



Board of Directors Meeting
Oct. 17, 2023 – 4 p.m.
Royal Neighbors of America | 230 16th St., Rock Island, IL

Present: Raja Krishnamurthy, Erica Williams, Greg Stecker, Steven Ratcliff, Amanda Wood, Todd Thompson, Ben Fawks, John Chow, DeAnna Freeman-Foster, Brett Hitchcock

Absent: Nicole Watson-Lam, Brandy VandeWalle, Arron Sutherland

Guests: Ald. Dylan Parker, Ald. Judith Gilbert, Tom Flaherty | **Staff:** Jack Cullen, De'Andre Robinson, Brie Collier, Kyle Carter

Call Meeting to Order, Approval of Sept. 19 Minutes

Meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m.

Erica moved to approve the minutes. Steven seconded. Motion passed.

Finance & Governance

August Financial Report

Brie Collier, VP of Finance and Administration for the Quad Cities Chamber, presented the attached August Financial Report. Brie noted normal cadence will be reporting on September financials at the October meeting. The team is slowly getting on track. In-kind sponsorship for Alternating Currents will be included in the September financial statement. No current budget pressures.

Greg moved to approve the August Financial Report. Steven seconded. Motion passed.

Onboard

The Board was reminded to set up their account in the board portal system OnBoard and to use the system to access all meeting materials and submit RSVPs. Downtown Alliance staff will attach all materials to the meeting page each month for easy access. Amanda asked who all had access to portal. All Board members and Modern Woodmen of America representatives who regularly attend meetings were invited to join the OnBoard group. Anyone experiencing technical issues with OnBoard is encouraged to connect with Emily Codling at ecodling@quadcitieschamber.com.

Committees

In addition to the Rebuild Downtown Committee, a Finance Committee; Events and Promotions Committee; and Livability Committee will be formed by the end of 2023 to advise the Downtown Alliance Board on a wide range of matters. Full descriptions of each Committee are included in the Downtown Alliance's place management [services agreement](#) with the City of Rock Island. Board members interested in joining a Committee are encouraged to connect with Downtown Alliance staff.

Infrastructure & Livability

Eponic Demonstration

Downtown Alliance staff showed backend functionality and reporting capabilities of mobile software application used to track daily activities of the Downtown Alliance. The Board requested high-level metrics to be shared each month at meetings.

Advocacy & Promotions

Deck the Downtowns

Emails inviting businesses to participate in the Hunt for the Holiday Train, Holiday Display Challenge and Holiday Gift Guide were sent Oct. 10 and 13; dozens of businesses signed up for promotions. The final count and details will be presented at the November meeting.

Launch Party & IDA Recap

The Downtown Alliance Launch Party on Oct. 3 at Huckleberry's was successful with 100+ downtown stakeholders in attendance for networking, food & drink and a brief program presented by Mayor Thoms, Arron and Jack. [WQAD](#) and the Quad Cities Regional Business Journal provided great coverage of the event and the work of the Downtown Alliance.

Following the launch, Jack and De'Andre participated in the 2023 International Downtown Association Annual Conference in Chicago. The highlight for Jack was connecting with leaders of organizations that have similar Special Service Area (SSA) budgets and programs, including Lincoln Park Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Hyde Park. De'Andre gained a broader perspective on the place management industry and networked with professionals in similar roles across the country.

Digital Assets

Nothing new to report on the status of negotiations with DARI regarding the Downtown Rock Island website and social media assets.

Other Business

Rebuild Downtown Rock Island

The next progress meeting with the City and consultants is scheduled for Oct. 23. With construction expected to begin in spring 2024, communication to businesses re: phasing of block face construction schedule will be very important and priority for the City and Downtown Alliance before and during the project. Access to businesses will be maintained throughout the entire construction process.

Downtown Development(s)

Todd provided an update on the Star Cres International Building at 1830 2nd Avenue. Downtown-based nonprofit Project NOW is purchasing the property and moving its offices and services to the building. The City Council, which previously allocated \$250,000 of federal ARPA funds to address homelessness in Rock Island, approved a City staff [memorandum](#) on Oct. 9 to grant the funds to Project NOW for building renovations.

Special Service Area Levy

The City of Rock Island is preparing its budget for 2024 and is seeking input from the Downtown Alliance on the SSA levy. The Downtown Alliance staff recommendation is to maintain the current levy of about \$310,633, which will cause the tax rate to decrease slightly. Board members agreed with the proposal, saying the positive benefits and value of the SSA should be shown prior to increasing the levy. A future increase to the levy would capture all increases to the Equalized Assessed Value (EAV) of the district.

Adjourn

Erica moved to adjourn the meeting. Steven seconded. Meeting adjourned at 5 p.m.