

**Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation/
Downtown Special Assessment District
Board Meeting Minutes
April 28, 2015**

Attending: Richard Antokol, Austin Fisher, Scott Johnson,
Chris Spraragen, Rudy Grant
Absent: Heather Peterson, Jack McDonald, Joe O'Connor
Staff: Jim Salengo, Colleen Merays, Gail White

Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation

Richard Antokol opened the meeting at 8:27am.

1) Approvals - All

- a) Meeting Minutes** - Richard Antokol asked for a motion to approve the March 31, 2015, board meeting minutes.

Rudy Grant made a motion to approve the March 31, 2015, board minutes; Scott Johnson seconded the motion. All in favor.

- b) Schenectady/Albany Chamber Integration-** Jim Salengo informed the board of an informative meeting he had with Chuck Steiner regarding the proposed integration of the two Chambers. Jim believes that there will be very little impact on the DSIC as a partner of the Chamber and it is his recommendation that we vote in favor of the integration.

Austin Fisher made a motion to accept Jim Salengo's recommendation to vote in favor of the integration of the Chamber of Schenectady County and the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce. Scott Johnson seconded the motion. All in favor.

2) Executive Director's Report – Jim Salengo/All

a) Finance

- i. 2014 Audit Update** – Jason Marra was here Monday & Tuesday of last week and all went smoothly. Jason will present the audited financials at the June board meeting.

b) Outdoor Program

- i. Hometown Heroes Banner Program** - Colleen Merays reported that we have 38 banners sponsored to date; SEFCU has sponsored 15 of them. Time Warner Cable News will be doing a story on WWII veteran Charlie Merriam, father of Brian Merriam of Merriam Insurance.
Press Conference - A press conference/ceremony is scheduled for May 15, 11am, at Veterans Park to kick off the banner program. We will unveil Charlie Merriam's banner and present him with a framed photo of the banner. We will then proceed to State Street in front of Johnny's to hang his banner live.
- ii. 2015 Flower Program** – We have increased our flower baskets by about 70 this year for a total of 300. Installation is scheduled for May 20. We will have two overnight waterers this year. Neil Boers will be returning from last year, along with another gentleman from the City Mission. They will split the shifts due to the extra time needed to water the additional baskets.

c) **Marketing /Communications**

i. **2015 Dining Guide** – The 2015 Schenectady Dining Guides are in. 18,000 brochures will be shipped to Berkshire Brochure Display for regional distribution. They will also be distributed along the Thruway from New York City to the Capital Region.

d) **Ambassador Event** – Save the date for the Annual VIP Fundraiser for the Schenectady Ambassadors. It is scheduled for June 10, 5:30pm, at Transfinder. Jim Salengo is attending the monthly Ambassadors meetings to keep them up to date on downtown activities.

e) **2015 Building Block Party**

i. Scheduled for October 29, 5:30-8:30pm, at Proctors – Colleen Merays spoke with Ray Legere about possibly holding the event at the Armory. Since this is our main annual fundraiser, it would only work if there is no cost to us.

ii. **Award Nominees** – A list of past Building Block Award winners and suggestions for this year were passed out to board members, who were asked to review the lists and send thoughts or suggestions to Colleen Merays. Awardees must be voted on at the May board meeting. Austin Fisher suggested the Folklore Society. ACTION: Colleen Merays will send out the lists to all board members for review.

3) **New/Old Business**

i. **Taking Care of Business** – Jim Salengo reviewed a report of the results from the fundraiser the DSIC coordinated to help businesses impacted by the Jay Street fire. Summary: The April 1 event with Mazzone Hospitality raised \$19,000. Through April 10, donations totaled \$26,208; a \$25,000 match from Neil & Jane Golub brought the grand total to \$51,208. For every \$1 we spent, \$22 was raised. Our hard costs of \$587.36 were for the band and the credit card/PayPal fees. Established businesses that were closed and have reopened will receive \$5,000; a locksmith that had just opened will receive \$1,000. Businesses that remain closed will receive \$5,000 now, plus an additional \$5,000 when they are ready to reopen. Don Leva and Kathy Fitzmaurice donated their proceeds to the other businesses.

ii. **Downtown Survey** – It was decided to table this discussion until the next meeting when Heather Peterson is present.

iii. **Governance Committee** – Jim Salengo reviewed the idea of an Advisory Board that would provide board input but have no voting powers; these members could then be strong candidates for board vacancies. Jim plans to form a small sub-committee to review the DSIC bylaws and the nominating process.

iv. **Annual Meeting Date & Location** – The Annual Meeting will be a casual networking event again this year. A tentative date of July 22 was discussed. Last year, we hosted about 100 people at Mexican Radio. This year's location is tentatively Centre Street Pub.

Chris Spraragen made a motion to adjourn the DSIC meeting; Scott Johnson seconded the motion. All in favor. Board meeting closed at 9:21am.

Richard Antokol opened the DSAD meeting at 9:21am.

No new business.

Scott Johnson made a motion to close the DSAD meeting; Chris Spraragen seconded the motion. All in favor. Meeting closed at 9:22am.