



**Thayer Street District Management Authority
Board of Directors Meeting**

Tuesday, July 11, 2023

118 Waterman Street, 2nd floor, Providence, RI

DRAFT

MEETING MINUTES

The Thayer Street District Management Authority (TSDMA) board meeting was called to order at 9:00 A.M.

1. Roll Call

Directors: Joe Mardo, Chair; Paul Griesinger; John Luipold; Richard Dulgarian; Lauren Berk; Katie Silberman; Taylor Enos; and Donna Personeus, Executive Director.

Absent: Harry Bilodeau

Guests:; Megan Lewis, Brown University; Lt. William Brown, PPD; Natalia Mitrelis; Tammy Mitrelis; Philippe Maatouk; Camille Laflame; Enzo Battaglia, City of Providence fellow; George Madian, City of Providence fellow.

2. Update from Lt William Brown on Recent Incidents in the TSDMA Area

Lt. Brown updated TSDMA Board members regarding recent incidents in the Thayer Street area. He provided an update on the recent incident at the Avon Cinema. He explained the struggle he has had to fill open positions. He asked for help lobbying for additional foot posts in the area. Lt. Brown addressed the issue of the increased homelessness and panhandling in the area. He stated that there is not much the police can currently do unless sidewalks are blocked or individuals become aggressive. He said if either happens, business owners should call the main number (272-1111 or 911) immediately. He stated that he will be speaking to the Mayor regarding these issues and will report back with any changes to the current policies. He mentioned that he has sent social workers into areas to help when possible. Lt. Brown mentioned that he has concerns that the problem will get worse with the closing of Home Gate.

3. Presentation by Tammy Mitrelis regarding Andreas Food Truck parking in TSDMA

Mr. Luipold introduced Ms. Tammy Mitrelis and Ms. Natalia Mitrelis, Andreas restaurant to the Board members. Ms. Tammy Mitrelis presented her idea of launching a fast food, food truck concept for Andreas Express. She explained that she would like their food truck to be able to be parked directly outside of Andreas. She explained that currently their sit down dining restaurant does not have the space to provide both high volume fast-to-go orders and fine dining due to the kitchen size and location. The food truck would provide a limited menu geared to the fast turn to-go customer. The food prep would be done inside the restaurant and the cooking within the food truck. Several Board members asked if they had reviewed the current food truck ordinance that provides a 200 ft buffer from any Thayer Street eating establishment. She replied that they had not. Mr. Luipod questioned if it would be possible for the food truck to be parked on private property. Board members questioned that possibility

due to the current food truck ordinance. Several Board members suggested that they investigate the traffic to the current food trucks that park on Waterman outside the 200 ft current barrier. Ms. Tammy Mitrelis stated that they had not yet purchased the food truck. They were researching options to bring Andreas Express to reality.

4. Discussion and Vote to Approve the Minutes from the Board Meeting on June 6, 2023.

Minutes from the June 6, 2023 Public Budget Hearing presented by Ms. Personeus were approved after a motion by Mr. Griesinger, which was seconded by Mr. Mardo. The vote was unanimous.

Minutes from the June 6, 2023 the Board meeting presented by Ms. Personeus were approved after a motion by Mr. Luipold, which was seconded by Ms. Silberman. The vote was unanimous.

5. Discussion and Vote to Approve the Financial Report as provided on July 11, 2023.

Financial Reports were presented July 11, 2023 by Ms. Personeus. The reports were approved after a motion by Mr. Luipold, which was seconded by Ms. Silberman. The vote was unanimous.

6. Nomination, Discussion, and Vote on TSDMA Board of Directors Executive Positions for FY 2024.

A motion to continue with the current TSDMA Executive Directors, Chairman, Joe Mardo; Vice Chairman, Paul Griesinger, and Treasurer, John Luipold for the fiscal year of 2024 was made by Ms. Berk, which was seconded by Mr. Dulgarian. The vote was unanimous. The Executive Directors each agreed to hold the position for an additional year.

7. Executive Director Report

Ms. Personeus provided her Executive Director report on July 10, 2023 to Board members. There was no further discussion.

8. Thayer Street Marketing Committee Update

Board members discussed the Taste of Thayer as the major annual marketing event for Thayer Street and the TSDMA. Members discussed the event and decided on a sales goal of 600 tickets in total. There was agreement from the Board members that 20% of the ticket sales would be donated to the RI Food Bank in lieu of stipends for each business participating in the event. Each participating business would be presented with a certificate thanking them for their participation in the donation and have the opportunity to participate in social media posts and photos of the presentation of the funds. It was agreed that details regarding business participation and sponsors would be discussed during the Marketing Committee meeting.

9. Social Media Report Presentation by Consultant Audrey McClelland

Ms. McClelland presented a summary of her social media report to the Board, which included engagement data from each social media platform and an influencer update. Ms. McClelland stated that the new business, "In the Pink", generated a large amount of traffic for the month on Instagram. Facebook's engagement dipped from May, with less posts generated due to the change in the vendor contract. She anticipated that Facebook will drop and eventually plateau. Ms. McClelland mentioned that she was working with Ms. Personeus to create a new Threads account that will eventually replace Twitter (now "X"). She mentioned working with Ms. Personeus to secure three (3) segments with Thayer businesses (Avon, Spectrum-India, and La Crepeire) for an upcoming "On the Road" series of Rhode Show TV segments.

10. Updates on Redevelopment of 279 Thayer (Two Cousin LLC) and 235 Meeting (Boutros Salo & Boghos)

Ms. Personeus mentioned that after several requests, she had not received an update from Mr. Balagian. She let the Board know that she was notified by a business owner that a whole segment of Meeting Street/Thayer had

been closed with no notice to the TSDMA or Thayer businesses. She emailed Nate Urso and provided members with a copy of his response through email. Member Taylor Enos said he would look into the matter as well.

11. Thayer Business Update

Mr. Paul Griesinger mentioned that Mala Noodles would be opening between Metro Mart and In the Pink soon.

12. Other Business

There were no updates at this time.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:25 A.M.