

St. Marys Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Meeting Minutes for March 5, 2012

The regular meeting of the St. Marys DDA was called to order by Lomis at 9:00 am and at that time the guests were welcomed.

Members Present: Gary Straight, Charlie Smith, Cheri Richter, John Morrissey, Jim Lomis, and Terry Landreth

Members not Present: Craig Root

Guest in attendance: Simon Scott, Chris Daniel; Camden County Chamber of Commerce, Barbara Ryan; St. Marys Convention and Visitors Bureau

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

Minutes: The board reviewed the February 6, 2012 meeting minutes. Minutes were approved with a motion by Smith and a second by Landreth. All were in favor of the motion.

Treasurers Report: Smith presented the city financial report and the DDA statements. Smith made a motion to approve the financials and the motion was second by Straight. All were in favor.

Additions to the Agenda: Richter asked to add DDA training in Tifton and Morrissey added JDA and barge port and DDA Budget under the Director's Report. Motion to adopt the agenda was made by Smith and second by Morrissey. All were in favor.

BUSINESS DISCUSSION:

Promotions Committee: Spirit of 1812: Richter mentioned that the event was not a great success mostly due to the location. There were approximately 200 people who stopped by the booth at Orange Hall. Richter stated that due to the lack of support she was going to allow the upcoming Peace Garden initiative to coincide with the efforts of the War of 1812. The formation of the garden has an interest in the War of 1812 and the two purposes may pair well together. Richter also mentioned the \$1000 that was left in the DDA account in this line item and stated that those funds should be used to aid in assisting any future War of 1812 projects. **Airport:** Richter mentioned that she was approached about the possibility of an airport technical school being constructed on the airport property that could possibly teach maintenance, manufacturing, repair, etc. After brief discussion it was noted that there is not currently someone looking to start this type project and if so in the future it should be brought to the attention of the airport authority. Landreth mentioned that there presently is someone teaching a technical course at the airport and that it is an idea that could be expanded upon. AJ asked that Richter get the questioner in touch with him for further discussion. **Chocolate for Charities:** Richter mentioned that the event is scheduled for March 31st at the First Presbyterian Church. **DDA Training in Tifton:** Richter mentioned that she and AJ both attending the DDA basic training in

Tifton recently and from that training she expressed that the DDA should only focus on five goals at the upcoming planning session to implement and complete versus a larger number that may leave several projects pending.

Economic Development Committee: Seminar on March 8th: Renée mentioned the upcoming seminar that SCORE, the Chamber and the Small Business Development Center will partner to sponsor on March 8th at 5:30 pm.

Design Committee: AJ reminded the board that at the last meeting two projects were awarded. Those projects are being completed, and once receipts are received in the DDA office the funds will be dispersed.

Film Alliance: Ryan mentioned that thirty five members of the production crew for the TV series “Royal Pains” are in town in preparation for the upcoming filming on March 19th. Ryan also mentioned that the next movie that will be filmed locally is called 10,000 Angels. There will be three full page color ads in the Source Book this month about St. Marys and the local arts. Ryan also mentioned that the film museum has moved to the St. Marys Welcome Center to aid with staffing issues of the museum. Ryan also asked the board to keep the Theatre by the Trax in mind for Economic Development and future projects and funding.

Tourism: Ryan mentioned all of the efforts that the CVB has been putting forth with the Lovetown, USA filming.

St. Marys Intracoastal Gateway (SMIG): Morrissey reported that the property has been cleared. At the last meeting the committee discussed the possibility of removing the fence and underbrush. The conclusion is that the fence will not be removed but the underbrush and the bamboo will be removed to facilitate being able to view the property from the street. The dock will be completed by July 1st. The wall and bulkhead will be completed in late 2013 or early 2014, paid out of the upcoming grant year budget cycle. The marketing sub-committee for the property is planning to have an event promoting the property and inviting realtors and developers. AJ is working on getting pictures from the air and water of the property to aid in the marketing process. Ryan mentioned that she would be willing to run a full length article in the upcoming St. Marys magazine if the committee has specific information for the article.

Potential Barge Port: Morrissey mentioned the articles that have been circulating regarding the Joint Development Authority (JDA) and the mill property and the possible barge port. Morrissey asked AJ to invite the JDA to the April meeting to discuss the idea. Ryan stated that she would be willing to do a combined article on the SMIG property and the mill property in the upcoming magazine if there is enough pertinent information. Richter asked Morrissey to discuss the Maritime Heritage Overlay Zone Opportunity that is the Council Agenda for tonight. Morrissey stated that the city planner will be requesting permission from the council to acquire more information on the possibility of St. Marys obtaining this designation.

DIRECTORS REPORT:

DDA Golf Cart: AJ reminded that the cart has been repaired and the material has been ordered for the seat repair. The total of all of the work comes under the \$1700 budget that the board allowed for the completed project.

Georgia Cities Foundation Week – April 23rd – 27th: AJ reminded the board about the dates for the event. Events will be determined this month.

Updated MOU: AJ presented the updated MOU that had minor changes made by the City of Kingsland’s attorney. All of the Economic Development Officers were asked to have the updated document signed in a timely manner. Motion to sign the updated MOU was made by Straight and second by Landreth. All were in favor.

Planning Session Reminder: AJ reminded the board that the planning session will be on April 2nd. AJ will add the JDA presentation to the beginning of the meeting agenda.

Businesses and Updates: AJ mentioned the new State Farm Insurance Office and their grand opening on Wednesday, March 7th. Jeff Pool’s is now open on Charlie Smith Senior Highway and had their grand opening last week. AJ mentioned the current Military Zone that encompasses Census Tract 106. In December the Department of Community Affairs notified the city that Census Tract 105 is also eligible for the designation. The requirements are that there be at least a 15% poverty rate in the area noted and the area is in close proximity to a military base. Tract 105 meets those two standards. The letter has been written and AJ will present it at the March 5th council meeting for approval and Mayor’s signature.

Budget: AJ mentioned that he and Smith discussed the current budget. AJ noted items that increased which were travel, (due to the city manager requesting that AJ be out recruiting businesses more), and a fuel line item that was added due to the recent acquisition of a department vehicle. AJ noted that there were a few line items that decreased due to lack of necessity of the extra funds. AJ did note that after discussion with the City Manager, the Advertising/Marketing line item should be increased and AJ is working on justifying the increase for the upcoming budget cycle.

Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 10:32 am with a motion by Morrissey and second by Landreth. All were in favor.

Charlie Smith, Secretary
Prepared by Renée Coakley, Executive Assistant