

**Summit Downtown, Inc.**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**July 26, 2023, 8:00AM**  
**In-Person/Zoom Meeting**

**Members Present:** Karen Schneider, Bob Conway, Beth Welsh, Tony Melchionna, Antonietta LaVecchia, David Bernat, Kathy Cowan, Greg Vartan, Leslie Herman. Staff: Nancy Adams and Amanda Lynn

**Members Absent:** Michael Rogers, Lisa Allen, Ray Merritt, Claire Toth, Mayor Nora Radest.

**Members of the Public:** none

Chair Bob Conway called the meeting to order at 8:10am.

**Approval of Minutes – Bob Conway**

June minutes were presented for approval. Beth Welsh asked about access to Placer.ai as noted in the minutes for all businesses not just our office. Nancy noted her request. The approval of the amended minutes was moved by Tony and seconded by Karen and unanimously approved. Bob noted there is no meeting in August and the next meeting is September 20<sup>th</sup> instead of the last Wednesday of the month because of a schedule conflict.

**COMMITTEE/PROJECT REPORTS**

**Financials – Claire**

Claire is absent and financials will be moved until the next meeting.

**Gift Card/Placer.ai – Nancy, Amanda**

Nancy provided a report of gift cards activated over the last 5 years. She noted that we did a promotion during covid times giving away a number of gift cards to businesses to be used in their business or others to keep money in the downtown. 3312 cards have been sold since the start of the program in fall of 2018. About 60% of the cards have been used, over \$120,000. Beth asked if we could contact people who have not used their cards to ask if they have lost them or to use them. David suggests a campaign to sell more gift cards versus reaching out to prior card holders. David and Karen both noted that they were given as gifts so that the cards may not be associated with the person who now holds the card. David suggested a gift card promotion give back for the holidays. Amanda is going to research sponsorship options and how to fund the promotion. A full report is available with a list of business that have redeemed them.

Amanda spoke of learning the Placer.ai system, there has been a learning curve and some training sessions to better navigate the system and build reports for our events. She spoke of statistics on the Arts & Cars event which had almost 5,000 people in attendance for 2022 with a 20% increase from 2021, the average age was 41 which was younger than previously thought. Average attendance was about 2 hours, also with an increase from prior years attested to increased activities for children. David suggested building a Summit customer profile to provide to the businesses and to give them access to the data. David noted how valuable this type of data was for his business and others for marketing and future business plans. Amanda stated that an additional login had been created that could be used for business owners and they could be trained to use the program. Amanda also noted an additional webinar from National Main Street about using market data like this in main street applications.

**Event Updates – Amanda**

Amanda spoke of the end of Summit Street Sounds for the season. One event was canceled due to rain, one late start and one early ending due to rain. Tested a new location on Springfield Avenue by Maison 53 and Gregory's Coffee. We will make it a more regular location next summer. The fall series starts after Labor Day, September 8<sup>th</sup> through October 27 on Friday nights from 5-8pm.

Restaurant Week is in progress with postings happening daily of promotions and unique content of the downtown restaurants and eateries. They feature both lunch and dinner. A special newsletter went out as well as some press and ads.

Arts & Cars planning is in progress with new partners the Summit Elks for the car show and Peerless Beverage for the Beer Garden, Cambridge Wines was also noted as a beer garden sponsor. Amanda asked the board for volunteer help for the event.

**DCS/SDI Updates – Nancy**

Nancy reported that they were unable to meet so Aaron sent an update via email. Awaiting schedule for PSEG for road paving; Summit Ave is complete with striping. No issues with sewers. Waiting for concepts on rain garden type areas downtown, not a lot of planners looking for work so will take some time. Traffic signal plan at Maple & Springfield is nearly complete, concept for Beechwood and Springfield was approved yesterday, final plans and specs being developed for the fall with work to be commenced early 2024. Tree trimming and pruning has started, with complaints about trees hanging low on Beechwood to be addressed. Garbage and trash ordinance to be introduced at September meeting to address businesses and residents putting out trash downtown in the early evening. DPW completed a trial with success, further discussion needed about how to proceed and cost. Planner will be looking at bike parking plan in the fall and bike depot is behind red tape due to permitting issues, NJ Transit is now actively assisting DCA. Items still to be discussed in person before next meeting: sidewalks that need work, striping issues, tree wells for removal, string lights, horse trough follow-up discussion, and night trash collection. Beth asked about carving in sidewalks, Nancy said she would circle back and find out.

**Summit Public Arts** – Leslie said that the plaque would be installed for the fountain soon. The SPA Gala is September 22.

**Common Council Updates – Greg**

Greg reported that the relationship with the developers from Broad Street West has ended. The consensus of council is that the property will not be redeveloped, and the plan would be repealed. The dog park will open in a few weeks and will be named The Gould Dog Park for departed colleague Matt Gould. The internship program is complete, and it is the first year they were paid, their projects included an interactive map of the hometown heroes' banners and others. The peddlers license changes have gone into effect and police are patrolling to see if permits are being displayed and sending those without them to the clerk's office. So far, no complaints or new applications. Greg noted that enforcement was now through the clerk and not the police. Summer concert and movie series on the green on Tuesday & Thursdays. Next council meeting is September 5, there is no meeting in August.

**New Business**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38am.

**The next BOT meeting is at 8AM September 20, at City Hall.**