.

2023 Workplan/Budget:

-Gary Ferguson discussed the various financial changes that will occur in 2023 (addition of PT Office Manager, removal of GO Ithaca Staff from DIA payroll in Q1, etc.).

-BRD Considerations: Housing marketing study, BIPOC markets, Retail market study, Retail incubator project, etc. Additionally, adding promotions for businesses and engaging more retailers.

-Strategic Planning Issues: Gary Ferguson is planning to meet with Lisa Nicholas from the city to finalize several key projects (i.e., Bus hub, W. State St., DeWitt Park, etc.).

-Operations: The DIA is contributing \$25,000.00 in 2023 for wayfinding signage within the BID. The DIA is also hoping to get new holiday lights and decorations with the help of sponsorships, public safety liaison, expand the community outreach worker program to include weekends and evenings, and pop-up parklets for easy placemaking.

-Marketing/Communications: The marketing department has several things planned for 2023: They are trying to decide whether to keep or change from the current gift card vendor, whether

they should keep Placer/SpringBoard, changes to the website, grants to pursue, and improving data collection for the “State of Downtown” report.

-Special Events: The special events department plans to: have an economic impact analysis done for Apple Fest and other events, work on managing the growth of the apple festival, re-imagine how the department handles the technical assistance part of the Tompkins festivals program, and monitor and adapt to the escalating costs for events.

-Transportation Related Issues (GO Ithaca): In 2023, there will be a on-demand transportation program being started withing a certain radius, the GO Ithaca office will transition to their own independent 501(c)(3), and they’ll be promoting and sharing their new bike share program.

-Governance Related Issues: In 2023, the vision, mission, and values statement of the DIA will all be modified, and the discussion of the W. State Street area will continue.

-Night Economy: Add/train nighttime staff, get a liaison with IPD, and reactivate the night economy committee

-Staffing: Staffing continues to be the largest expense for the organization; 2023 will be no exception. The organization has spent \$542K on staffing as of 9/30. There will be cost of living increases for staff in 2023 as well as all salaried employees increasing to a minimum of \$55,480.00.

-Next steps to occur are: committee meetings need to happen, staff input (Gary is meeting with individual department heads), reconciling expenses, and the DIA workplan needs to be completed.

Committee Reports:

-BRD: No report

-Operations: No report

-Marketing Oversight: No report

- Special Events: A discussion on Apple Harvest took place and what will happen to the event over the next 3-5 years

-Transportation: Board is actively looking for a new chair

-Nighttime Economy: No report

-Retail Committee: No report

Executive Director’s Report:

-DRI Application was submitted. Darlene Wilber was a huge part of making this happen. The winner should be announced sometime in the next 30 days

- The board retreat went well, polling element was a fun and engaging aspect
- The 25th anniversary has been postponed, date is TBD
- Halloween event is taking place on 10/28 with trick or treating from 4-6pm.
- Ice and Lights festival is happening in December and ice sculptures will be brought back this year
- Some DIA staff is going to New Haven, CT on a comparative city visit from 10/18-10/19.

Announcements:

-Ben Sandberg announced that the History Center is having a Firebrand books reception on 10/21 from 7-9PM.

Tom Knipe motioned to adjourn the meeting; vote was unanimous with no abstentions.

Meeting adjourned at 8:44pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Galen Morehead
Director of Administration

Respectfully Reviewed,

Abby Peterson
Secretary, DIA Board