

Summit Downtown, Inc.
Board of Trustees Meeting
June 25, 2025, 8:00AM
In-Person/Zoom Meeting

Members Present: Karen Schneider, Ray Merritt (Zoom), Mayor Elizabeth Fagan, Beth Welsh, Bill Robb, Kristen Scalia (Zoom), Annette Dwyer, Leslie Herman, Antonietta LaVecchia, Peter Llyod Staff: Nancy Adams, Amanda Lynn

Members Absent: Tammie Baldwin, Claire Toth, Delia Hamlet, David Bernat

Members of the Public: Bob Powlowski (City Council), Julie (Overlook Auxiliary)

CALL TO ORDER

In Chair David Bernat's absence, Vice Chair Karen Schneider called the meeting to order at 8:05am. She asked for approval of the May minutes. Beth Welsh commented to acknowledge the prior meeting (May 28). Language around the farmers market not being the focus of what we do, but a means to assist in what we do – benefiting the brick & mortar stores. With that amendment, Beth moved for approval, Peter seconded, all in favor.

COMMITTEE/PROJECT REPORTS

Financials – Bill Robb

Bill was not at the May meeting so gave a report on both the April and May finances. April's assets were \$321,150 and May's were \$326,095.68. Most of the income in May was for entry fees for the farmers market and for Family Fun Night. Key expenses: Facade grant, insurance, marketing, events, and general operational costs. The budget was approved by the City of Summit on May 20th. The first two assessment payments from the city are pending (the person responsible is on leave). Karen Schneider asked for approval of the April/May Financial Reports – Beth moved for approval, Antoinette seconded, all in favor.

Event Updates – Amanda Lynn

Family Fun Night (FFN)

- Held the previous Thursday with strong turnout and vendor participation.
- Sponsored by: Atlantic Health, Overlook Hospital, Lois Schneider Real Estate, Brownie Points, Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, and JAG Physical Therapy.
 - Sponsorship Revenue: \$8,600
- Visitors stayed approximately 20 minutes longer on average.
- Attendance data shows more Summit residents than previous years
 - Zip code data to be analyzed and shared with retailers.
- Increase in downtown business participation and in-store foot traffic during the event (first time this occurred significantly).

Kudos to SDI staff by Karen, Beth and the board agreed. Nancy thanked Amanda for her work organizing this and getting sponsors. It seemed to be the first year more people walked into the stores as well as partaking in the event. Some suggestions for next year included providing merchants with event statistics early and encourage cross-promotional offers (e.g., coupons or incentives to return). This event is great because it attracts newer and younger families downtown to get to know it. Acknowledgment to Peter for initiating this event years ago as a replacement for Girls Night Out.

Summit Street Sounds kicked off a few weeks ago. The weather has been a challenge but new locations are being used with success. Invitations for the Fall series will be sent out in the coming weeks.

Stakeholders Meeting was held recently with over 50 business owners and workers attending. Sponsors were Serra Doce, What A Dish and Cambridge Wines. The event has been successful in reinforcing SDI's relevance and fostering connections among merchants and sharing information. This time we had a speaker from NJEDA, who gave a ton of information about programs and grants businesses can get from the state, the Kristen led breakout discussions on networking, partnerships, and potential revenue opportunities. Next one will be in October.

Marketing Committee Update – Amanda Lynn

The committee's discussions largely focused on the HTTPV program. The first set of videos, featuring positive vendor interactions from FFN, has been produced and will begin posting this week. More collaborative work with HTTPV is planned.

Design Committee/DCS Updates – Annette Dwyer

Trash Issues: Ongoing complaints to the city from residents about businesses putting trash out too early creating an eyesore and health hazard. Committee believes after education of businesses, enforcement by the city is needed. There is significant trash accumulation on Sundays at the Farmers Mkt particularly pizza boxes clogging regular cans. Nancy is working with Rachel at DPW on getting a dedicated pizza trash receptacle. She will tell Marin to talk to vendors about their trash. A specific complaint about Ani Ramen's trash overflowing in the dumpster and other issues; Delia said she would get someone there. DPW workers often leave city trash lids open after collection, SDI requesting DPW to replace them.

Public Space Furnishings (Streetscape Vision): Annette reported that SDI currently lacks a consistent process for public space donations (benches, planters, etc.) After much discussion, the Design Committee will work on getting previous studies and choices on street furnishings so that people can donate by choosing from a catalogue of preselected designs.

Tree Wells: Annette reported that some of the wells are filled with weeds and trash. A suggestion for clearing all vegetation except trees and then mulching was not supported and there are a lot of well-maintained tree wells downtown. Board emphasized shared responsibility of business owners to take care of the tree well in front of their business.

Summit Public Arts – Leslie Herman

Summit Public Arts is hosting a **gala fundraiser on Friday, September 26th, at Twin Maples**. The event will feature a "**Tiny Art Movement**," where individuals can donate original art pieces no larger than 6x6 inches. These pieces will be auctioned for \$100 each to fund new art installations in 2026. The submission deadline is **July 31st**, with potential for extension. Further details will be shared in the Bulletin.

Common Council Updates – Mayor Elizabeth Fagan

Complaints have been received regarding illegal parking during the farmers market, particularly in dangerous spots at CVS and on Maple Street. Police will begin patrolling and enforcing these areas. Efforts are being made to notify farmers market patrons through newsletters and social media posts. The board discussed implementing signage (sandwich boards, pyramid signs) or even concrete planters in problem areas to deter illegal parking, balancing enforcement with the desire to encourage visitors. Amanda and Nancy will discuss specific signage options.

Public Comment

Bob Pawlowski: Criticized the downtown tree wells not looking maintained. He suggested Firefighters volunteer to maintain them or tear everything out but the trees. Board responses included that prior to the tree wells, they looked boring so they were planted and are planted every year. It's complicated because every tree well is in its own ecosystem because of shade, what's planted already etc. DPW does weeding when notified of problem areas.

Julie from Overlook Auxiliary's Twig #10 proposed a new fundraising event called "MomCon. The concept was a daytime event for moms encouraging visiting downtown stores for deals, experiences, maybe a passport program. Want to raise \$8-\$12,000 for the Stacy Goldstein Breast Cancer Center at Overlook. Proposed for Sept/Oct. Lack of clarity on what the \$40 tickets would provide and concerns about a daytime event and focusing on moms only. Marketing Committee will discuss; this October would not be nearly enough lead time; maybe next year.

MEETING ADJOURNED

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 AM.

The next BOT meeting is at 8AM, Wednesday, August 6, 2025, at City Hall.