

**St. Marys Downtown Development Authority (DDA)**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
Meeting Minutes for September 10, 2012

The regular meeting of the St. Marys DDA was called to order by Lomis at 9:00 am.

**Members Present:** Craig Root, Terry Landreth, Jim Lomis, Gary Straight, and John Morrissey

**Members not Present:** Cheri Richter, and Charlie Smith

**Guest in attendance:** Angela Wigger; Director of Tourism, and Mike Neff; Spencer House Inn Owner

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

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

**Treasurers Report:** Lomis presented the city financial report and the DDA statements. A recommendation was made to have the \$25,000 grant funds figure that is included on the city report under advertising be moved to a separate line item. AJ will meet with the Finance Department to discuss moving those grant funds. Landreth made a motion to approve the financials and the motion was second by Morrissey. All were in favor.

**Additions to the Agenda:** Morrissey requested to add Marshwalk and AJ added Façade Grant under the Directors Report.

**BUSINESS DISCUSSION:**

**Team Camden:** AJ reported that representatives from St. Marys, Kingsland and the JDA met recently to discuss a Request for Information (RFI) that was received for possible locations for a proposed business. St. Marys submitted two locations and Kingsland submitted one location. All locations submitted met the specifications that the requestor was looking for. It was noted that the tap fees on the properties that St. Marys submitted were significantly higher than Kingsland's. AJ is working on putting together an incentive package to present to Council for future prospects to better attract businesses. AJ will have the planning department write a memo explaining the tap fee process and present it to the DDA board at a future meeting. The board would also like to review a comparative created by the planning department comparing local cities fees. Team Camden will be meeting with a county tax assessor and the Board of Education regarding abatements in case these issues come up in the future.

**Film Alliance:** No report was given.

**Tourism:** Angela reported on the upcoming events in St. Marys which include: Starry Nights on September 15<sup>th</sup>. The Rock Shrimp Festival is scheduled for October 6<sup>th</sup>. Hay Days Build a Scarecrow is scheduled for Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup> and this year the event will be held at Theatre by the Trax due to the construction at Orange Hall. A new event, St. Marys Railroad Day will

take place on that day as well. The Scarecrow Stroll is on Tuesday, October 16<sup>th</sup>. October 23<sup>rd</sup> is the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cumberland Island National Seashore Museum. The Haunted History Tour is scheduled for October 26<sup>th</sup>. The Fantastics will perform at Theatre by the Trax for several shows in October. Bike Ride across Georgia (BRAG) is scheduled for June 2013. St. Marys will be the ending point for the ride and will bring approximately 2000 visitors to the area.

**St. Marys Intracoastal Gateway (SMIG):** AJ reported that the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) deadline for respondents was extended to September 20<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm. New respondents are allowed to submit packages as well as previous submitters are allowed to send additional information to their package. The next meeting for the committee is Monday, September 24<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm at which time the group will review all submitted RFQs.

**Marshwalk:** Morrissey asked if the DDA should be charged with being involved with this project if the SMIG property is developed. The board agreed and AJ will work on putting a committee together to oversee this project. Landreth volunteered to be a committee member.

## **DIRECTORS REPORT:**

**Façade Grant:** AJ announced that the application received from J's Restaurant and British Pub for an electric sign to be mounted between the existing pillars at the front of the building has been withdrawn due to the business purchasing additional property near the restaurant. The business owner will eventually do some sort of expansion work and resubmit an application at that time. AJ also discussed an application presented by the Spencer House Inn for replacing windows on their building. Mr. Neff discussed the process and the application was approved with a motion by Root and second by Morrissey. All were in favor. Straight asked if a better definition of signage in regards to electronic signs should be added to the Façade Grant brochure to ensure that the DDA would not be paying for advertising for a business if that is what the sign would be used for. AJ will work on revising the brochure in regards to electronic signs. Renée will email the Design Guidelines to the board that were created for new and existing businesses in St. Marys to review.

**Georgia Mainstreet Conference:** AJ reported that he recently attended this conference in LaGrange, GA where he learned about the BRAG event and he will be working with Tourism on ways to capitalize on this event.

**Businesses and Updates:** AJ reported that he will be working again this year on the Georgia-Florida Renewable Energy Expo (GFREE) with the County Extension Office. This year's event will have more of a home energy conservation aspect.

Morrissey made mention of an editorial in the Friday, September 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the Tribune & Georgian that spoke negatively about local Economic Development. The board recommended that the article be scanned and emailed to the board and placed on the October agenda for discussion. Straight requested that the time for the October meeting be adjusted to start at 8:30 am due to the proposed agenda items. The board agreed to the time.

**Adjourn** – Meeting adjourned at 10:27 am with a motion by Straight and second by Landreth.  
All were in favor.

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Charlie Smith, Secretary  
Prepared by Renée Coakley, Executive Assistant