



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

Tuesday, January 5, 2016

MEETING MINUTES

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

1. Roll Call

Directors: Dean Martineau, Chair; Albert Dahlberg; John Luipold; David Shwaery; Paul Greisinger; Steve Lewinstein; Susan Mardo; Margit Liander; Edward Bishop; Laura Berk, Amanda Giessler & Donna Personeus, Executive Director.

Guests: Katie Silberman, Brown University; Richard Dulgarian, Avon Cinema; Raber Umphenour, Avon Cinema

2. Discussion and Vote on the Board Meeting Minutes from December 1, 2015

Minutes from the December 1, 2015 board meeting were approved with edits after a motion by Mr. Dahlberg, which was seconded by Ms. Mardo. The vote was unanimous by all attending Board members.

3. Discussion and Vote on Financial Report as provided on January 5, 2015

The Financial Reports were presented January 5, 2015, and approved after a motion by Mr. Luipold, which was seconded by Ms. Mardo. The vote was unanimous by all attending Board members.

4. Chairman's Report

Mr. Martineau stated that the Board should decide on goals for 2016 to help provide direction for Ms. Personeus. Mr. Dahlberg stated that he would spearhead that project and bring recommendations to the next Board meeting. Mr. Martineau stated he would like to participate in process as well.

5. Executive Director Update

Audit Updates; Tree Well Plaque Project Update; Winter Storage for Parklet Update; Marketing Updates: Article in 49th Anniversary East Side Monthly Issue, December 5th Holiday Market at Wheeler, Holiday Wreath, Providence Children's Film Festival; Thayer Public Art Master Plan Update; Big Belly Update; Tippy Trash Container Sale Status Update; Enforcement Meeting Update; Distribution of Printed Thayer Business Guide.

Ms. Personeus reported the audit for FY's 2013-2015 had begun and that she and our TSDMA bookkeeper, Arylan MacCuish, would be meeting with the auditor later this week. Ms. Personeus reported

that she had sent tree plaque proofs to Mr. Lewinstein and was waiting for approval to proceed. Ms. Personeus confirmed the parklet had left Thayer Street and is currently being stored in the same location as last year courtesy of Orion Red in Smithfield. Ms. Personeus mentioned that she had purchased a half-page ad in East Side Monthly's 40th year special edition that would run along with the merchant half-page ad to create a full page presence in the January 2016 issue. She also mentioned that she was pleased with the results and opportunity to reach out to the community that was presented with the free booth space at the December 5th Holiday Market at Wheeler courtesy of Festival Fete. She stated the TSDMA should participate next year if given the opportunity was given again. Ms. Personeus reported that the artist that was creating the Holiday Wreath was injured during construction and was unable to finish the artwork. Ms. Personeus stated that she had meet with the organizers of the Providence Children's Film Festival that is coming to Avon Cinema in February. She was able to secure promotional opportunities for Thayer Merchants in lieu payment, merchants will be providing discounts to PCFF volunteers and attendees. She also reported that she was working with Brown University to provide Lot#11 for PCFF attendee parking, on the weekends, during the festival. Ms. Personeus reported she had personally supervised the installation of the Big Belly containers and at this time the containers are performing as expected. She mentioned that Ocean State is currently testing liners other than the Big Belly suggested product to locate a more cost effective liner solution. Ms. Personeus reported that all the tippy trash containers have been sold at the approved \$50 per container amount and to the two entities previously approved by the TSDMA Board and secured by Ms. Silberman. Ms. Personeus reported that she and Ms. Liander met with Lt. Donnelly to discuss what can be done to better enforce of existing rules pertaining to "Food Trucks, Peddlers and Panhandlers" in Thayer Street District. Ms. Liander reported that she would provide a clearer map of the 200-foot buffer border to help law enforcement. Board members suggested better signage to indicate "No Food Truck" zones. Ms. Liander said she would work on that.

6. Board Member Nominating Committee Report

Update on Mayor's Appointee

Ms. Liander reported that the Mayor's office had received Ms. Berk's resume and that she was waiting to hear further on the confirmation of Ms. Berk.

7. Parking Initiative (Brown University) Update

Mr. Luipold reported that Brown University's application to the City of Providence Planning Board for the demolition of the Brown owned properties along Brook Street and repurposing of the space for a temporary, public-fee based surface parking lot, would be heard on January 19th. Brown's outside counsel has informed Mr. Luipold that the Brook Street re-purposed temporary surface parking lot, if approved, as well as the use of Lot #11 for another public paid parking lot, will mostly likely require a Special Use Permit from the Zoning Board. Mr. Luipold answered a Board member question of cost to park, stating the cost to park, if the special usage is approved, will be based on current market rates. Mr. Martineau suggested a letter from the TSDMA in support of Brown University's application. Mr. Lewinstein made a motion to accept Mr. Martineau's letter of support from the TSDMA which was seconded by Mr. Greisinger. The vote was unanimous by all attending Board members. Ms. Mardo stated that she would also write a letter of support on behalf of the Thayer Merchants Association.

8. Infrastructure Update

Big Belly Project Update

In addition to the information Mr. Personeus provided in her report, the Board discuss the potential for using the Big Belly side advertising panels to help promote the Thayer merchants and generate additional

revenues to offset the monthly cost. It was suggested that the TSDMA look to Newport as an example of how to use these panels most effectively. Mr. Luipold mentioned that he had received several complaints regarding the misuse of A-frame signage by many current Thayer Street Merchants. He suggested that the advertising panels to be used by the Merchants in place of their A-frame signage to help solve that issue and create a more appealing and less cluttered street landscape for Thayer shoppers and diners. Another suggestion from the Board was to use some of the panels to show parking information/maps.

9. City Liaison Report

Updates to Thayer Business Guide, Merchant Request to Change Parking Meters Update

Ms. Liander reported that the meter signage and meters had been updated to match; time limits of either 3 hours or 4 hours depending on location as well as the days of the week Monday-Saturday. The Board discussed the rumors of the City extending the meters from 6pm to 9pm. Ms. Liander said she had not been notified of that change, but would check and report back to the Board. Ms. Liander was also asked about the time frame for Hope Street and Wickenden to receive their meters. The Board discussed concern with the lack of an equal playing field with two close competitive commercial areas not yet having meters, stating it put Thayer Street at a severe disadvantage and was hurting business. Ms. Liander stated that she was unaware of a change in time frame to install meters in both locations. She would check and report back to the Board.

10. Merchant Report

Next Merchant Meeting Date and Location

Ms. Mardo stated there would not be a Merchant's meeting tomorrow. The next meeting would be February 3rd, 9:30 AM at Kartabar. She reported the merchant association would be discussing new sources of fundraising to support merchant group marketing efforts. She was going to try and revisit the discount card program discussed by the merchants before the holiday as a fundraising option. She stated that the funds raised by the Neighborhood Day event had been used to decorate the street for the Holidays with lights, wreaths and bows, as well as provide entertainment for the event (carolers, Santa, elves). Ms. Mardo reported that unfortunately attendance to the event was lower than expected due to heavy rains throughout the early to late evening. Ms. Mardo stated that she is trying to increase Merchant interest to participate in the association. She reported that when she has a guest speaker at the meetings addressing an issue, attendance by the merchants is approximately 30-40, however without a guest speaker attendance falls to 5-6 merchants. She has tried holding the meetings at different times, which has not seemed to have an effect on attendance. Ms. Mardo reported that the Holiday season was weak, with sales down 3 to 30% across the board from last year.

11. Other Business

Shark Bar and Grille Update

Mr. Dahlberg informed the Board that the initial applicant to take over the Shark Bar and Grille had backed out and a new party had shown interest, led by a former manager of Paragon/Viva in purchasing the business. Mr. Dahlberg reported that he had heard the new party was planning to open as a restaurant and bar. Several Board Members stated concerns and questioned the concept, asking the intentions of the new owners and if they planned on being open until 2 am. Mr. Dahlberg replied that he did not know their intentions at this time.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:28 AM.