

**BRIDGEPORT DOWNTOWN SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
March 10, 2021
Meeting Minutes**

The DSSD Board of Commissioners Meeting took place at the offices of the Bridgeport DSSD, 938 Broad Street, Bridgeport, CT 06604, and via Zoom video conference.

In attendance:

Commissioners

Phil Pires, C & W Associates II, Chair
Kim Morque, Main State Ventures, Vice Chair
Eric Gross, John Broadcannon, Treasurer
Bob Schneider, Jimmy's A & N, Secretary
Karolyn Egbert, Trefz Corporation
Fred Frassinelli, AMS Real Estate
David Iassogna, People's United Bank
Philip Kuchma, Kuchma Corporation
Max Pastor, Bordentown DB, LLC

Staff

Lauren Coakley Vincent, DSSD President
Harold Hasell, DSSD/Block-By-Block

Guests

Paul Antinozzi, Antinozzi Associates
Chris DeAngelis, Cabezas-DeAngelis Surveyors & Engineers
Kathy Maher, The Barnum Museum
Matt Meyer, Crestwood Management
Timothy O'Connor, Retail Performance Solutions
Daniel Roach, City of Bridgeport
Ian Sacarny, Crestwood Management
Denese Taylor-Moye, Bridgeport City Council

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 Paul Antinozzi of Antinozzi Associates, Chris DeAngelis of Cabezas-DeAngelis Surveyors & Engineers, Kathy Maher from The Barnum Museum, Matt Meyer and Ian Sacarny from Crestwood Management, Timothy O'Connor of Retail Performance Solutions, Daniel Roach from City of Bridgeport, and Bridgeport City Council Member Denese Taylor-Moye.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Kuchma made a motion to approve the Minutes of the February 10, 2021, 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 March 2021 financial report as provided by the bookkeeper. The Bridgeport DSSD ended the month of January 2021 with \$65,804 in assets, of which \$85,736 was cash spread across two bank accounts. Liabilities totaled \$28,096, encompassed by a mix of Accounts Payable and Deferred Revenue. Net Assets at the end of the month totaled \$37,708. The accrued revenue was \$322,490 – primarily City of Bridgeport tax payments. Expenses for the same period totaled \$366,868 – primarily related to streetscape maintenance and administration of the organization (\$268,433). Accrued revenue for the period fell short of expenses by \$44,378. Commissioner Morque made a motion to approve the March 2021 financial report. Mr. Iassogna seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

V. REPORT FROM THE CITY

Mr. Roach provided updates on the use plan for Post Office Square on Main/Middle Streets, proposed uses at the AGI site (141 Stratford Avenue), development commitments for a hotel and manufacturing uses at Steelpointe Harbor, the suspected release date for the PSEG Environmental Task Force project funding application (April 1, 2021), expected date to announce the CARES Act small business grants (March 31, 2021), and the status of Downtown parking meter repair.

Mr. Roach announced that expanded outdoor dining permitting would be allowed to continue, and that there were no significant changes to the process from last year. The \$100 fee would be waived again, with the permits going through the Zoning Department. He noted that the Health Department would be more involved this year on enforcement of what social distancing and capacity limits may exist. Businesses with a current permit would need to re-apply before April 15, 2021, when the permit from last year expires.

Mr. Roach concluded his report with a request for a letter of support toward the State's investment in the development of Sikorsky Airport in Stratford. Mr. Morque made a motion to approve Mr. Pires and DSSD President Lauren Coakley Vincent to draft and send the letter of behalf of the DSSD Board of Commissioners. Mr. Kuchma seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

VI. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

DSSD President Lauren Coakley Vincent reported on the timeline to select vendors for the scopes of work pertaining to the four requests for proposals: the Downtown Ambassador program, Colorful Bridgeport marketing initiative, accounting and bookkeeping for the organization, and the annual audit. Ms. Coakley Vincent noted that a detailed timeline, including dates for drafting the fiscal year 2022 budget, were outlined in the written President's Report. She provided updates on the various marketing and events initiatives undertaking in celebration of Black History Month, as well as previewed plans for Women's History Month in March. Ms. Coakley Vincent went on to note that the Downtown Ambassadors' February Performance Report reflected an increase (118%) in sanitation instances, mostly due to the significant jump in snow removal work, as well as additional empty open containers picked up. The team also observed a significant increase in documented passive panhandling, which has been shared with the Bridgeport Police Department. Finally, there was a significant increase in public engagement (198%), due to a jump in hospitality assists. See the detailed performance report on page three of the President's report.

Ms. Coakley Vincent then walked through insights from the IDA COVID Benchmarking report and opened the meeting for a freeform discussion of those findings. Mr. Morque recommended an insightful *Wall Street Journal* article about remote work and urban centers: "[How Remote Work is Reshaping America's Urban Geography](#)." The meeting attendees engaged in a discussion about the various benchmarks and their relevance to the experience in Downtown Bridgeport.

Bridgeport City Council Member Denese Talyor-Moye joined and opened a conversation on compliance with COVID-19 safety requirements. Ms. Taylor-Moye also asked for opinions on the viability of converting McLevy Hall to be usable by a local charter school.

VII. REPORTS OF STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES

A. Chairman/Executive

Mr. Pires reported on the Executive Committee meeting that was held on March 3, 2021. The Committee discussed the fiscal year 2021 budget in detail, plans to host a meeting of Downtown businesses about the opening of the Hartford Healthcare Amphitheater, and the possibility of expanded outdoor dining permits returning. The Committee also set the agenda for the board meeting in March.

Mr. Pires reported back on the annual review of DSSD President + CEO Lauren Coakley Vincent, noted that her work adapting the organization to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was much appreciated.

B. Physical Conditions

Mr. DeAngelis reported on the Physical Conditions Committee meeting that was held on February 26, 2021. The Committee reviewed additional information about the responses received from the Downtown Ambassador RFP and briefly touched on upcoming streetscape projects for 2021. The Committee will submit an official recommendation to the Selection Committee in advance of their March meeting.

C. Public Safety

Commissioner Iassogna reported on the Public Safety and Security Committee meeting that was held on February 26, 2021. The Committee met with representatives of the Bridgeport Police Department to discuss the ongoing partnership with the DSSD, as well as recent safety incidents in the Downtown. The Committee finalized plans to host a “Coffee with a Cop” sometime in April at the Holiday Inn to talk about issues and services available.

D. Special Events and Marketing

Commissioner Morque reported on the Special Events and Marketing Committee meeting that was held on February 2, 2021. The Committee discussed the Colorful Bridgeport strategic initiatives for the upcoming month, and reviewed content performance over the past month. The Committee heard updates on events, and brainstormed ideas for the 2021 decorative light pole banner program design.

E. Zone Bridgeport

The Committee did not meet in the past month.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Pires called for the meeting to be adjourned at 5:02 p.m.