

BRIDGEPORT DOWNTOWN SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
September 13, 2023
Meeting Minutes

The DSSD Board of Commissioners Meeting took place at the offices of the Bridgeport DSSD, 938 Broad Street, Bridgeport, CT 06604. In attendance:

Commissioners

Phil Pires, C & W Associates II, Chair
David Iassogna, M&T Bank, Vice Chair
Eric Gross, John Broadcannon, Treasurer
Bob Schneider, Jimmy's A & N, Secretary (Ex Officio)
Javier Ceja, Downtown Strategic Group
Karolyn Egbert, Trefz Corporation
Fred Frassinelli, AMS Real Estate
Callie Gale Heilmann, Made in Bridgeport, LLC
Philip Kuchma, Kuchma Corporation
Jason Cohen, Bordentown DB, LLC
Andy Toledo, City of Bridgeport (Ex Officio)

Staff

Lauren Coakley Vincent, DSSD President
Charles Suarez-Penn, DSSD/SMG

Guests

Alicia Cobb, Art Simplified
Chris DeAngelis, Cabezas-DeAngelis Surveyors & Engineers
Ian Sacarny, Crestwood Management
Sue Purefoy

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pires called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

II. RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Mr. Pires opened the meeting by welcoming guests Alicia Cobb of Art Simplified, Chris DeAngelis of Cabezas-DeAngelis Surveyors & Engineers, Sue Purefoy, and Ian Sacarny from Crestwood Management.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Kuchma made a motion to approve the Minutes of the August 9, 2023, DSSD Board Meeting, as presented. Commissioner Iassogna seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

IV. TREASURER REPORT

Treasurer Gross provided an explanation of the July 2023 financial report as provided by the bookkeeper. The Bridgeport DSSD ended the month of July 2023 with \$146,997 in assets, of which \$66,698 was cash spread across two bank accounts. Liabilities totaled \$50,411, encompassed by a mix of Accounts Payable and Deferred Revenue. Net Assets at the end of the month totaled \$98,586. The accrued revenue was \$49,880 – primarily City of Bridgeport tax payments. Expenses for the same period totaled \$97,489 – primarily related to streetscape maintenance and public art projects related to the Downtown Placemaking contract with the City (\$77,598). Accrued revenue for the period fell short of expenses by \$47,610. Commissioner Frassinelli made a motion to approve the July 2023 financial report. Commissioner Ceja seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

V. REPORT FROM THE CITY

Mr. Toledo provided updates on the letter submitted to the State DOT requesting that the State Street blinking lights change to regular signals during late night hours, plans for the additional performance space between the Amphitheater and the Arena, the status of the train station signage project, and the new Health Department annex on Middle Street that will offer services to the senior and veteran communities in Bridgeport. On the development plans for 404-410 State Street (former CT Post building), he did not have updates but committed to sharing more information in a follow up correspondence.

VI. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

DSSD President Lauren Coakley Vincent shared a recap of the Colorful Bridgeport campaign's August content highlights, including the Downtown Farmers Market vendor features and What's Happening event videos. Ms. Coakley Vincent then shared a design preview of the new DSSD website that was

under development and asked for input from the Board. In addition, she reported out on the communications from the City's Tree Warden regarding the timeline for trimming identified trees in the neighborhood.

Ms. Coakley Vincent gave an overview of the Downtown Ambassador team's performance report for the month of August, which reflected a small decrease (4%) in sanitation instances over the past month and the previous year (11%) due to a drop in the bills/stickers removed, and alcohol containers and trash bags collected. The team saw an increase (22%) in the amount of time devoted to beautification work from the previous month in time spent watering and weeding, though a decrease from same time period in the previous year (36%) in the same categories. The Public Safety category also decreased by 33 percent from the previous month and 35 percent from the same month in the previous year due to a drop in the instances of panhandling. Finally, there was a small increase in the number of interactions in the Public Engagement categories from the previous month (3%) and from the same month in the previous year (1%).

Ms. Coakley Vincent concluded the President's Report with an activity to refine the areas for further action identified from the Downtown Bridgeport Business Needs Assessment report. Specifically, the group broke up into teams around the Public Safety and Public Space Activation priority areas to determine immediate steps to achieve the two most important actions in the respective area. The teams were encouraged to think through the DSSD's role in achieving each action, who implements each step, what resources would be needed, and how long it would take to complete.

VII. REPORTS OF STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES

A. Executive

Mr. Pires reported on the Executive Committee meeting that was held on September 6, 2023. The Committee reviewed the new DSSD website design and the letter to City Engineer Jon Urquidi regarding late night light signaling changes. The Committee discussed how to move forward on certain elements of the CT Main Street Center's district assessment. The Committee also finalized the agenda for this month's board meeting.

B. Physical Conditions

Mr. Iassogna reported on the Physical Conditions Committee meeting that was held on September 1, 2023. The Committee walked the district with Ms. Coakley Vincent and Downtown Ambassador Operations Manager Charles Suarez-Penn, identifying areas where additional detailed cleaning was needed, as well as sites for special or seasonal beautification projects.

C. Public Safety

Mr. Iassogna reported on the Public Safety and Security Committee meeting that was held on August 25, 2023. The Committee met with Bridgeport Police Captain Paul Grech and one of his lieutenants to discuss recent public safety and quality of life issues in the neighborhood, in particular the Police Department's efforts towards curbing illegal parking were highlighted. The Committee also heard reports from the Ambassador team regarding quality of life and safety concerns observed during the weekly public safety shifts.

D. Special Events and Marketing

Ms. Cobb reported on the Special Events and Marketing Committee meeting that was held on September 5, 2023. The Committee reviewed the Colorful Bridgeport content for the past month, including the What's Happening events videos and Downtown Farmers Market season announcements, the new DSSD website design, and a request for an event partnership from Metro Art Studios related to the upcoming South End Sounds event series. The Committee discussed plans for upcoming events, including PARK(ing) Day, Jane's Walk, and the DSSD's participation in Bridgeport Art Trail weekend.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Pires called for the meeting to be adjourned at 5:07 p.m.