

**Summit Downtown, Inc.**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**January 25, 2023, 8:00AM**  
**In-Person/Zoom Meeting**

**Members Present:** Bob Conway, Beth Welsh, Councilman Greg Vartan, Karen Schneider, Mayor Nora Radest, Antonietta LaVecchia, Tony Melchionna, Leslie Herman, Lauren Decker, David Bernat, Ray Merritt, Michael Rogers. Staff: Nancy Adams and Amanda Lynn

**Members Absent:** Claire Toth and Lisa Allen

Chair Bob Conway called the meeting to order at 8:05am.

**Approval of Minutes – Bob Conway**

December minutes were presented for approval. The approval of the minutes was moved by Karen and seconded by Ray and unanimously approved.

**Financials – Claire Toth**

Claire was absent, financials as well as the budget will be presented next month.

**Board Elections – Bob Conway**

Bob state the current Executive Committee is running again and asked the floor for any additional nominations. The board unanimously approved the current committee.

**2023 Committees – Bob**

Bob asked that board members submit their committee requests via email. Nancy will email committee lists to all board members to respond with their selections in order of priority.

**Event Updates – Amanda**

Amanda reported that we are working on the yearly calendar with event updates and budgets. A virtual event, I Love Summit is being setup for the month of February. It will feature the faces of the businesses in downtown in a social media campaign, created to drive engagement to our social platforms and website. This also helps to remind customers of stores and the wonderful services Summit has to offer. The HillTop bunny promotion will start in March, another virtual event, it will feature a hidden stuffed bunny throughout downtown for consumers to “find”. The bunny is posted on our social media channels with customers submitting their guesses for a chance to win a large Easter basket with gifts and a \$250 Summit VISA gift card, again drawing customers downtown. March will also include the invitation for performers Summit Street Sounds. Amanda expressed the need to gather more talent and asked the board for suggestions, noting the local talent in later high school/early college Summit residents and the crowd that they draw. Staff is in talks about the return of Design Day, an event that was cancelled during Covid and has not returned. After polling, some businesses have expressed a desire for the event to return. Amanda asked the board for opinions about the event with an explanation of how the event was previously run, Nancy noted the assistance of Jess Hobson, will report more next month. Arts & Cars was discussed, the main support sponsor (Summit PAL) is no longer interested in hosting the event. We are seeking a new partner, Antonietta is working to setup a meeting with the Summit Elks who expressed interest in gathering more information. Lastly, Amanda spoke of the new Marketing Admin hire, Robyn Kobren who starts the 31<sup>st</sup>. Bob noted the Summit Farmers Market opens April 23, with all paperwork now submitted online. This was a complex transition, and we are now able to take credit cards for payment; fees have increased 6% for the year. Increases of fees will be reflected in the budget presented next month.

**COMMITTEE/PROJECT REPORTS**

**DCS/SDI Updates – Tony, Nancy**

Tony stated that Nancy, Mike Caputo, Aaron Schrage, Lisa Allen and himself meet once a month ahead of the board meeting. Tony reported that the sewers are running okay still. Mondays & Fridays downtown is blown and swept, there is a walking crew that cleans up around town. Discussion about the Edison lights on the trees, the current servicing vendor is not returning. Nancy to meet with Aaron to evaluate and create a plan to inspect and service the lights. Crosswalks will be restriped, and some potholes repaired. Trees on Springfield near La Pastaria are to be removed, this creates an opportunity to remove tree wells in those locations. Removal and change to grates in wells are a costly upgrade. Nora to ask Aaron to brainstorm ideas for the wells. Extended discussion on

opinions of tree well styles and potholes. Lisa Allen brought up (in the meeting) the alley from Beechwood to Summit Ave and possible solutions, repair cost would have to come from the city and it has been low on the priority list of needs throughout town. Michael stated that maybe it is time to add the project specifically to the budget. Greg spoke of workshops held to discuss capital projects like this. Continued discussion of the project by multiple board members.

**Design Committee Updates – Claire**

None.

**Summit Public Arts – Leslie** stated that they had come up with four new art installations for town this year. They are working with high school art majors to create a public art project. Nora stated how enthusiastic the students were on past projects that included them. Leslie stated that none of the projects were downtown and she would get the dates of removal for the current statues. The virtual 3D project has been tabled for this year. Board members will be receiving an invitation for a cocktail party fundraiser on February 21.

**Common Council Updates – Greg**

Council held their re-organization meeting and heard from the mayor about the state of the city, which is strong. A meeting was held a couple weeks ago to determine council's course of action for the year. Broad Street West will be brought through the process and to a conclusion that makes sense, a decision about Maple Street will also be made. Possible course of action on both projects by next month. The CAPS committee is looking into what is needed from the DOT and engaging business owners and relevant boards for 2023 projects. PSEG is doing gas line repairs as well as NJ American Water. Downtown repairs will be in delayed into March, about 5 days of construction, could increase up to 10. Nancy asked if project could be delayed until the fall, Nora and Greg stated that the dates they set would need to be honored, the city is unable to control the dates. Council talked in their last meeting about illegal parking related issues, discussed increasing fines and other alternatives to help the parking situation. The "Safety Stick" is being discussed for deployment in the downtown. The concept is a bollard that faces illegal parking areas and takes a photo for review and a ticket will be sent in the mail. In the same concept of the red-light camera but it is reviewed by humans and a determination is made if a ticket needs to be issued. This is still a discussion only item, they are installed in Garfield with success. Goes back to CAPS committee for continued discussion. It would be used in the most visible problem areas, and this could allow for the removal of some of the unsightly barriers. Nancy asked that SDI be included in the location of the new 15-minute parking spaces and locations for the cameras if installed. Greg will be reinstating a council summary update that will be posted on the website and on social media. Council is trying to be more visible to the public and holding Facebook live sessions the Tuesday after the council meeting.

**New Business – Bob** stated that Karen would be running the next meeting due to knee surgery.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05am.

**The next BOT meeting is at 8AM February 22, at City Hall.**