

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
DOWNTOWN MANCHESTER SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT
May 6, 2015**

LN7

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Donald DuBaldo, Chair
Stephen Carter, Vice Chair
Nicholas DuBaldo, Secretary
William Bayer
George R. Dorin
John Tunila, Esq.

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

STAFF PRESENT: Tana Parseliti, Downtown Manager

ALSO PRESENT: Sgt. Marc Hughes, Lynn Sottile, Vini Quast

MEMBERS ABSENT: Edward Firestone, Esq., Robert Mahoney

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT: April DiFalco, GMCC

Call to Order

Mr. D. DuBaldo called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Roll Call

Mr. D. DuBaldo conducted a roll call. Mr. Carter, Mr. Nicholas DuBaldo, Mr. Bayer, Mr. Dorin, and Mr. Tunila were present. Mr. Firestone, Mr. Mahoney and Ms. DiFalco were absent.

Also present were Ms. Sottile of Schultz Design, new Downtown business owner, Vinnie Quast of Quast Media LLC and Sgt. Marc Hughes, who took over the Community Policing Unit in October of 2014.

Minutes

Mr. Dorin moved acceptance of the minutes of April 1, 2015. Mr. Bayer seconded the motion which passed unanimously 6-0-0.

Public Comment

None.

Community Policing Report, Sgt. Marc Hughes

Sgt. Hughes distributed his business card and encouraged all present to contact him if they have a problem. He reviewed changes to the Community Policing Unit that include:

- Changes to the prior service area model. A North/South service area replaced an East/West service area. The South service area (the area the Downtown falls into) now includes Center Springs Park and the MACC Shelter.
- The Community Resources Officer position has been eliminated with those duties going to Sgt. Hughes.

- Positions have been reshuffled with Off. Doyan and Off. Marois moving to the North service area that includes the Mall area. Off. Carbone, Off. Dui and Off. Krawiec are assigned to the South service area.
- An enhanced focus on community policing functions and elimination of non-community policing functions. The Community Policing Unit was becoming too reactive. Officers were pulled out for non-community policing functions. There is now a renewed focus on crime prevention and community services.

Sgt. Hughes noted that one of the biggest challenges is the youth. They plan to work with kids in the Spruce St. area. They want to work with the Board of Education to help coordinate services and develop programs for at risk kids.

Sgt. Hughes would like to hold monthly “Coffee with the Cops” at the Downtown Community Policing Office once remodeling is complete. He noted that communication with Downtown constituents is important and observed sometimes people’s perception of a situation is often worse than the reality.

Mr. Tunila asked what the Downtown can do for the Police. Sgt. Hughes responded that he does not have any current needs.

Sgt. Hughes noted that the same panhandler that caused problems last year is back in the Downtown area and has been reported to be operating on Bissell St.

Mr. Pellegrini asked if Sgt. Hughes has identified any trends. Sgt. Hughes noted that it has been quiet.

Mr. D. DuBaldo inquired if bike patrols were planned? Sgt. Hughes responded affirmatively and said they will use crime program data to target areas.

Ms. Parseliti questioned the impact of the closing of the MACC Shelter. Sgt. Hughes believes we should see a decrease in activity as shelter clients move to new shelters. Mr. N. DuBaldo suggested we might see extra activity in the tent area. Sgt. Hughes noted that as one of the reasons they have extended their service area to include that area. Mr. Pellegrini noted that a number of tent communities have been dispersed.

Old Business

- **Downtown Newsletter** – Mr. N. DuBaldo called for ideas for the newsletter. Suggestions included an article by the April for the Chamber and a series of articles for business people. It was agreed that distribution would include both digital and hard copies. Hard copies would be available at special events and for non-digital constituents. The frequency will be 2 to 4 times per year.

Ms. Sottile noted that the newsletter connects everyone and makes the Downtown seem like a tight community.

The idea was raised to secure advertising support for the newsletter.

Mr. Dorin pointed out that a newsletter is part of the commissioner’s desire for better communications.

Mr. D. DuBaldo suggested that the DMSSD web address should be prominent.

BOC Action Items Review

Mr. D. DuBaldo asked Ms. Parseliti to set-up a meeting with Jim Mayer, the Chief Montminey and the Parking Committee to look into handheld ticketing devices.

There was brief discussion regarding securing an office intern with Mr. N. DuBaldo suggesting that a pro bono intern could use the experience for course credit or independent work study credit.

Mr. Carter moved to set-up an internship program for the DMSSD office. Mr. Tunila seconded the motion and all voted in favor 6-0-0.

Mr. Quast noted that he had success with an internship program.

Mr. D. DuBaldo would like to see more appropriate office space for the DMSSD at no cost. He suggested looking into rather the Town has space. Mr. Dorin supported the idea and also felt office equipment should be upgraded. Mr. Quast suggested that First Niagara has vacant office spaces in the Watkins Building. Mr. Pellegrini noted that Axis901 has no space currently.

Ms. Parseliti was asked to undertake a “Snow Study” to look at how other Towns deal with snow in their Downtown areas. She was asked to determine which other towns “plow to the middle” of the street. Mr. Bayer suggested contacting Fuss & O’Neil.

The Parking Committee will undertake a Treescape Study that looks at replacing or removing street trees in the Downtown that have outgrown their locations. Mr. Tunila noted that when this was studied three years ago it was determined that there were electrical conduits under the trees that make removal and replacement extremely difficult. It was suggested that the Parking Committee speak with a landscape architect. Mr. Dorin asked the commissioners to get their ideas to Ms. Parseliti.

Officers and Committee Reports

- **Chair, Donald DuBaldo** – Mr. D. DuBaldo noted he had covered his report during the action items discussion. He later noted that he had reviewed a report to the Town Board of Directors prepared by Scott Sprague regarding the transition of Cruisin’ on Main to the Town in 2016. He was pleased with the report. He also confirmed that Ms. Parseliti would continue to serve on the committee going forward.
- **Vice Chair & Finance Committee Chair, Stephen Carter** - Mr. Carter distributed copies of the latest Cruisin’ financial report noting that Ms. Barker and Ms. Parseliti are doing a good job. Mr. Carter and Ms. Parseliti will meet with Town Accounting Dept. staff to review the DMSSD year to date budget vs. actuals. A year to date report and any needed budget adjustments will be brought to the next meeting.
- **Secretary & Marketing Committee Chair, Nicholas DuBaldo** – Mr. N. DuBaldo provided his report earlier in the meeting.
- **Parking & Maintenance Chair, Robert Dorin** – Mr. Dorin reported on the Parking Enforcement Workers hiring status citing a strong pool of applicants. He asked for board approval to make a conditional offer to the preferred candidates prior to the next commissioner meeting. Mr. Tunila moved to authorize Mr. Dorin to make a conditional offer to the two preferred Parking Enforcement Workers subject to successful completion of background checks and subsequent approval by the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Bayer seconded the motion and all voted in favor 6-0-0.
- **Cruisin’ Committee, Edward Firestone** – In Mr. Firestone’s absence no report was given.

Other Reports

- **Imagine Main Street, Steve Gates** – In Mr. Gates’ absence no report was given
- **Director of Planning, Town of Manchester, Mark Pellegrini** – Mr. Pellegrini reported that the Parking Lot Improvement Project Plans will be out to bid by the end of the month. Mr. Santos signed consent to easement. Mr. Pellegrini noted that large concrete blocks have been put in place to demarcate a section of the Purnell Parking Lot as belonging to the Town. This section had been used by abutting tenants for parking. It was necessary to “reclaim” this section of the lot as it will be part

of the Improvement project. He may ask Sgt. Hughes to enforce overnight parking. He will advise the abutting property owner.

Mr. Carter cited the importance of educating Downtown constituents regarding the Downtown Parking Regulations. He suggests that we need to educate tenants/owners/employees about the parking regulations, fine increases and the importance of compliance. It was felt that peer to peer contact was more effective. Mr. Carter agreed to coordinate commission members to conduct an informational outreach to Downtown constituents. Talking points will be provided.

President, GMCC, April DiFalco – There was not report as Ms. DiFalco was absent.

Administration

- **Manager's Report** – A copy of Ms. Parseliti's report is attached.

New Business

- **Library Feasibility and Concept Plan Report** – Mr. D. DuBaldo noted that some commissioners attended a Director's Policy Briefing where they learned more about the plan. Representing the DMSSD's support for keeping the library in the Downtown, he asked that they maintain the same amount of customer parking and make the building architecture fit into the architecture of the street.

Mr. Bayer expressed concern for voter support of a \$24 million bond issue and questioned if the Downtown will look bad if it fails a second time.

Mr. Pellegrini noted that if the referendum fails it will be the library that fails and not the Downtown. He suggested that library supporters speak with us to develop some ground level, positive support.

Mr. Carter noted that we need to think of positive arguments to support the plan and to think big.

Mr. Dorin agreed and noted that the addition of CVS and the new location for the library will increase the Downtown trade zone.

Mr. D. DuBaldo supported an idea that has been put forward of having the Lutz Museum move to the former library space.

MACC Shelter Closing

Commissioners were advised of the shelter closing.

Public Comment

Ms. Schultz provided updated information on the Wall That Heals Project. The half size replica of the Vietnam Memorial is coming to Center Park October 8 thru 11 of 2015. She noted they are trying to reach a goal of \$30,000. Sponsorship opportunities are available.

Adjourn

Mr. Dorin moved to adjourn at 7:30PM. Mr. Tunila seconded the motion and all voted in favor 6-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Tana Parseliti, Downtown Manager
Recorder