

**BRIDGEPORT DOWNTOWN SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
February 8, 2023  
Meeting Minutes**

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

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  
Max Pastor, Bordentown DB, LLC  
Daniel Roach, City of Bridgeport (Ex Officio)

**Guests**

Alicia Cobb, Art Simplified  
Chris DeAngelis, Cabezas-DeAngelis Surveyors & Engineers  
Albert B. Grajales  
Meg Haffner, The Kennedy Collective  
Tricia Hyacinth  
Josue Jorge, Habitat for Humanity  
Lynn Mosher-Howell, Rapha Massage  
Tim O'Connor, Park City Compost  
Andy Toledo, City of Bridgeport  
Brianna Walston

**Staff**

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

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Pires called the meeting to order at 4:05 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, Albert B. Grajales, Meg Haffner from The Kennedy Collective, Tricia Hyacinth, Josue Jorge from Habitat for Humanity, Lynn Mosher-Howell of Rapha Massage, Tim O'Connor from Park City Compost, Andy Toledo from the City of Bridgeport, and Brianna Walston

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Gross made a motion to approve the Minutes of the January 11, 2023, DSSD Board Meeting, as presented. Commissioner Frassinelli seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

**IV. TREASURER REPORT**

Treasurer Gross provided an explanation of the December 2022 financial report as provided by the bookkeeper. The Bridgeport DSSD ended the month of December 2022 with \$213,151 in assets, of which \$281,797 was cash spread across two bank accounts. Liabilities totaled \$64,774, all of which were Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses. Net Assets at the end of the month totaled \$148,377. The accrued revenue was \$645,486 – primarily City of Bridgeport tax and contracted work payments. Expenses for the same period totaled \$654,454 – primarily related to streetscape maintenance and creative placemaking programming for the organization (\$518,869). Accrued expenses for the period exceeded revenue by \$8,969. Commissioner Frassinelli made a motion to approve the December 2022 financial report. Commissioner Pastor seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Mr. Gross then presented the revised fiscal year 2023 budget, which was reviewed and approved at a joint meeting of the Executive and Finance Committees on February 1, 2023. A component of the budget revision included the proposed Downtown Placemaking contract scope of work for year two. DSSD President Lauren Coakley Vincent presented the proposed scope of work. Commissioner Ceja made a motion to approve the Downtown Placemaking contract scope of work for year two. Mr. Gross seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Mr. Gross continued with his presentation of the revised fiscal year 2023 budget, outlining the amended sources of revenue and associated expenses. Mr. Frassinelli made a motion to accept the revised fiscal year 2023 budget as presented. Mr. Pastor seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

## **V. REPORT FROM THE CITY**

Mr. Roach and Mr. Toledo provided updates on the various development projects in the Downtown, including the opening date for the converted Holiday Inn, currently open requests for proposals to develop the [Davidson Block](#) and [157-171 Golden Hill Street](#), the status of the Lafayette Circle realignment project, Congress Street Bridge construction, Pequonnock River Trail construction, the second phase of construction at the Intermodal Transportation Center, and the timeline to re-install parking and wayfinding signage there.

## **VI. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Ms. Coakley Vincent reported on the ideas and key takeaways that emerged from her annual one-on-one conversations with the DSSD Commissioners and the Chairs of each program committee to gather input on the effectiveness of 2022 programming and priorities and areas for improvement in 2023. She shared the Colorful Bridgeport campaign's January content highlights, including the release of the Color It In public art video series. In addition, the DSSD revamped the weekly What's Happening in Downtown Bridgeport events newsletter by adding a short video shared on Instagram mentioning the events and how to sign up for the newsletter on the Colorful Bridgeport website. Finally, Ms. Coakley Vincent relayed the Town of Fairfield's Economic Development Director Mark Barnhart's visit to the district for a walk of the public art project sites and to learn from the DSSD how to implement a public art program involving beautification of public spaces.

Ms. Coakley Vincent provided an overview of the Downtown Ambassador team's performance report for the month of January, which reflected an increase (21%) in sanitation instances over the past month and a 37 percent increase over the same period in the previous year, mostly due to a jump in trash bags and empty alcohol containers collected. The team saw a decrease (86%) in the amount of time devoted to beautification work from the previous month but an increase of 81 percent over the same time period in the previous year. Both changes were to do with the volume of leaf bags collected. The Public Safety category stayed steady (2% increase) over the previous month and a significant increase of 167 percent over the previous year, demonstrating an increase across all metric categories. Finally, there was an increase in the amount of public engagement over the past month (13%) and at the same time the previous year (211%) in the hospitality assists category.

## **VII. REPORTS OF STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

### **A. Executive & Finance**

Mr. Pires reported on the combined Executive and Finance Committees meeting that was held on February 1, 2023. The Committee reviewed the fiscal year 2023 budget revision and proposed Downtown Placemaking Year 2 scope of services. Given that the grand list assessed values may be adjusted due to pending appeals with the City of Bridgeport, the Committee recommended that the net revenue be held in reserve to be accessed for future shortfalls those adjustments, if approved, may create. The Committee set the timeline to draft the fiscal year 2024 budget. Before setting the agenda for this month's board meeting, the Committee reviewed a request for an event sponsorship and the key takeaways from Ms. Coakley Vincent's meetings with Commissioners and Committee Chairs.

### **B. Physical Conditions**

Mr. DeAngelis reported on the Physical Conditions Committee meeting that was held on February 3, 2023. The Committee welcomed new committee member Fred Frassinelli. The Committee then heard a presentation from Mardi Morrow of the Black Rock Pollinator Partners about supporting their efforts to establish Bridgeport as a [Bee City USA affiliate](#). The Committee decided that the DSSD should add its support to the multi-stakeholder effort. The

Committee reviewed the meeting materials from the UI 115kV Railroad Transmission Line Upgrade construction project public information session, as well as updates to the planned enhancements to the Sliver by the River.

**C. Public Safety**

Commissioner Iassogna reported on the Public Safety and Security Committee meeting that was held on February 3, 2023. The Committee welcomed new committee members Fred Frassinelli, Max Pastor, and Javier Ceja. The Committee discussed recent safety incidents that had occurred in the Downtown in the past monthly, including the instances of illegal parking documents by the Downtown Ambassador safety team. Finally, the Committee discussed the UI 115kV Railroad Transmission Line Upgrade construction project's possible impact on traffic routes along the railroad tracks.

**D. Special Events and Marketing**

Ms. Cobb reported on the Special Events and Marketing Committee meeting that was held on February 7, 2023. The Committee reviewed the Colorful Bridgeport content for the past month, including the Color It In video series release and the outcomes of the Hearst Media holiday shopping campaign. The Committee discussed plans for Black History and Women's History Month content, as well as formed planning groups for the upcoming Jane's Walks and PARK(ing) Day events. Finally, the Committee reviewed a sponsorship request for a short film by local director Edwin Escobar.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Pires called for the meeting to be adjourned at 4:53 p.m.