

**BRIDGEPORT DOWNTOWN SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
April 12, 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
Javier Ceja, Downtown Strategic Group
Karolyn Egbert, Trefz Corporation
Fred Frassinelli, AMS Real Estate
Philip Kuchma, Kuchma Corporation
Ryan McClay, Forstone Capital
Max Pastor, 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
Jason Cohen, Time Equities, Inc.
Daniel Roach, City of Bridgeport
Ian Sacarny, Crestwood Management

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pires called the meeting to order at 4:01 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, Jason Cohen from Time Equities, Inc., Daniel Roach from the City of Bridgeport, and Ian Sacarny from Crestwood Management.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Kuchma made a motion to approve the Minutes of the March 8, 2023, DSSD Board Meeting, as presented. Commissioner Gross seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

IV. REPORT FROM THE CITY

Mr. Toledo provided updates on the status of the Lafayette Circle realignment, Congress Street Bridge, and train station signage projects. He noted that there are no new or currently open RFPs for Downtown projects, but that applications were received and are being reviewed for the Davidson and Golden Hill Street properties.

Mr. Roach added insights about the groundbreaking for residential units at Steelpointe Harbor, and took questions from meeting attendees.

V. TREASURER REPORT

Treasurer Gross provided an explanation of the February 2023 financial report as provided by the bookkeeper. The Bridgeport DSSD ended the month of February 2023 with \$174,482 in assets, of which \$168,327 was cash spread across two bank accounts. Liabilities totaled \$40,852, all of which were Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses. Net Assets at the end of the month totaled \$133,630. The accrued revenue was \$776,079 – primarily City of Bridgeport tax payments. Expenses for the same period totaled \$764,034 – primarily related to streetscape maintenance and creative placemaking programming (\$586,859). Accrued revenue for the period exceeded expenses by \$12,045. Mr. Kuchma made a motion to approve the February 2023 financial report. Commissioner Frassinelli seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Treasurer Gross 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 10, 2023.

VI. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

DSSD President Lauren Coakley Vincent shared the Colorful Bridgeport campaign's March content highlights, including the collaboration with Alicia Cobb to honor and celebrate Women's History Month through video interviews with several women making change in Bridgeport. Ms. Coakley Vincent noted that the DSSD participated in or hosted a number of events this month, including the Wakeman Boys and Girls Club's Multicultural Fair, the AIR Collaborative Engage workshop held in partnership with the Connecticut Office of the Arts and the Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County, and Leadership Greater Bridgeport's Arts & Culture Day. In addition, the DSSD announced six new public art sites available for creative concept proposals via the Color It In: Corners program. All available sites are listed on the DSSD's website: colorfulbridgeport.com/color-it-in-corners.

Ms. Coakley Vincent gave an overview of the Downtown Ambassador team's performance report for the month of March, which reflected an increase (14%) in sanitation instances over the past month mostly due to a jump in the alcohol containers and trash bags collected; and a 20 percent increase over the same period in the previous year, also due to a jump in trash bags and empty alcohol containers collected. The team saw a large increase (150%) in the amount of time devoted to beautification work from the previous month, and a decrease from the same time period in the previous year both related to the number of blocks weeded. The Public Safety category decreased by 14 percent from the previous month and 23 percent from the same month in the previous year, both due to a drop in instances of panhandling. Finally, there was an increase in the number of interactions in the Public Engagement category stayed the same from the previous month and increased by 51 percent from the same month in the previous year in the hospitality assist and business contacts metric categories.

VII. REPORTS OF STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES

A. Executive and Finance

Mr. Pires reported on the combined Executive and Finance Committees meeting that was held on April 5, 2023. The Committees reviewed the draft fiscal year 2024 budget, which was created using revenue assumptions based on the 2021 grand list and expense assumptions based on the contract values of identified vendors and other sources. The draft budget and companion narrative will be presented for vote and approval by the membership at the 2023 annual meeting on May 10, 2023. The Committees also discussed preparations for the annual meeting and set the agenda for this month's board meeting.

B. Elections

In Secretary Schneider's absence, Ms. Coakley Vincent reported on the Elections Committee meeting that was held on April 7, 2023. She presented the slate of Commissioners for election at the DSSD's annual meeting: Fred Frassinelli, Phil Kuchma, and an open seat. Ms. Coakley Vincent asked for input from the board on the location for the upcoming annual meeting, and the board selected In The City Lounge. The meeting will take place from 4:00-5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 10, 2023.

C. Physical Conditions

Mr. DeAngelis reported on the Physical Conditions Committee meeting that was held on March 31, 2023. The Committee joined with the Public Safety Committee to walk the district and note areas for detailed cleaning or for seasonal plantings. Specifically, the Committee discussed the upcoming tree bed upgrade project to take place in May, along with the launch of the Colorful Crew volunteer recruitment page on the DSSD website.

D. Public Safety

Commissioner Iassogna reported on the Public Safety Committee meeting that was held on March 31, 2023. The Committee joined with the Physical Conditions Committee to walk the district and discuss recurring Downtown safety issues. Committee member and Commissioner Frassinelli arranged for the Committees to visit the business owners operating out of 97 Elm Street as part of the neighborhood walk.

E. Special Events and Marketing

Ms. Cobb reported on the Special Events and Marketing Committee meeting that was held on April 4, 2023. The Committee reviewed the Colorful Bridgeport content for the past month, including the Women's History Month video interview series, and upcoming content for April and May. The Committee shared priorities for the fiscal year 2024 budget. The Committee also discussed plans for upcoming events, including the Downtown Farmers Market, AIR Shift workshop, Jane's Walk, and PARK(ing) Day. Finally, the Committee gave input on effective approaches to outreach regarding the new Color It In: Corners Call for Artists.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Pires called for the meeting to be adjourned at 4:45 p.m.