

**BRIDGEPORT DOWNTOWN SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
October 11, 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  
Jason Cohen, Bordentown DB, LLC  
Karolyn Egbert, Trefz Corporation  
Fred Frassinelli, AMS Real Estate  
Callie Gale Heilmann, Made in Bridgeport, LLC  
Philip Kuchma, Kuchma Corporation

**Staff**

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

**Guests**

Chris DeAngelis, Cabezas-DeAngelis Surveyors & Engineers  
Kathy Maher, The Barnum Museum  
Sue Purefoy

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Pires called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

**II. RECOGNITION OF GUESTS**

Mr. Pires opened the meeting by welcoming guests Chris DeAngelis of Cabezas-DeAngelis Surveyors & Engineers, Kathy Maher from The Barnum Museum, and Sue Purefoy.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Kuchma made a motion to approve the Minutes of the September 13, 2023, DSSD Board Meeting, as presented. Commissioner Ceja seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

**IV. TREASURER REPORT**

Treasurer Gross provided an explanation of the August 2023 financial report as provided by the bookkeeper. The Bridgeport DSSD ended the month of August 2023 with \$151,858 in assets, of which \$44,614 was cash spread across two bank accounts. Liabilities totaled \$52,785, encompassed by a mix of Accounts Payable and Deferred Revenue. Net Assets at the end of the month totaled \$99,073. The accrued revenue was \$217,283 in revenue during the fiscal year, of this \$99,451 was accrued from City of Bridgeport tax and contract payments. Expenses for the same period totaled \$254,734 – primarily related to streetscape maintenance and creative placemaking of the organization (\$207,685). Accrued expenses exceeded revenue for the period by \$37,451. Commissioner Frassinelli made a motion to approve the August 2023 financial report. Mr. Ceja seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

**V. REPORT FROM THE CITY**

Mr. Toledo 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 gave an overview of the Downtown Ambassador team's performance report for the month of September, which reflected a small decrease (7%) in sanitation instances over the past month but a small increase over the previous year (8%) due to a fluctuations in the bills/stickers removed, and alcohol containers and trash bags collected. The team saw a decrease in the amount of time devoted to beautification work from the previous month (43%) and the same time period in the previous year (52%) in the number of leaf bags collected and time spent watering. The Public Safety category increased by 12 percent from the previous month but dropped by 31 percent from the same month in the previous year due to fluctuations in the instances of panhandling. Finally, there was a small decrease in the number of

interactions in the Public Engagement categories from the previous month (8%) but an increase from the same month in the previous year (7%).

Ms. Coakley Vincent shared a recap of the Colorful Bridgeport campaign's September content highlights, including the Downtown Farmers Market vendor features, PARK(ing) Day, and Hispanic Heritage Month, as well as planned content through the end of the calendar year. Ms. Coakley Vincent then shared reminders to attend the last weeks of the Downtown Farmers Market, visit to Downtown Hartford on October 13<sup>th</sup>, the Bridgeport Entrepreneur Exchange on October 17<sup>th</sup> hosted in partnership with the BRBC and the City's Office of Small and Minority Business Enterprise, and the Color It In Artists Reception on November 16<sup>th</sup>. She also noted that the contracts for all four service providers for Streetscape, Marketing, accounting, and the annual audit were expiring at the end of the fiscal year. So that there would be accurate information to include in the fiscal year 2025 budgeting process, the Executive Committee decided to review the possibility of extending each contract by one year and report back with recommendations at the November board meeting.

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. The group added more detailed insight into potential programming around the Public Safety and Public Space Activation priority areas, and then referred them to the respective program committees for further definition.

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

### **A. Executive**

Mr. Pires reported on the Executive Committee meeting that was held on October 4, 2023. The Committee discussed how to address the various vendor contracts that expire at the end of the fiscal year, how to move forward on certain elements of the CT Main Street Center's district assessment, and Edwin Escobar's proposal for Colorful Bridgeport video content. The Committee also finalized the agenda for this month's board meeting.

### **B. Physical Conditions**

Mr. DeAngelis reported on the Physical Conditions Committee meeting that was held on September 29, 2023. The Committee reviewed the most recent Sliver by the River project plan presented by the Trust for Public Land. The Committee also provided feedback on where the Downtown Ambassador team needed to concentrate on additional detailed cleaning and seasonal beautification projects.

### **C. Public Safety**

Commissioner Iassogna reported on the Public Safety and Security Committee meeting that was held on September 29, 2023. The Committee met with Bridgeport Police Chief Roderick Porter to discuss recent public safety issues in the neighborhood and preparations for Sound on Sound. In particular, Chief Porter spoke about the Police Department's efforts towards addressing late night incidents as bars close on weekends. 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. Coakley Vincent reported on the Special Events and Marketing Committee meeting that was held on October 3, 2023. The Committee reviewed the Colorful Bridgeport content for the past month, including the Downtown Farmers Market vendor features, What's Happening and Hispanic Heritage Month newsletters, and PARK(ing) Day activities. The Committee then reviewed the holiday shopping content proposal from Edwin Escobar and progress toward completion of the Color It In mural program. The Committee discussed plans for upcoming events and ways to incorporate wayfinding signage in the Downtown.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Pires called for the meeting to be adjourned at 5:00 p.m.