

St. Marys Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Meeting Minutes for April 8, 2013

The meeting of the St. Marys DDA was called to order by Landreth at 8:30 am.

Members Present: John Morrissey, Cheri Richter, Jerry Brandon, Terry Landreth, Charlie Smith and Gary Straight

Members not Present: Jim Lomis

Guest in attendance: Roger Weaver, Planning Director for City of St. Marys

Staff: Artie Jones, III; Director, Renée Coakley; Executive Assistant

Minutes: The board reviewed the March 11, 2013 meeting minutes. Minutes were approved with a motion by Richter and a second by Straight. All were in favor of the motion.

Treasurers Report: Smith presented the financial reports. AJ discussed the status of the Norris Street property and stated that the buyer will be purchasing the DDA property for \$7500. The paperwork is currently with the attorney for rewording to include the Norris Street property and the joint sale should be closed on within the next two weeks. Board members suggested that at the next meeting AJ report on how to write off the asset and unrestricted uses of \$185,000 from the DDA account after the sale of the property. Motion to approve the financials was made by Morrissey and second by Smith. All were in favor.

Additions to the Agenda: Morrissey added Pilot/Flying J and Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) to the agenda. AJ added DDA Planning Session to the agenda and Richter added Georgia Welcome Center.

New Board Member, Mr. Jerry Brandon was welcomed.

BUSINESS DISCUSSION:

Maritime Heritage District: Weaver reported that the Planning Department requested from Council the opportunity to look at a Maritime Heritage District overlay. This has been approved and there will be a second work session for the public in the near future. The study will focus its attention to the needs of the waterfront to enhance access to the water. The current zoning ordinance will not change. The next meeting is scheduled for April 15th at 5 pm and the group will be making revisions to the current document. Public input is requested.

JLUS: Weaver reported that currently the committee is setting up the first technical review committee meeting for around April 29th. The DDA board will be contacted for input in the report.

Team Camden: AJ reported that there has not been much activity with the group since the Ann Purcell visit. The group will meet on Thursday, April 11th to discuss the Savannah team visit to Camden County. All DDA and IDA board members will be invited to that event once the date is set.

Tourism: Angela was not present to report. Richter asked about the GA on My Mind Day and asked if St. Marys participates in this event. AJ noted that he did participate last year and planned on attending again this year. Renée will email the flyer for the event to the board.

St. Marys Intracoastal Gateway (SMIG): AJ reported that the consultant presented the Feasibility/Best Use Study at the April 4th SMIG meeting. The study noted several options for the property and suggested that now is not the best time to proceed due to the economy but a hotel would be feasibly best. If certain incentives were in place, the hotel would have a better chance to attract a flag hotel. A major flag would have a reservation system to help attract business. The consultant stated that a full service hotel would be the best value but a limited service hotel would generate more money. The report will be released to the public within 1-2 weeks after proofing is completed.

Pilot Flying J: AJ announced that the grand opening for this new business is Tuesday, April 9th at 2 pm. Morrissey noted that he recently emailed the GA region Department of Transportation (DOT) representative, Mrs. Purcell, in regards to the problems at the Exit 1 interchange especially with the opening of the new business and the recent closing of the Highway 17 bridge.

DDA Planning Session: AJ reported that it is time for the annual planning session and asked the board if he should contact Mrs. Jolley with GA Power Company to determine if she would be able to facilitate again this year. The board agreed and decided to utilize the second Monday, May 13th as the meeting/planning session date. DDA business will be conducted from 8:30 am until 9:00 am and the planning session will begin at 9:00 am. AJ noted that at the last planning session one of the items that he was requested to do was to visit other communities comparable to St. Marys and learn their best practices and challenges. Recently AJ visited two cities and out of those visits, representatives from Warner Robins expressed an interest to visit St. Marys and meet with local officials and board members to discuss their best practices. Mr. Gary Lee, Executive Director for Redevelopment for the city of Warner Robins will be visiting St. Marys on Friday, April 12th and will meet with board members and City Officials. An invitation will go out later this week to the City Manager, DDA, IDA, SCORE, Council and City Department Heads.

DIRECTORS REPORT:

Businesses and Updates: AJ reported the status of Cory's Thunder currently located in the Industrial Park in St. Marys. This company had plans to relocate to Jacksonville to accommodate its employees who lived in that area for some time. These plans have been in the works for a while and are the result of incentives that the business will receive from the City of Jacksonville to aid this move. The board discussed the recent article in the Tribune & Georgian that misrepresented the move of this business and requested that AJ write a rebuttal to the newspaper in response to the accusations.

Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 10:11 am with a motion by Brandon and second by Richter. All were in favor.

Charlie Smith, Secretary
Prepared by Renée Coakley, Executive Assistant