

St. Marys Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Meeting Minutes for July 8, 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 May 13, 2013 meeting minutes. Minutes were approved with a motion by Smith and a second by Morrissey. All were in favor of the motion.

Treasurers Report: The board reviewed the financial statements for the last three months of the fiscal year. It was noted that the department finished under budget for this fiscal year. Smith motioned to approve the financials and second was made by Straight. All were in favor.

Additions to the Agenda: Façade Grant was added to the agenda by Renée. Morrissey added City Dock and City Welcome Package.

BUSINESS DISCUSSION:

Façade Grant: AJ reported on the upgrades that Lake Industries Inc. has made to their business, (i.e. sign installation and solar panel installation). This business utilized the façade grant received from the DDA for the sign placement and in turn mailed the board a thank you letter that AJ read aloud. AJ also reported on the various programs that the business owner used for the purchase of the solar panels at great savings. AJ will get the information to be passed on to other business owners. AJ also discussed an application received for Emma's Bed and Breakfast for the installation of awnings in two locations on their business. The application was for a grant of \$500 and was approved with a motion by Smith and second by Landreth. All were in favor.

Dock Damage: Morrissey made note of an email that he received in regards to the 6 hour dock that received damage after the July 4th celebration. The barge used for the fireworks damaged the dock and the City is currently discussing this item with the insurance company. Morrissey wanted the board to be aware in case questions were asked of board members.

Welcome Package: Morrissey asked if a welcome package for St. Marys' new business owners existed. AJ noted that a package has been created and data pertinent to St. Marys, quality of life, a Design Guideline and St. Marys magazine are some of the items in the package. AJ also mentioned a document that has been created recently in partnership with the DDA, SCORE, the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), and the St. Marys Development Authority. This document highlights what each of the named entities does and who the point of contact would be and this document will be given out in the Planning Department to all new business license applicants.

Team Camden: AJ reported that the Georgia Legislatures Day that had been scheduled for July 15 and 16, 2013 has been rescheduled for later in the year due to schedule conflicts. The event

will be held around the Georgia/Florida football game to entice attendees to extend their trip to partake of the festivities for the football game. Team Camden will meet on Wednesday, July 10th to further discuss the new dates and activities to be scheduled.

Tourism: No report.

St. Marys Intracoastal Gateway (SMIG): Morrissey reported that the group is currently working with Loretta Cockrum of the Forum Group, Inc. Mrs. Cockrum has been approved by City Council and is working on a proposal to serve as an overseer for the development of the SMIG property at no cost to the city.

DDA Update: AJ presented the last DDA Update that was created for the purpose of the annual report to Council which will be held this year on October 21st. The board stressed the pleasure of continuing the creation of this report to have the items that the DDA has completed during the year easily accessible for viewing. Motion to allow AJ to update the brochure and have the document printed at a cost of up to \$500 was made by Morrissey and second by Smith. All were in favor.

Board Positions: Smith reported that he recently received a notice from Lomis stating that he would like to resign his position as board chair for the DDA and continue to serve on the board as a member and Economic Development Committee Chair. The board accepted Lomis' resignation and discussed the nomination of an alternate chair. Renée read Richter's email casting her vote for Straight if nominated. Smith nominated Straight as the new DDA Board Chair and Morrissey second the motion. Straight accepted the nomination. All were in favor. AJ will update the City Clerk on the change and will draft a thank you letter to Lomis for his time spent on the DDA board as chairman.

Visions & Mission Statement Review and Adoption: Board members reviewed the vision and mission statements for inclusion in the 2013 Main Street Assessment. Motion to submit the vision and mission statements as presented was made by Smith and second by Landreth. The board discussed the possibility of shortening the mission statement in the near future once all board members are present. All were in favor.

DDA Planning Session Report Adoption: It was noted that an incorrect mission and vision statement was used on the planning report. Renée will update the document and a motion to adopt the DDA planning session report that was completed by Peggy Jolley of GA Power was made by Morrissey and second by Smith. All were in favor.

DNR Boat Signage at Docks Update: The board asked for the City Planning Director to report on this item at the July meeting. AJ read the email that he received from the City Planning Director in regards to this item. Mr. Weaver's reply was as follows: "I am puzzled about the need for the DDA to be updated on the DNR signage. It is jurisdictional and controlled by a permit the City has with DNR and we have no control over it other than asking for a permit revision – which will be investigated in the future. Therefore, there is no need for updating – and, with the exception of the Gateway Dock - anything needed to be done has already has been accomplished. The CIG signage at the Gateway dock is currently underway in accordance with

the City grant.” Straight asked AJ to add the Maritime Heritage District update as an ongoing item on future agendas.

DIRECTORS REPORT:

Businesses and Updates: AJ shared with the board the recent Georgia Municipal Association magazine that highlighted cities who participated in Georgia Cities Week. St. Marys was listed and had pictures due to the 3 events it held this year during this event. AJ reported that Gilman Building Products is relocating to St. Marys at the East entrance of Osprey Cove. The building will be erected and completed by December 2013. A ground breaking ceremony and grand opening events will be planned for the near future. AJ reported on a project that he is working on with the St. Marys CVB. The two will jointly plan a display for the welcome center at Exit 1. The display should be completed around July 30 and will contain information on events in St. Marys as well as visitor information on the area. AJ reported on the recent visit by Mr. Billy Peppers with the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). Mr. Peppers gave two presentations on the Redevelopment Powers Laws and Tax Allocation Districts (TAD). AJ is currently awaiting feedback from Council on whether to move forward in the further education on these financial tools. If it is decided to move forward, education pieces will need to be prepared immediately to accurately inform as many individuals as possible. If a TAD is to be in place by January 15th information sessions should begin by August 2013. AJ reported that there has been a lot of activity recently with the Mill Site. AJ is working with the Joint Development Authority (JDA) on one of the prospects. AJ reported that he is currently working on a Request for Proposal (RFP)/Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for an Economic Development Strategic Plan. The document will be forwarded to the City Manager for his comments this week. If approved, the request will be sent out by August and have plans by December 2013. AJ reported that the Enterprise Zone document is almost complete. Within the next two weeks the document will be finalized and sent to DCA for review and then it will go back to Council for adoption. AJ reminded the board that the zone would benefit businesses that create 5 or more jobs. The business would receive 100% tax abatement for the first 5 years and additional incentives that Council may offer.

LCD Projector, Screen and Sound System: AJ reported on the possibility of the Economic Development Department moving to City Hall in the Executive Suite. Possible changes are currently being discussed and the DDA board will have to discuss the items that were purchased with DDA funds and placed in the building, (i.e. furniture, LCD projector, screen and sound system).

Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 10:20 am with a motion by Smith and second by Landreth. All were in favor.

Charlie Smith, Secretary

Prepared by Renée Coakley, Executive Assistant