

**BRIDGEPORT DOWNTOWN SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
April 13, 2022
Meeting Minutes**

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

In attendance were:

Commissioners

Phil Pires, C & W Associates II, Chair
Kim Morque, Main State Ventures, Vice Chair
Bob Schneider, Jimmy's A & N, Secretary (Ex Officio)
Karolyn Egbert, Trefz Corporation
Fred Frassinelli, AMS Real Estate
David Iassogna, People's United Bank
Max Pastor, Bordentown DB, LLC

Staff

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

Guests

Javier Ceja, Downtown Strategic Group
Kathy Maher, The Barnum Museum
Tim O'Connor, Retail Performance Solutions
Mark Reed, 1188 Lofts
Ian Sacarny, Crestwood Management

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pires called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

II. RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Mr. Pires opened the meeting by welcoming guests Javier Ceja of the Downtown Strategic Group, Kathy Maher from The Barnum Museum, Tim O'Connor from Retail Performance Solutions, Mark Reed of 1188 Lofts, and Ian Sacarny from Crestwood Management.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Morque made a motion to approve the Minutes of the March 9, 2021, DSSD Board Meeting, as presented. Commissioner Frassinelli seconded the motion. Commissioner Pastor abstained, and the minutes were approved.

IV. TREASURER REPORT

In Treasurer Gross' absence, Mr. Pires provided an explanation of the February 2022 financial report as provided by the bookkeeper. The Bridgeport DSSD ended the month of February 2022 with \$147,981 in assets, of which \$89,659 was cash spread across two bank accounts. Liabilities totaled \$45,061, encompassed by a mix of Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses. Net Assets at the end of the month totaled \$105,809. The accrued revenue was \$462,277 – primarily City of Bridgeport tax payments. Expenses for the same period totaled \$465,166 – primarily related to streetscape maintenance and administration of the organization (\$36,999). Accrued revenue for the period fell short of expenses by \$2,889. Commissioner Iassogna made a motion to approve the February 2022 financial report. Mr. Pastor seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

V. REPORT FROM THE CITY

Mr. Roach was not in attendance to present a report from the City, so this agenda item was tabled to the next board meeting.

VI. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

DSSD President Lauren Coakley Vincent began her report with an overview of the Ambassador performance report for the month of March, which reflected an increase (21%) in sanitation instances, mostly resulting for more time devoted to snow removal and curb line detailed cleaning. The team saw a large increase (450%) in the amount of time devoted to beautification work, which reflected preparations for weeding work that will continue through the spring. The Public Safety category also increased by 11 percent, mostly caused by a modest change to the instances of

panhandling. Finally, there was an increase (44%) in the amount of public engagement over the past month in the hospitality assists category.

Ms. Coakley Vincent reported out on the last strategic plan refresh sessions, which focused on an exploration of the strategies and goals that would lead to achieving our vision. She announced that the [draft strategic plan](#) was available for input and comments ahead of the presentation at the DSSD's annual meeting. Ms. Coakley Vincent gave an overview Colorful Bridgeport campaign content from March. She noted that 26 Downtown businesses (22% of the total sample size) responded to the merchant needs assessment survey conducted by the DSSD's Merchant Engagement Coordinator, Razul Branch. Key insights from the survey will be used to advance solutions-focused conversations held with individual sectors (dining + nightlife, community + culture, shopping, and service) in April, May, and June. Ms. Coakley Vincent also shared that the DSSD had worked in partnership with the City of Bridgeport's Office of Planning and Economic Development to release the [Downtown Placemaking Public Art Call for Artists](#) and would be holding an information session on April 15, 2022 with interested artists. Finally, she concluded here report with a preview of upcoming events:

- [Coffee with a Cop](#) on Friday, April 29 at 8:30 a.m. at Leisha's Bakeria
- [Jane & Cesar's Way](#) on Saturday, May 14 at 11:30 a.m. at various locations

VII. REPORTS OF STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES

A. Executive and Finance

Mr. Pires reported on the Executive Committee meeting that was held on April 6, 2022. The Committee reviewed the draft fiscal year 2023 budget, requests for sponsorship of community events in this fiscal year and in 2023, a possible addition to the annual meeting slate of Commissioner candidates, and progress toward the Downtown Placemaking contracted scope of work. The Committee also set the agenda for this month's board meeting.

Mr. Pires reported on the Finance Committee meeting that was held on March 29, 2022, to draft the fiscal year 2023 budget, using revenue assumptions based on the 2021 grand list and expense assumptions based on the contract values of identified vendors and other sources. Ms. Coakley Vincent presented the draft budget and companion narrative for board discussion, which will be presented for vote and approval by the membership at the 2022 annual meeting on May 11, 2022.

B. Elections

Mr. Schneider presented the proposed ballot presenting the slate of Commissioners for election at the DSSD's annual meeting. Mr. Frassinelli made a motion to approve the slate of Commissioners as presented. Mr. Iassogna seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Mr. Schneider further confirmed that the location for the upcoming annual meeting would be at the Housatonic Community College Werth Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and that the meeting would begin at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 11, 2022.

C. Physical Conditions

Mr. DeAngelis reported on the Physical Conditions Committee meeting that was held on March 25, 2022. The Committee discussed plans for beautification planting sites and types of planting materials, as well as updates on prospective grants to fund those efforts. The Committee explored a collaboration with Colorblends flower bulb wholesalers, which will roll out in the late summer/early fall. Finally, the Committee discussed options for activating the block of Bank Street between Main Street and Middle Street.

D. Public Safety

Mr. Iassogna reported on the Public Safety and Security Committee meeting that was held on March 25, 2022. The Committee reviewed the Downtown Ambassador's safety report, noting an observed increase in panhandling at hot spots in the district. Committee members from the Bridgeport Police Department shared feedback from night life business owners that there is a need for increased police presence in the late night/early morning hours. The Committee

discussed plans for the upcoming NCAA Women's Basketball tournament. The meeting concluded with plans to host the April meeting as a Coffee with a Cop open event with residents and business owners. Mr. Iassogna also noted that he and Ms. Coakley Vincent met with Police Commissioner Daniel Roach on April 28, 2022 to advocate for increasing the police presence in Downtown Bridgeport.

E. Special Events and Marketing

Mr. Morque reported on the Special Events and Marketing Committee meeting that was held on April 5, 2022. The Committee discussed the Colorful Bridgeport platform content released over the past month including commissioned artworks celebrating local womxn historical figures and interviews with the Bridgeport Library's femme leadership. The group discussed content plans for April and upcoming events including Coffee with a Cop, as well as Jane & Cesar's Way. The Committee provided input on whether the DSSD should create a resident version of its business welcome packet, and the best approaches to informing area residents and business owners about the DSSD's annual meeting in May. The meeting concluded with a review of the Downtown Placemaking Call for Artists and outreach plan. The Committee requested that a letter be sent to the Office of Planning and Economic Development urging them to include budget information about the project in all future communication pieces.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Pires called for the meeting to be adjourned at 4:44 p.m.