

**DOWNTOWN MILFORD INC.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
JANUARY 7, 2016**

In Attendance: Cheryl Doucette, Brad Dennehy, Paige Evers, Lisa Fitzgerald, SaraKate Hammer, Walt Hepford, Sara Pletcher, Bob Starkey, Pat Sparks

Executive Director: Lee Nelson

Administrative Assistant: Erica Ray

VISTA Volunteer: Noa Kornbluh

Guests: Eric Norenberg

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by President SaraKate Hammer. Eric Norenberg, the new City Manager for Milford, was introduced and welcomed. A motion was made, seconded and approved by Board members present to make a donation to the Riverfront Theatre in memory of Bob Connelly.

A motion was made, seconded and approved by Board members present to accept the minutes of November 5, 2015 meeting.

President's Report: DMI made a one-time grant for the DEDO Pop-up Program in 2015. This grant was given directly to the landlord of the new pop-up as supplement for extending the offer to host a pop-up. There is \$3,000 in the 2016 budget for this program. Discussion was held concerning how to use this money. It was felt that the money would be more beneficial if used to help the business owner gain training. Lee then informed the Board that the funding for this program for DED may no longer be available.

It was suggested that DMI look into providing training to business owners looking to utilize the program in Milford along with guidelines for how to receive a DMI grant as a pop up project. Board members are looking into sources for training. Suggestions include contacting SCORE and gathering information about the model used in Smyrna. The ER committee will work on parameters for this year's project pop up based on two scenarios, one with the assistance of DEDO and another if the funding is limited from DEDO and Milford will have to fund the project alone or with limited State assistance.

Executive Director: Lee reminded the members of the Master Plan presentation scheduled for January 12 at 7:00 PM. Everyone is encouraged to attend if possible.

Representative John Carney visited downtown businesses on December 21, 2015. All the business owners spoke to him about the need to attract more visitors to Milford. This would help all of the businesses and would help make Milford more attractive to new businesses.

Financial Report: A motion was made, seconded and approved by Board members present to accept the Financial Report.

Committee Reports:

- **Design Committee:** Milford in Bloom program needs to raise funds. It was discussed at their November meeting about going door-to-door and asking for donations. Arrangements need to be made for watering the baskets and planters in the spring and summer. The committee is hoping that the city will commit to handling this.

Beautification in general needs to be well-thought out especially at the gateways and the River Walk.

Plans are underway for the 2nd Annual Roaring Twenties Party at Causey Mansion.

- **Economic Restructuring Committee:** The International Food Festival was a success with more than 700 people attending. Small Business Saturday brought good results to downtown businesses. A notice has been sent to business owners and merchants regarding the “Five for Free” and Micro-loan programs as it is felt many of them are unaware of the program. This committee has volunteered to work with the City to promote the Public Restroom project. This will be presented to the City once the new City Manager is on board.
- **Organization Committee:** DMI membership levels for businesses have been updated with the addition of a 3-year option to both the \$75 and \$175 levels. This option will provide a discount to those choosing to pay for three years.
- **Promotions Committee:** The 2015 Holiday Stroll was a great success with more than 40 businesses participating. Most of the business owners were pleased with the number of people who visited their businesses.

The Santa House was successful once again. There was some discussion among members present about providing a means of purchasing refreshments while standing in line. This will be presented and discussed at the Promotions Committee January meeting.

A motion was made, seconded and approved by Board members present to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 PM.

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be Thursday, February 4, 2016 at 7:00 PM in City Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Sparks
Secretary