



**Thayer Street District Management Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting**

Tuesday, April 2, 2024

118 Waterman Street, 2nd floor, Providence, RI

**MEETING MINUTES**

The Thayer Street District Management Authority (TSDMA) board meeting was called to order at 9:07 A.M.

**1. Roll Call**

Directors: Joe Mardo, Chair; John Luipold; Paul Griesinger; Harry Bilodeau; Lauren Berk; Anthony Aquino; Luis Gonzalez and Donna Personeus, Executive Director.

Absent: Melanie Jewett; Richard Dulgarian

Guests: Mr. Michel Boutros, Mr. Ken Kazarian, and Mr. Grant Dulgarian

**2. Introduction, Nomination and Vote of Luis Gonzalez to replace Katie Siberman on the TSDMA Board of Directors.**

Mr. Luipold introduced and provided a summary of Mr. Gonzalez's professional resume which included three (3) years as Brown Bookstore Operations Assistant Manager, before joining the Brown University Real Estate team. After discussion, Mr. Mardo made a motion to nominate Mr. Gonzalez to the TSDMA Board of Directors, which was seconded by Mr. Griesinger. The vote was unanimous.

**3. Discussion and Vote to Approve the Minutes from the Board Meeting on March 5, 2024.**

Minutes from the March 5, 2024 meeting were presented by Ms. Personeus. The minutes were approved after a motion by Mr. Aquino, which was seconded by Mr. Luipold. The vote was unanimous.

**4. Discussion and Vote to Approve the Financial Report as provided on April 2, 2024.**

Financial Reports were presented April 2, 2024 by Ms. Personeus. The reports were approved after a motion by Mr. Luipold, which was seconded by Mr. Griesinger. The vote was unanimous.

**5. Audit Update**

Mr. Luipold stated that the audit would begin after tax season was complete. He was reviewing cost estimates.

**6. Executive Director Report**

Ms. Personeus provided her Executive Director report on April 2, 2024 to Board members. There was no further discussion.

## **7. Thayer Street Marketing Committee Update**

Ms. Personeus confirmed the Earth Day Event scheduled for April 22, 2024. She informed the Board that the What's Cheer Flower Farm would be providing Flower seed bombs in a collaboration for the event at a cost of one dollar each. They also agreed to co-market the event and send a representative to attend the event to help pass out the seeds. Ms. Personeus updated the Board on the progress of the City of Providence Event application for the 2024 Taste of Thayer. She stated that she was waiting for the certification of the insurance document. Once received she would upload it along with the event map and be able to submit the completed application.

## **8. Updates on Redevelopment of 279 Thayer (Two Cousin LLC) and 235 Meeting (Boutros Salo & Boghos)**

Ms. Personeus provided the Board with an update that she had received from the 235 Meeting Street development. Rouben Balagian, project manager for 235 Meeting Street stated that the commercial glass was done, they were finishing up the exterior sitting around the windows, residential units were finished, they were wrapping up the commercial unit, their architect is waiting for approval for sidewalk easement for the drain connection, and they were preparing to start the site work. The goal is to be 100% done with the project by June 1.

Michel Boutros, co-owner of the 279 Thayer development attended the board meeting in person and provided an update. He introduced, then informed board members that Ken Kazarian would be overseeing the project going forward. He would be reviewing the building plans, including the foundation. The board addressed on-going concerns and issues caused by the development. Board members stated they felt better communication was necessary. They informed Mr. Kazarian that they wanted Ms. Personeus to receive regular operating schedules so she could inform Thayer business owners regarding issues that could affect their business operations. Members requested a covered overhead scaffold to be placed over the sidewalk, to make the sidewalk usable again. They stated that they felt controls over how and when deliveries are made to the construction site were necessary. They asked that deliveries be made before 10am to avoid road blockage during peak times. Mr. Kazarian stated that he would have the operating protocol in place within ten (10) days. Mr. Bilodeau stated that his neighboring property, 259 Thayer, has experienced on-going water in their basement since the development began. Mr. Kazarian stated he plans to get the site stabilized and remove the water. Mr. Bilodeau offered 15-20 parking spaces at 151 Waterman, two blocks away from the construction, in order to keep construction vehicles off Thayer Street. Mr. Kazarian mentioned that the project he oversees on Brook Street is due to be completed September 1, 2024.

## **9. Social Media Report Presentation by Consultant Audrey McClelland**

Ms. McClelland provided her social media report in hard copy and a pre-recorded video update for the Board to watch. She mentioned that IG had a good month with increased engagement. She created 29 individual posts and that she would be continuing the giveaways monthly on IG, due to their successful engagement. She noted that Facebook engagement had increased over last month. She reported 61 posts on FB for the month, with a throwback question being the top post with the highest level of interaction. She mentioned her goals for April were to help promote a successful Earth Day Event and help Flatbread secure an influencer.

## **10. Thayer Business Update**

Mr. Griesigner stated he would like to invite the owner of the new restaurant business at the corner of Meeting and Thayer, Yum's Halal Food, to the next Board meeting to explain their food concept. Board members welcomed the invitation. Ms. Personeus mentioned that the last few times that she had been on Thayer Street, she found Andreas closed. She said she planned to reach out to the owners this week for an update.

## **11. Other Business**

Mr. Dulgarian asked questions regarding changes to RIPTA bus stops and routes since the tunnel was closed for repairs. He suggested better signage. Mr. Aquino was asked if the city has considered not charging for parking on Thayer due to the current Washington Bridge issues. He stated he was not sure, but would check.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:14 A.M.