



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

Tuesday, August 1, 2023

118 Waterman Street, 2nd floor, Providence, RI

**MEETING MINUTES**

The Thayer Street District Management Authority (TSDMA) board meeting was called to order at 9:01 A.M.

**1. Roll Call**

Directors: Joe Mardo, Chair; Paul Griesinger (via zoom); John Luipold; Richard Dulgarian; Lauren Berk; Katie Silberman; and Donna Personeus, Executive Director.

Absent: Harry Bilodeau; Taylor Enos

Guests:; Megan Lewis, Brown University; Mikele St. Germain, Director of Parent and Family Engagement, Brown University; and Meg Silvestri, Assistant Director of Event Management, Brown University

**2. Presentation by Mikele St. Germain, Director of Parent and Family Engagement, and Meg Silvestri, Assistant Director of Event Management regarding collaboration with Thayer St merchants during high visitor time at Brown, including Family Weekend (Oct 13-15) and Commencement (Memorial Day weekend '24).**

Ms. Silberman introduced Ms. St. Germain and Ms. Silvestri to the members. They proceeded to present ways in which Brown University could collaborate with the businesses in the TSDMA on events like the Brown Parents Weekend and Commencement. Ms. St. Germain suggested businesses could provide special coupons and incentives for parents to visit the street during an event like Family weekend, October 13-15. A pin or identifier could be used so that businesses could easily spot Brown Family members. She stated one of the biggest problems during Family weekend is having places for all the students and visitors to dine. They need alternative dining options. She stated having a list of all the restaurants with order ahead options would be helpful. Ms. Personeus stated that she would email a list of the restaurants within the week. They would like to make visiting Thayer Street on that weekend a special event. Ms. Personeus suggested closing off areas like Olive and Cushing that Brown controls, and adding tables, lighting and live music. Mr. Mardo asked them for their suggestions on how to best get a TSDMA event, like the Taste of Thayer, out to the Brown community. Ms. St. Germain recommended news stories and social media. Ms. St. Germain and Ms. Silvestri stated they would get back to Ms. Personeus with a plan that could be shared with the Board.

**3. Discussion and Vote to Approve the Minutes from the Board Meeting on July 11, 2023.**

Minutes from the July 11, 2023 Board meeting presented by Ms. Personeus were approved after a motion by Ms. Silberman, which was seconded by Ms. Berk. The vote was unanimous.

#### **4. Discussion and Vote to Approve the Financial Report as provided on August 1, 2023.**

Financial Reports were presented August 1, 2023 by Ms. Personeus. The reports were approved after a motion by Ms. Berk, which was seconded by Mr. Luipold. The vote was unanimous.

#### **5. Executive Director Report**

Ms. Personeus provided her Executive Director report on July 31, 2023 to Board members. There was no further discussion.

#### **6. Discussion on a Demographic Study of the TSDMA**

This item was removed from the agenda pending clarification.

#### **7. Thayer Street Marketing Committee Update**

Board members discussed the next phase of planning for the Taste of Thayer. The members decided the priorities would be to secure participating food businesses, as well as a new ticketing platform that could accept venmo and possibly apple pay. Mr. Mardo updated members on a brief meeting that he, Mr. Griesinger and Ms. Berk had with RI Food Bank representatives. He stated that they were interested in a partnership and talking further. A second meeting would be scheduled in the coming week to discuss details on how to collaborate best. Mr. Mardo explained that the TSDMA marketing committee had decided to offer 20% off the ticket purchase to the Food Bank.

#### **8. 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", continued to generate a large amount of traffic on Instagram. Facebook's engagement saw a slight bump upwards in July. Ms. McClelland mentioned that influencers had worked with Den Den, Mala Noodle and In the Pink in July. One influencer worked with East Side Pockets on a giveaway. She mentioned that the three (3) segments with Thayer businesses (Avon, Spectrum-India, and La Crepeire) that aired on the "On the Road" series of Rhode Show TV segments were received well.

#### **9. 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 had been informed that he was no longer working with 279 Thayer. The owners informed her that Michel Boutros would be providing future updates for that development project.

#### **10. Thayer Business Update**

Mr. Luipold updated members that the Sydney Cafe would be opening on Thayer in the former Blue State Coffee location at 300 Thayer. He also mentioned Mad About Noodles would be opening in the former Revd Cycling location and Heng Thai would be expanding with a second restaurant concept above their current restaurant on the first floor of 165 Angell, called MAHA Heng Hot Pot & Bowl.

#### **11. Other Business**

There were no updates at this time.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:12 A.M.