



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

Tuesday, May 2, 2023

118 Waterman Street, 2nd floor, Providence, RI

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; Lauren Berk; Katie Silberman; Richard Dulgarian; Taylor Enos; and Donna Personeus, Executive Director.

Attendance by zoom: John Luipold

Guests: Megan Lewis, Assistant Director, Real Estate, Brown University; Kristen Adam, President & CEO, PWCVB; and Ednita Colon, PWCVB

2. Presentation on Observation of Visitors to Providence by Kristen Adamo, President & CEO, PWCVB and Ednita Colon, PWCVB

Ms. Adamo presented the Board with a packet outlining the relationship with the TSDMA over the last several years. She mentioned blog posts, social media posts and shares, event calendars, Thayer Street neighborhood page and the Taste of Thayer. She stated the Thayer Street neighborhood page is the most popular page. She also spoke to the goals of the PWCVB positioning Providence as a travel destination for leisure tourism, as well as for sporting, meetings and conference events. Ms. Adamo stated Providence tourism is on its way to recovery since COVID, with hotel room bookings down. Rates, however, are up. She explained the PWCVB runs the goprovidence.com website and social media platforms. Ms. Colon spoke about the visitor bureaus' physical locations, hours of operation, and new opportunities for the TSDMA to work with the centers. It was recommended that the TSDMA provide printed pieces to be available at the visitor's center because foreign travelers do not always have expensive international internet capabilities. Ms. Adamo stated she recommends the TSDMA work several months ahead and create events to drive traffic that include hot food topics (gluten free/vegan), and outdoor activities that could be stops on the urban trails (bus tours, walking trails, bike trails). She mentioned that experimental experiences (glass blowing, events in groups) are very popular at the moment. Ms. Adamo stated Thayer Street's brand is considered cool, young, walkable, art/creative, a must-see and experience like Harvard Square. She recommended the TSDMA tie into Brown sporting events and work with the PWCVB and City of Providence Arts and Tourism to try and secure additional funding for events.

3. Discussion and Vote to Approve the Minutes from the Board Meeting on April 4, 2023.

Minutes from the April 4, 2023 Board meeting presented by Ms. Personeus were approved after a motion by Mr. Griesinger, which was seconded by Ms. Silberman. The vote was unanimous. Mr. Luipold did not vote due to attendance by zoom.

4. Discussion and Vote to Approve the Financial Report as provided on May 2, 2023.

Financial Reports were presented May 2, 2023 by Ms. Personeus. The reports were approved after a motion by Ms. Silberman, which was seconded by Mr. Griesinger. The vote was unanimous. Mr. Luipold did not vote due to attendance by zoom. Mr. Griesinger asked to have future reports provided as accrual based instead of cash based.

5. FY 2024 Budget Draft for Discussion

Ms. Personeus presented a second draft of the FY 2024 budget that combined FY 2019 through FY 2023 expenses for Board member review and discussion. Mr. Luipold informed the Board that Brown University would no longer be providing additional revenues in support of the TSDMA budget other than the 25% of budget previously agreed when the TSDMA officially began in 2006 and the more recent voluntary tax assessment contribution for the commercial space at 307 Thayer, located just outside the district. Mr. Luipold stated the TSDMA needed to present a balanced budget for FY 2024. Executive Board members, Mr. Griesinger, Mr. Mardo and Mr. Luipold agreed to work with Ms. Personeus in the coming weeks to provide all the Board members a balanced budget for review, in advance of the June 2023 Public Budget Hearing and Board meeting.

6. Executive Director Report

Ms. Personeus provided her Executive Director report on May 1, 2023 to Board members. There was no further discussion.

7 Thayer Street Marketing Committee Update

There was no update on the marketing committee pending FY 2024 budget decisions. The marketing committee will continue to meet on the second Friday of the month at 11 a.m. via zoom.

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

Ms. Personeus informed the Board that she had received the following update provided by Rouben Balagian, project manager on the redevelopments of 279 Thayer (Two Cousin LLC) or 235 Meeting (Boutros Salo & Boghos). Mr Balagian emailed at 279 Thayer, “Underpinning and soil stabilization of urban outfitters is completed. Underpinning and soil stabilization of the FedEx building is almost completed. We have one section and two main column’s remaining. We are finalizing the adjustments to the foundation plan based on the soil stabilization and underpinning results, and getting ready to start the footings” and at 235 Meeting Street, “We completed the third floor walls and wall pour and have begun the fourth floor system. We are also in the process of finalizing windows and doors as we prepare to get the building completed and weather tight.”

9. Social Media Report Presentation by Consultant Audrey McClelland

Ms. McClelland presented her social media report to the Board. She mentioned the city/towns with the most engagement and that both Facebook and Instagram had seen an increase in the past month with the addition of Yaz Chicken and giveaway promotions. Ms. McClelland informed the members that Brendan from the Rhode Show provided multiple social media posts, as well as a segment on the Rhode Show mentioning Sneaker Junkies. She also mentioned that she would be producing a 4-5 minute video with helpful social media information this month to the district businesses.

10. Thayer Business Update

Mr. Griesinger mentioned that a new ramen noodle restaurant would be coming to 215 Thayer and that *In the Pink* would be moving into the former Pokeworks location.

11. Other Business

There were no updates at this time.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:29 A.M.