

**St Marys Downtown Development Authority**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Meeting Minutes for August 6, 2007

The regular meeting of the St. Marys DDA was called to order by Craig Root at 9:00 AM.

**Members Present:** Craig Root, Barbara Ryan, Walt Natzic, Carol Buddin, Tom Monahan and Bill Deloughy

**Members not Present:** Diane McCoy

**Guest in attendance:** Paula Amari; Promotions Committee Chair, Janet Brinko; St Marys Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Bob Barrie

**Staff:** Alyce Thornhill; Executive Director, and Renée Coakley; Economic Development Assistant

**Minutes:** The July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2007 meeting minutes were presented and the minutes were approved with a motion by Natzic and a second by Ryan.

**Treasurers Report:** Monahan presented the treasurers report for June 2007. Charges noted were for the Marketing College that Alyce attended and miscellaneous posting to card services for the Plum Orchard trip for the Historic Preservation Training that the DDA hosted in St. Marys. Monahan mentioned the profit on the P&L statement due to the Chair-ity auction. After discussion the board decided that a line item should be added to the balance sheet to show the debits and the payment to the St. Marys Tree Board. The treasurer's report was approved with a motion by Ryan and a second by Buddin.

**Additions to the Agenda:** Ryan asked to speak about Recycling and Paula asked to speak about Community Gardens under her Promotions Committee report.

**BUSINESS DISCUSSION:**

**Economic Development Committee – Last Months Meeting Cancelled:** Alyce mentioned that the Committee did not meet in July because the chair was out of town. The committee will resume monthly meetings in August. **Economic Development Strategic Plan:** Alyce mentioned that she met with Kingsland's DDA Director to discuss working on a marketing analysis of the area. Once completed this analysis will be presented to the Chamber of Commerce to request partnership/funding on this initiative.

**Promotions Committee – Chair-ity Auction:** Paula mentioned that the auction was a great success. Over five thousand dollars was raised and after lined expenses a donation of over four thousand dollars will go to the purchase of live oaks for downtown. The Tree Board will be in charge of determining locations for the trees. The auction

committee had a post/lessons learned meeting and picked the date of July 19, 2008 as the date for the next auction. **Website:** Paula mentioned that the website designer is still moving forward with the design phase. Alyce will contact the designer to determine status. The board suggested that the designer put a blank page that states “Under Construction” at the website URL address. **Arts Camden:** Paula mentioned that the Arts Camden group is currently looking at St Marys Antique Mall as a location for their studio. The owner is willing to rent to the group at a reasonable price and the group will be responsible for completing the area to include installing sheet rock, electrical, air conditioning unit, etc. The group does not have funds generated so they will be looking into grants and local support to fund this effort. Paula will be meeting with the owner of the Antique Mall to determine what set up costs, etc would be. **Community Garden:** Paula mentioned that she met a Master Gardener in Sarasota, FL who shared plan ideas for a community garden. Paula presented this idea to the board members to determine if they felt this concept would work for St. Marys. The board agreed that Paula should continue with her research and report back at a later date.

**Annual Report** – Root mentioned that he will be presenting a report to council at the end of the month and that he would prefer not to present a memo form report. Root and Alyce will put together the report and hand over to Ryan who will dress it up with photos from SCAD, various events and new area design ideas.

**Recycling** – Ryan asked all to attend and support the Earth Keepers committee at the Water/Sewer Committee Meeting on Tuesday, August 7<sup>th</sup>.

## **DIRECTORS REPORT:**

**Main Street visit with Jo Childers:** Alyce reported that the representative from DCA came and after reviewing our book and files determined that we need a vision statement that mentions downtown, a better map and Alyce has recruited public works to prepare this map for us, and a downtown survey which Renée has completed. Once these items are forwarded to the representative we may be able to acquire a designation date at that time. Alyce also mentioned the idea of purchasing a golf cart, (approximately \$4500), to be used for a Downtown Concierge program idea. This idea is to have someone on the golf cart who could interact/converse with arrivals from the ferry and Cumberland Island tour to generate interest in the local restaurants and shops. Buddin made a motion and Monahan second for Alyce to gather figures and grant info to support this idea. Alyce will report back to the board in September.

**VA Clinic:** Alyce mentioned that the VA is currently looking at two properties in St. Marys that are possible sites for a new VA clinic coming to the area. The one property which falls in the DDA boundaries is the Harvey’s grocery store shopping center just past Spur 40. The VA is also looking at alternate locations in the county. Alyce will keep the board updated on this site selection process.

**Firefighters benefit:** Alyce mentioned that the concert to benefit the firefighters was postponed due to rain. The committee is looking at alternate dates and once the band has recommitted the date will be announced.

**Chamber of Commerce award:** Alyce asked the board to join her in congratulating Ryan for winning the Entrepreneurial Spirit Award at the Chamber Annual Dinner.

**Railroad ride:** Alyce mentioned that she will schedule the train ride with Herb Crabtree for September 10<sup>th</sup> during the regularly scheduled board meeting. The board suggested meeting at 8:30 AM for the ride then begin the meeting afterwards. Alyce will coordinate this with Herb.

**DDA attorney:** Alyce mentioned that she talked to attorney Charlie Smith regarding warranty deeds for the 3 properties that the DDA owns. Smith agreed to do the work for \$300 per property. Ryan made a motion to allow Smith to write the deeds and Natzi second. Alyce will generate a letter to Smith naming the three properties mentioned.

**Greenway Water Taxi:** Alyce mentioned that she attended the meeting regarding the water taxi. This service could be starting as early as September.

**Leesburg Visit:** Alyce mentioned her recent conversation with the Main Street Manager for Leesburg, FL and his interest in bringing his board members to St. Marys to meet our DDA. Alyce will work out the logistics and keep the board informed of the status.

**Building and Business update:** Alyce updated the board on all of the changes in the DDA Boundaries: GEM is again working on their EIP grant, Bulldog Liquors will be opening in the Jehovah's Witness Church building, Hunt Country Iron will be located in the old Napa auto parts store, Salsa Grill is open and their liquor license has been approved, an auto parts store named O'Reilly's will be opening on the corner of Osborne and North Julia Street, KFC will be opening next to Lester Harris's office on Osborne, Aerospace Missions Corporation has rented office space above Market on the Square and will be looking for a permanent location in the near future, a pet supply store will be opening in one of the out parcels near the Wal-mart shopping center, JTP Trading will be moving into the Red Wall Mall location. The second story of the former JTP site will be converted into mixed use development.

**Pocket Park on Osborne design:** Alyce presented design ideas for the area adjacent to the DDA building. This pocket park design would make an attractive area for visitors to the area and would improve parking situations for the Methodist Church if the land swap is agreed upon. Alyce will present the design ideas to a representative of the church.

**Georgia Academy for Economic Development Scholarship:** Alyce mentioned that Renée received a scholarship to attend this training on August 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. This 5 day course which is broken down over the next 4 months will be a great source of economic development knowledge for Renée.

**Marketing College Review:** Alyce gave a brief review of the training that she attended last week. This 3 year course afforded Alyce quality networking connections and a wealth of knowledge that will aid in the development of our downtown. In the alumni class of the college it was addressed that Geo Tourism and Economic Community Development should be partnered. Our Signature Community was discussed and mentioned that this is an example of this.

**Adjourn** – The next meeting is scheduled for September 10<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 AM, (Alyce will confirm with Herb Crabtree and email the board), and the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

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Tom Monahan, Secretary  
Prepared by Renée Coakley