

St. Marys Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Meeting Minutes for August 12, 2013

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

Members Present: John Morrissey, Terry Landreth, Charlie Smith and Gary Straight

Members not Present: Jim Lomis, Cheri Richter, and Jerry Brandon

Guest in attendance: N/A

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

Minutes: The board reviewed the July 8, 2013 meeting minutes. Minutes were approved with a motion by Smith and a second by Landreth. All were in favor of the motion.

Treasurers Report: The board reviewed the city financial statements for the first month of the fiscal year as well as the DDA financial reports. Renée made note of the advertising expense for the Guide to Camden that was approved at an earlier meeting for \$880, the Camden Partnership Agreement payment that is a quarterly deposit from the city to the DDA account and in-turn those funds are dispersed to the Partnership. Lastly it was noted that the land line item on the balance sheet has been adjusted for the sale of the Norris Street property and the loss on sale of property totaled \$177,500.00 (this amount takes into account the appraisal that was done during better market times). Smith motioned to approve the financials and second was made by Landreth. All were in favor.

Additions to the Agenda: Speak Easy Restaurant and Bar was added to the agenda by Morrissey. Straight added Economic Development Committee report (this item will be recurrent on future agendas).

BUSINESS DISCUSSION:

Team Camden: AJ reported that the Georgia Legislatures Day that had been scheduled for July 15 and 16, 2013 has been rescheduled for October 30 & 31st. Developers, elected officials, etc. will be invited to the event which is being planned near the date for the Georgia/Florida football game to entice attendees to extend their trip to partake of the festivities for the football game. There will be a charter bus tour of properties/sites to be developed, a boat tour and a tour of the base and a submarine with a briefing by the base commander. Team Camden will also follow up on the second day with a PowerPoint presentation of the developable properties that were visited.

Redevelopment Powers Law: AJ reported that he met with Ken Bleckley recently of Bleckley Associates. This firm consults cities all over Georgia and has worked on over ten Tax Allocation Districts (TADs). This group will be beneficial if the Redevelopment Powers Laws are adopted for St. Marys. AJ noted that he attended a Sidebar Conference in Atlanta recently where the Redevelopment Powers Laws were discussed extensively. There will be a repeat of this conference in Savannah on September 28th and all Council members and Board members are invited to attend this no fee seminar. AJ also noted that a listing of various Economic Development tools was recently emailed out to the board. This listing includes all tools available, but the DDA website has a listing of tools that St. Marys currently has available to use.

Straight asked AJ to provide at the next meeting a percentage of unoccupied property from Charlie Smith Sr. Hwy to downtown only to include businesses facing Osborne.

St. Marys Intracoastal Gateway (SMIG): AJ reported that he and the SMIG committee chair recently travelled to Savannah to meet with Loretta Cockrum of the Forum Group to discuss the next steps for her firm, the SMIG group and the City of St. Marys. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been created and will be finalized today after the DDA meeting by AJ and the SMIG committee chair. Once finalized, the document will go to the city attorney for review and then to the SMIG committee for approval. Once approved, the committee will present it to council for adoption.

Maritime Heritage District: AJ read the email status report from the City Planning Director: *This project has been temporarily delayed until after the Dock permit has been submitted. It will restart at some point after the permit is accepted for review by the CR Committee of DNR (scheduled for the middle of October).*

Dock Repairs: AJ read the email status report from the City Planner: *The damaged DNR Docks have been repaired and have been reopened. The Gateway permit applications are being finalized at this time and will be submitted to DNR for preliminary review next week, with formal submission prior to the end of August.*

Joint Land Use Study (JLUS): AJ read the email status report from the City Planner: *Data gathering is completed and meetings with appropriate organizations are beginning to be scheduled by the consultant.*

Orange Hall: AJ read the email status report from the City Planner: *Work has been completed on the upper floors of the South elevation, and work is commencing on the west elevation. Stairs are completed, and work is proceeding on the masonry lower floor, prior to painting.*

Speak Easy Restaurant and Bar: Morrissey reported that the alcohol request was denied by the city based on recommendations from the City Planning Director. The business has changed management and the request will be on the upcoming agenda for the City Council Meeting for consideration again.

Smith made note of a meeting he attended recently with the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) chair, Straight, the Chamber President, AJ, and representatives from other venues in the county. The IDA is interested in creating an incubator process for the City of St. Marys and was looking for support from the various groups. The end results was that the group did not feel it should be a St. Marys project but that it should be available for the entire county and other avenues should be researched.

Economic Development Committee: Straight read the email statement from Lomis: *Report for Economic Development: I am also working with the Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee. Our purpose is to gather and analyze data that will be used to create an economic dash board for Camden County. The areas of focus thus far will be: 1 – Retirees (50+ moving to area), 2 – Government and related (Navy and Suppliers) and 3 – Small Business*

(less than 30 employees). We've had one initial meeting thus far and our goal is to publish the initial dash board by the end of the year. Information will also be beneficial to St. Marys.

DIRECTORS REPORT:

Businesses and Updates: AJ will email the board the items that were not discussed.

Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 9:30 am with a motion by Smith and second by Landreth. All were in favor.

Charlie Smith, Secretary
Prepared by Renée Coakley, Executive Assistant