

St. Marys Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Meeting Minutes for July 14, 2014

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

Members Present: Bill Bruce, Charlie Smith, Jim Lomis, Gary Straight, Cheri Richter, Councilman Dave Reilly, and Terry Landreth

Members not Present: N/A

Guest in attendance: DJ Blais & Darren Harper

Staff: Renée Coakley; Executive Assistant & John Holman; City Manager

Straight began the meeting by welcoming all attending. Each board member introduced themselves to the guests and the new City Manager gave a brief introduction of himself.

Minutes: The June 9, 2014 meeting minutes were presented by Smith. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Smith and seconded by Reilly. All were in favor.

Treasurers Report: Smith presented the financials for the month and noted that the department finished the year within 36% of the budgeted amount. Motion to approve the financials was made by Smith and seconded by Landreth. All were in favor.

Additions to the Agenda: There were no additions to the agenda.

Code Enforcement Officer Presentation: DJ gave a presentation on his position with the city and the obstacles he faces as the Code Enforcement Officer. During the presentation the issue of signage was addressed. After discussion, Lomis made a motion to draft a letter to Council requesting a review of the current sign ordinance to ensure that it is more pro-business. Mr. Holman noted that he had this item on his list to address. He will meet with the Code Enforcement Officer, Planning Director and HPC Chair in the future and gather information. Mr. Holman will have an update at a future DDA meeting. The motion was seconded by Smith. All were in favor. The board thanked DJ for his presentation.

BUSINESS DISCUSSION:

Bicycle Paths: Reilly noted that he has looked at this idea closer and its potential to contribute to the downtown and increase tourism. He will continue to work on this effort.

Incubator Program: Reilly spoke about this concept and his exposure to it at a recent GMA training in Savannah. He is interested in creating this idea for St. Marys.

Team Camden: Darren reported that this meeting is a meeting for all Economic Development organizations. The group meets once per month and is working on several events that will bring people from all across the state into the area to showcase Camden County.

St. Marys Intracoastal Gateway (SMIG): Straight reported that the next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 24th at 5:00 pm. At that meeting Foram will give an update.

Maritime Heritage District (MHD): Richter noted there was nothing to report.

Historic Tree Trail: Richter reported that the group is still working on the grant application and signage.

Economic Development Committee: Lomis had nothing to report. It was noted that Bill Gross is now the Chairman of the Camden County Chamber of Commerce and Straight is the Government Community Affairs Chair. It was also reported that the Chamber President has tendered her resignation from the position.

Straight presented a challenge idea to the board. The question posed was: How do we get people off the I95 Interstate and into downtown St. Marys? Straight asked the board to bring all ideas to the next meeting and not to focus on funding as a deterrent to an idea.

DIRECTORS REPORT

Businesses and Updates: Nothing to report.

Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 9:52 am with motion by Bruce and second by Landreth. All were in favor.

Charlie Smith, Secretary
Prepared by Renée Coakley, Executive Assistant