

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
DOWNTOWN MANCHESTER SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT
April 1, 2015**

**6 PM
AXIS901
901 Main St.
Manchester, CT 06040**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Donald DuBaldo, Chair
Stephen Carter, Vice Chair
Nicholas DuBaldo, Secretary
George R. Dorin
Edward Firestone

EX-OFFICIO MEMBER: Mark Pellegrini, Planning & Neighborhood Services
April DiFalco, GMCC

STAFF PRESENT: Tana Parseliti, Downtown Manager
Sabina Wilson, Administrative Assistant

ALSO PRESENT: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: William Bayer, John Tunila, Esq., Robert Mahoney

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS
ABSENT: None

Call to Order

Mr. DuBaldo called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

Roll Call

Mr. Don DuBaldo conducted a roll call. Mr. Carter, Mr. Nicholas DuBaldo, and Mr. Dorin, were present. Mr. Firestone arrived at 6:06 PM. Mr. Bayer, Mr. Tunila, Esq. and Mr. Mahoney were absent.

Minutes

Mr. Dorin moved to accept the minutes of the February 4, 2015 and March 4, 2015 meetings. Mr. Carter seconded the motion. Mr. N. DuBaldo offered a friendly amendment to correct the spelling of Paul Koutsopoulos's name in the minutes of Feb. 4, 2015 and to add a period to the final sentence of the Roll Call section of the same minutes. The motion passed unanimously with the recommended changes 5-0-0.

Public Comment

None.

Old Business

Review of Downtown Special Events – Ms. Parseliti provided a list of Downtown Special Events for the 2015 calendar year. Mr. N. DuBaldo noted that the Marketing Committee recommended continuing the list as presented.

Mr. Carter felt that the events should benefit businesses. Mr. Dorin and Mr. N. DuBaldo noted that customer access can be restricted during events like the Safe Downtown Trick-or-Treat.

Mr. N. DuBaldo further recommended that businesses should use events as a marketing opportunity. Mr. D. DuBaldo agreed.

The commission consensus was that if businesses like the events we should do them and use them as a marketing opportunity for both the businesses and for the Downtown as a whole.

There was further discussion regarding the Scarecrow Festival. Commissioners agreed that we should shorten the time the scarecrows are displayed to 2 weeks and secure a committee to work on the event.

Mr. Carter moved to continue the Halloween Happenings – Safe Trick-or-Treat and the Scarecrow Festival subject to finding someone to take the lead as chair of the Scarecrow Festival. Mr. Firestone seconded the motion. A friendly amendment was made by Mr. Carter to support the balance of the Downtown Special Events list. Mr. Firestone seconded the motion and all voted in favor. 5-0-0.

Other Reports

Director of Planning, Town of Manchester, Mark Pellegrini - The order of the agenda was modified to allow Mr. Pellegrini to provide his report as he needed to leave to attend another meeting. He noted that the issue of one property easement for the Parking Lot Improvement Project is still outstanding and will likely be dealt with by the Board of Directors.

Work is continuing on details of the Parking Lot Improvement Plans.

The new Main Street pedestrian street lights are expected to be installed in June and July.

Old Business, cont.

BOC Action Items – The commissioners reviewed and updated the current list. They made the following additions:

- Place a review of the current Vending Ordinance on a future agenda.
- Request that the Town use tree trimming as a strategy to reduce nuisance bird nesting in street trees.
- Investigate resources for securing an intern with social media experience.

The commissioners spent some time discussing installation of automated parking permit ticket units in the Purnell Place Parking Lot. These units would allow clients or customers who will be there for intermittent visits to purchase single day permits from the machine that could be displayed on their windshield. This would ease enforcement, reduce customer tickets and subsequent waiver requests, and give short term parkers an easy method of complying. Mr. D. DuBaldo suggested that initial units be installed in the Purnell Place Lot per the recommendation of contractor and provisions be made for the installation of future units in other lots. All commissioners agreed. Mr. D. DuBaldo moved to contact Mark Carlino, the Town Director of Public Works, with a request to install the ticketing units in the Purnell Place Parking Lot per the recommendations of the installer and make provisions for installing future units in the Heritage Rear and Birch Street Lots. Mr. N. DuBaldo seconded the motion and all voted in favor. 5-0-0.

Officers and Committee Reports

Chair, Donald DuBaldo – Mr. D. DuBaldo reported that he had attended the recent Economic Summit held by the Town of Manchester and found it interesting.

Vice Chair & Finance Committee Chair, Stephen Carter

YTD Revenue & Expense Report – Mr. Carter reviewed the report which was distributed to all commissioners. There were no questions.

Cruisin’ Fund Balance – The chair of the Cruisin’ Committee submitted a letter to the Downtown District requesting authorization of approximately \$2,000.00 from the Cruisin’ “Reserve Fund” to purchase a new cross street banner prior to July 1, 2015. Mr. Carter asked Mr. Firestone, who serves on the Cruisin’ Committee, to explain the request. Mr. Firestone noted that the committee had set aside monies over the past several years to replace the banner. They requested use of those “Reserve Fund” monies to purchase a new banner.

Request for \$200 Honorarium to FGIC from Cruisin’ 2014 - Mr. Firestone noted a Cruisin’ Committee request for \$200.00 from the Cruisin’ Fund Balance to be given as an honorarium for use of the courtyard at 995 Main as a VIP/Sponsor Hospitality area for Cruisin’ 2014.

Mr. Carter moved to recognize the \$3,398.00 Cruisin’ Committee fund balance as Downtown Manchester Special Services District funds. Mr. Dorin seconded the motion and all voted in favor. 5-0-0.

Mr. Carter moved to accept the Cruisin’ Committee request for \$2,000.00 from the Cruisin’ Fund Balance to purchase a new banner. Mr. Dorin seconded the motion and all voted in favor. 5-0-0.

It was the consensus of the commissioners not to approve the request for \$200.00 to be given as an honorarium for use of the courtyard at 995 Main St.

Secretary & Marketing Committee Chair, Nicholas DuBaldo – Mr. N. DuBaldo distributed a mock-up of a newsletter endorsed by the Marketing Committee. Mr. Carter felt that the newsletter should be distributed in digital format. Discussion was tabled until the May commission meeting.

Parking & Maintenance Chair, Robert Dorin

Review of Parking Constable Job Description & Hiring Process - Mr. Dorin referenced the position description that was distributed to the commissioners. The position will be posted for two weeks. The committee would like to review the resumes expeditiously and move forward in the hiring process. Mr. Dorin made a motion asking for the support of the board of commissioners to move forward with the interview process after which the committee will report back to the commission. Mr. N. DuBaldo seconded the motion and all voted in favor. 5-0-0.

Mr. Dorin reported that Ms. Parseliti was asked to review the current Downtown maintenance contract to identify potential cost savings. He further noted that we need to address the 2015-16 snow season now with the Town Board of Directors while issues from the current season are still fresh in everyone’s minds.

Cruisin’ Committee, Edward Firestone – Mr. Firestone reported that sponsorship commitments to date totaled \$26,000. The committee has a goal of \$30,000.

Other Reports

Imagine Main Street, Steve Gates – Mr. Gates was not present and no report was given.

President, GMCC, April DiFalco – Ms. DiFalco reported that the Chamber is working on a rebranding campaign with a “future orientation”. It will include: a new mobile responsive site; a new tag line “We mean business”; and a new logo.

March was a great month for the Chamber with 20 new businesses joining. April 30 is the Chamber's Annual Meeting. The DMSSD commissioners were encouraged to attend. Finally, the Annual Chamber Golf Tournament is fast approaching.

Administration

Manager's Report – A copy of the Manager's Report was distributed to all commissioners. Ms. Parseliti highlighted several report items.

Community Policing Reorganization - The recent reorganization of the Community Policing Program included some changes in staffing and service area. Sgt. Marc Hughes of the Community Policing Unit has been invited to our May meeting to talk about the changes.

Maintenance – Ms. Parseliti noted that she will be reviewing snow damage to Downtown parking lots and will work with the Parking & Maintenance Committee to plan for addressing the damages.

Meetings with New Businesses – Two new businesses have located in the Downtown: Smokin' – Not Just BBQ and Quast Media. Ms. Parseliti met with the owners of both businesses.

Map of Handicapped Friendly Downtown Restaurants – Ms. Parseliti displayed a map created by the Director of Social Services that identifies the handicapped friendly Downtown restaurants. Ms. Parseliti provided technical support to the project. The map will be posted on the Town website and added to the DMSSD website.

A complete copy of the Manger's Report is attached.

New Business

Mr. Carter took the opportunity to remind the commission that we need to maximize our website and make sure all of our digital media is designed for display on cell phones, the prevalent media used by consumers.

Adjourn

There being no further business, Mr. Dorin moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:40PM. Mr. Carter seconded the motion and all voted in favor. 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Tana Parseliti, Downtown Manager
Recorder

Manager's Report
Downtown Manchester Special Services District
Board of Commissioners Meeting
April 1, 2015

Administration

A variety of activities took place during the final works days of former parking constable Harold Delisle.

Mr. Delisle and I met to review aspects of his job that incoming enforcement staff may find useful. We updated an existing Policies and Procedures Manual for review by the Parking Committee

I coordinated a debriefing with Mr. Delisle and the Parking Committee, and with Sgt. Mark Hughes.

A Bon Voyage Party was held for Mr. Delisle on Friday, March 27 in the District office. Approximately 30 people attended. The Commission presented Mr. Delisle with an etching of a Downtown streetscape by Stephen Sottile, a Downtown business. A second etching by Mr. Sottile was presented to Ms. Sabina Wilson from the Commission. Both Mr. Delisle and Ms. Wilson expressed their appreciation for the gifts.

Public Safety

Panhandling

The Town attorney advised us not to distribute the BOLA reviewed at our March 4 meeting. Rather, he suggested that we continue to educate our businesses in how to report aggressive panhandling.

Community Policing Reorganization

The Police Dept. is in the process of reorganizing the community policing areas and making some staff adjustments. I invited Sgt. Hughes to attend our May 6 commission meeting to discuss the changes. Officer Dan Doyan has been transferred to the new North area (Buckland Mall and surrounding area). Officers now covering the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods include: Officer Carbone, Officer Dui and Officer Krawiek.

Coffee with the Cops

I am waiting for a date from Sgt. Hughes.

Cruisin' Transition

I met with the incoming event manager, Karen Gubbins, and Sgt. Hughes, to review public safety responsibilities at Cruisin'. Transfer of pertinent documents underway.

I met with Karen, Rec Dept. administrative staff and Cruisin' Food Vendor Chair, Mike Esposito, to go over vendor recruitment and record keeping.

I met with Linda Barker, who is handling Cruisin' finances. We developed a Cruisin' 2015 revenue and expense journal as requested by Steve Carter.

Migration of the Cruisin' website and Facebook page to Town oversight is in process.

Maintenance

Hopefully, the snow season is behind us. We were able to stay within budget with the exception of the Purnell Place snow hauling and hauling required in the Tinker Lot.

I will be reviewing snow damage to Downtown parking lots and will work with the Parking & Maintenance Committee to plan address damages.

We are waiting for the street planters to thaw at which time the winter greens can be removed. Pansies will be planted as soon as greens are removed.

Meetings with New Businesses

I met two new Downtown businesses. Fran DelMaestro is the owner of the business that is taking over the Hilltop BBQ space. The new business will be called *Smokin' - Not Just BBQ*. Mr. DelMaestro is planning a quick serve restaurant that will offer BBQ and seasonal items. He will serve lunch and dinner. He anticipates that 50% of the business will be delivery, 25% to go and 25% eat-in. This could have implications for parking in the immediate area that should be reviewed by the Parking & Maintenance Committee. Anticipated opening is mid-April.

Winifred "Vinni" Quast is the President of Quast Media. Quast is a digital advertising agency specializing in digital signage and media production. He is located in 935 Main St. Suite B-4.

Map of Handicapped Friendly Downtown Restaurants

Over the past year, Mary Roche Cronin, Director of the Town Dept. of Human Services, worked to develop a map showing handicap friendly Downtown restaurants. (Copy attached.) The map will be on the town website and distributed to appropriate groups. I provided technical support to this project, visiting each restaurant with Ms. Roche Cronin. I would like to place the map on the Downtown District website.

State of the Arts on March 12

I spoke at the State of the Arts Meeting emphasizing the contribution of recent arts projects and institutions to creating a making the Downtown an attractive place to locate a business.

MCC on Main SWOT Analysis

I attended a workshop on March 24 funded by the Greater Hartford Arts Council where a SWOT (strength, weaknesses and opportunities) analysis for MCC on Main was conducted.

Imagine Main Street

I attended two Imagine Main Street meetings this month. The committee is planning its program content for the upcoming season. Imagine First Thursdays are planned for May, June, July, August, September and October. Additional volunteers are needed. I will be sending out a call for volunteers to Downtown businesses and friends.