

**BRIDGEPORT DOWNTOWN SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
February 14, 2024
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
Callie Gale Heilmann, Made in Bridgeport, LLC
Jason Cohen, Bordentown DB, LLC

Staff

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

Guests

Alicia Cobb, Art Simplified
Chris DeAngelis, Cabezas-DeAngelis Surveyors & Engineers
Ira Jacoby, Felner Corporation
Sue Purefoy

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 Alicia Cobb of Art Simplified, Chris DeAngelis of Cabezas-DeAngelis Surveyors & Engineers, Ira Jacoby from the Felner Corporation, and Sue Purefoy.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Iassogna made a motion to approve the Minutes of the January 10, 2023, DSSD Board Meeting, as presented. Commissioner Frassinelli seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

IV. TREASURER REPORT

Treasurer Gross explained that, unfortunately, the DSSD's accountant had been out of the office on medical leave and was not able to send the monthly financial report. He noted that a complete financial report will be available at the March 2024 board meeting.

V. REPORT FROM THE CITY

Mr. Toledo was not in attendance to present a report from the City, but did provide the following updates via email:

- State Street blinking light petition to CTDOT progress: No major update on this request. It's still stuck with State DOT traffic engineering division review process. DSSD President Lauren Coakley Vincent will reach out to State Representative Antonio Felipe for assistance in moving this request forward.
- Congress Street Bridge construction: The Office of Planning and Economic Development (OPED) is waiting to hear back from the federal government regarding the submitted funding request for construction. If not awarded, OPED does have a plan B in place. More details to follow.

VI. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ms. Coakley Vincent gave an overview of the Downtown Ambassador team's performance report for the month of January, which reflected a decrease (8%) in sanitation instances over the past month and over the previous year (5%) due to fewer alcohol containers left out to collect. The team saw a 100% decrease in the amount of time devoted to beautification work from the previous month and from the same time period in the previous year due to seasonal variations of the work for that category. The Public Safety category reflected a decrease (17%) from the previous month and from the same month in the previous year (65%) due to a steady decrease in reported panhandling. Finally, there was an increase (4%) in the number of

interactions in the Public Engagement category from the previous month, but a decrease (3%) from the same month in the previous year.

Ms. Coakley Vincent shared the release of the Color It In artist videos series on the Colorful Bridgeport platform. She reported back on the DSSD's participation in January events, including hosting the Bridgeport Chamber of Commerce for its monthly meeting and the Bridgeport Delegation Legislative Forum held at Housatonic Community College. Finally, she shared that the DSSD is partnering with the City of Bridgeport's Economic Development and Communications team to design and install wayfinding signage throughout the neighborhood.

VII. REPORTS OF STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES

A. Executive

Mr. Pires reported on the Executive Committee meeting that was held on February 7, 2024. The Committee finalized the DSSD's letter to City of Bridgeport City Finance Director Kenneth Flatto regarding funding for programming and services. The Committee further discussed the fiscal year 2024 budget and set the timeline for the fiscal year 2025 budgeting process. Lastly, the Committee 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 January 26, 2024. The Committee discussed next steps to enhance street lighting in the neighborhood. The Committee also provided input on the key questions shared by FHI Studio related to the CT Department of Transportation's I-95 Mobility Study.

C. Public Safety

Commissioner Iassogna reported on the Public Safety and Security Committee meeting that was held on January 26, 2024. The Committee welcomed three new members: Downtown residents and City of Bridgeport employees Curtis Denton and Tamara Root, as well as DSSD Commissioner Andy Toledo. The Committee then heard updates from Bridgeport Police Chief Porter about recent public safety and quality of life issues in the Downtown.

D. Special Events and Marketing

Ms. Cobb reported on the Special Events and Marketing Committee meeting that was held on February 6, 2024. The Committee reviewed the Colorful Bridgeport content for the past month, including the release of the Color It In murals video series, and plans for upcoming Black History and Women's History month content. The Committee provided feedback on the proposed welcome beautification signage concepts and reviewed the list of points of interest to be included on Downtown wayfinding signage. Finally, the Committee brainstormed concepts for the 2024 decorative light pole banner series.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Pires shared updates on the CT Siting Council's pending decision regarding the locations for the UI Fairfield to Congress Railroad Transmission Line 115-kV Rebuild Project. He noted that they had indicated a preference to locate the monopoles on the north side of the railroad tracks, in keeping with the location of the current infrastructure. A formal statement from the Siting Council was planned for Thursday, February 15th at 1:00 p.m.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Pires called for the meeting to be adjourned at 4:39 p.m.