



## ROME DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

July 14, 2022  
Carnegie  
607 Broad Street

### MEETING MINUTES

Prusakowski called the meeting to order at 8:32 am and welcomed members, city staff and guests. Members present: David Prusakowski, Megan Watters, Elaine Abercrombie, Randy Quick, Allison Watters, Bryan Shealy and Kelli Duncan. City staff present: Aundi Lesley, Megan Otwell, Jennifer Bailey, Julie Harris and Doug Walker. Other: Olivia Morley.

### ACTION

**Approve June 2022 Minutes** – Shealy made a motion to approve with a second from Abercrombie. All were in favor.

**Approve BID Financials** – Shealy made a motion to approve with a second from Abercrombie. All were in favor.

**Marketing Grant Recipients** – The Business Development committee made the selection for marketing grant recipients. Recipients meet requirements set by the committee and will commit to marketing workshops as well as consultations with the SBDC. Recipients include Living and Giving, Top Hat Formalwear, Rome Coins, Schroeder's, Trendy Teachers, Bluesky Outfitters and Everjean. Bluesky and Everjean will be splitting one grant as they share the same owner and building. Shealy made a motion to approve with a second from Abercrombie. All were in favor.

**Business Development Chair/Board Member** – With Shealy retiring, he will be stepping down from the Business Development committee. The Board recommends Harry Brock as his replacement. Megan Watters made a motion to approve with a second from Kelli Duncan. All were in favor.

### DISCUSSION

**River District Updates** – DDA staff received feedback that some businesses in the River District are struggling due to the current construction on the water and sewer lines. Construction is estimated to wrap up in September 2022. DDA staff will spotlight River District businesses on social media to help draw attention to them. Duncan asked for a request for communications from the water department on construction updates and asked there be better communication with River District business owners. Quick suggested Public Works as the point of contact for improvement updates. Lesley shared streetscape preliminary drawings from Pond Construction. An RFP for streetscape work will still need to go out for construction documents. Sidewalks will be widened, a roundabout is proposed for the Avenue A intersection, and a pocket park proposed at the intersection. Four Stones has started demolition on privately owned existing buildings.

**Business Incubator Update** – Lesley shared the official name and logo for the incubator (The Rome Collective). An RFP for roof work is out and a walk through for roof repairs was attended by several contractors. The RFP for architectural drawings will be going out soon. Lesley reviewed the incubator business plan with the board. The Business Development committee plans to vet member applicants while construction is underway in order to have members in place as soon as the incubator opens. The incubator manager job will be posted in early 2023. DDA has requested a grant from Georgia Power for initial setup costs. Quick asked what the current interest seems to be. Lesley stated it is mostly retail interest.

#### Committee Reports –

- **Parking** – Harris shared Midtown lot updates which include parking spaces being restriped, more frequent monitoring by parking ambassadors, and a clean up of the vegetation overgrowth. Harris also stated that signage updates have begun in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue decks. The northbound 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue deck entrance arrow has been repainted and Harris is in talks with the Street Department to have a sign made for that entrance. Harris is also working with the Street Department to have an additional “one way” traffic sign placed at the intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Tribune Street, as staff has witnessed several drivers turning the wrong way at that intersection.
- Lesley shared that Promotions and Outreach committees will now be combined into one committee.

#### Staff Reports –

- Lesley gave an update on the wayfinding signs. Hi Tech has started installation and plan to be completely within the next week.
- Otwell shared that First Fridays have been a big success. Survey results show that attendees came from 20+ zip codes, including Kennesaw, Cartersville and Chattanooga.
- Otwell stated that staff has met with potential sponsors for Christmas décor, Bridgepoint Plaza updates, and future DDA events.

**Other** – Allison Watters asked Lesley to share the trails rebranding. Previously known as the Heritage Riverways, the new name for the trail system is now ECO Greenway.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jennifer Bailey