

MINUTES

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
DOWNTOWN MANCHESTER SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT**

NOVEMBER 1, 2017

6PM

AXIS901

901 MAIN STREET, MANCHESTER, CT 06040

MEMBERS PRESENT: Donald DuBaldo, Chair
Stephen Carter, Vice Chair
Nicholas DuBaldo, Secretary
William Bayer
Rebecca Gentile
John Tunila, Esq.
Winfried Quast

**EX OFFICIO MEMBERS
PRESENT:** Gary Anderson, Director Planning and Development

ALSO PRESENT: Lynn Sottile, Schultz Design

STAFF PRESENT: Tana Parseliti, Downtown Manager

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bob Sulick

EX OFFICIO ABSENT: April DiFalco, President, GMCC

STAFF ABSENT: None.

Call to Order

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

Roll Call

Mr. D. DuBaldo confirmed those present and absent.

Minutes

October 4, 2017 – Mr. Bayer moved approval of the Minutes of October 4, 2017. Ms. Gentile seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All present voted in favor. (6-0-0)

Public Comment

None.

Mr. Quast arrived at 6:11PM.

New Business

2018 Board of Commissioners Meeting Schedule – Commissioners reviewed the proposed meeting schedule distributed by Ms. Parseliti. After some discussion the commissioners decided to change the meeting time of the

regular monthly meetings to 8AM. Ms. Parseliti was asked to confirm the availability of the conference room at Work_Space to host the meetings and report at the December meeting.

2018 Biennial Election Timeline – Ms. Parseliti reminded commissioners that the election process is governed by a strict timeline. She will distribute an undated timeline at the December meeting. The commissioners agreed that the commission officers will continue to serve on the Nominating Committee.

Commissioner Resignation – Mr. Carter tendered his resignation from the Commission effective at the conclusion of this November 1, 2017 meeting. Mr. Carter occupied a business owner seat on the commission. Mr. Tunila moved to have the minutes reflect Mr. Carter's profound service to the Downtown as a commissioner. Mr. Bayer seconded the motion. In Discussion all agreed with Mr. Tunila's motion and passed the motion by acclaim.

Mr. Carter agreed to continue to serve on the Finance Committee.

Mr. D. DuBaldo presented Mr. Carter with a Gift Certificate as a token of the Commission's thanks for his service.

The commissioners inquired as to the process of filling the vacant seat. Ms. Parseliti responded that a midterm commission resignation may be filled by a board appointment so long as a vacant property owner seat is filled by a property owner and a vacant business owner seat is filled by a business owner.

Old Business

Strategic Planning Meeting Report Status, Gary Anderson – Mr. Anderson reported that the document is nearing completion. They awaiting still photos. A copy will be forwarded to the Strategic Planning Committee for their thoughts before submission to the Board of Commissioners.

Wayfinding Signs Status, Gary Anderson – Mr. Anderson reported that the sign poles have come in. They hope to have some of the signs in place by the Thanksgiving Day Road Race.

Officers and Committee Reports

Report of Officers

Donald DuBaldo, Chair – Mr. D. DuBaldo deferred his report to the Downtown Economic Development Committee agenda item.

Stephen Carter, Vice Chair – Mr. Carter deferred his report to the Finance Committee agenda item.

Nick DuBaldo, Secretary – Mr. N. DuBaldo deferred his report to the Marketing Committee agenda item.

Finance Committee, Steve Carter/Rebecca Gentile

FY 17-18 Draft Budget – Ms. Gentile reviewed the working budget document.

In the Income category, an overall increase of \$9,025 is recommended. This is comprised of an increase to Downtown District taxes of \$5,500; an increase in Interest Income of \$325; an increase in Parking Permit Revenue of \$2,000 and an increase in Parking Violations Revenue of \$2,000. Downtown District Miscellaneous Revenue remains the same. Income from the Banner Program is reduced by \$800.

In the Expense category, overall expenses exceed income by \$7,250. The following categories are expected to see significant increases: Utilities increase by \$4,000 due to increase in parking lots lights. Repairs and Maintenance increase by \$6,000 due to anticipated increased cost of the Downtown Maintenance contract. Beautification increases by \$1,500 to allow for addition of planters/plantings on Purnell Place. Other Advertising increases by \$5,000 to allow for increased Downtown marketing. The Street Banner Program increases by \$2,800 to allow for design and fabrication of new banners on the two year cycle. Smaller increases are found in other Expense line items based on past performance.

The proposed Budget includes \$2,500 for purchase of another Video Camera.

The commissioners were asked to review the proposed budget and come to the Dec. 6th commission meeting with comments and suggestions before finalizing the budget for mailing to constituents with the Annual Meeting Notice.

Mr. D. DuBaldo reviewed some of the reasons for the increases in the budget expenses. He felt an increase in the Downtown District Taxes is reasonable as the cost of living increases each year. The \$5,000 increase in Marketing will benefit the Downtown businesses. The increase in Repairs and Maintenance expenses represents a middle of the road estimation of what a rebid of the Downtown Maintenance Contract will be. The \$2,500 for another video camera is a continuation of the purchase partnership we agree upon with the Police Dept. Finally, any changes to compensation will be considered by the Compensation Committee who will make a recommendation at the December meeting.

Mr. Quast recommended that some of the additional \$5,000 for Marketing be used to update the website. Perhaps an assistant could be hired for that purpose. He also asked if any monies have been allocated for new office space. Mr. D. DuBaldo indicated that he is hoping to get a deal on office space.

Mr. Carter reported that he spoke with the Director of Finance and any deficit would be taken from our Fund Balance.

Mr. Tunila stated that the Commission needs to appoint a Compensation Committee. Mr. D. DuBaldo, Mr. N. DuBaldo and Mr. Tunila will serve in that capacity.

Marketing Committee, Nick DuBaldo – Mr. N. DuBaldo reviewed the following:

- Recent events:
 - Scarecrow Festival, Oct. 14-18 – The talent pool stepped-up with a high level of creativity and execution.
 - Safe Trick-or-Treat, Oct. 28 – The good weather brought out a large crowd.
 - Road Race Saturday, Nov. 18 – Mr. N. DuBaldo referred to the event purpose and description documents provided by Ms. Parseliti.
 - Downtown Tree Lighting, Nov. 30.

Parking & Maintenance

Monthly Parking Violations Report - Ms. Parseliti provided the most recent Parking Violations and Wavier statistics.

Ms. Parseliti noted that a request had been made for planters on Purnell Place and additional plantings at the North end of the lot. Plans for the Parking Lot Improvement Project showed planters along Purnell Place and Plantings at the North end of the Lot that did not transpire. Mr. D. DuBaldo suggested that Ms. Parseliti obtain estimates for adding planters and some plantings.

Downtown Economic Development Committee, Don DuBaldo

Mr. D. DuBaldo reported on the Downtown Special Services District Preliminary Design Assistance Mini Grant Program. At its October 4, 2017 meeting the Board of Commissioners approved a supplemental appropriation of \$20,000 from fund balance to fund the program. The Town Finance Director informed the Downtown District Board of Commissioners that we must go in front of the Town Board of Directors to approve our supplemental appropriation. Mr. Anderson will work with Mr. D. DuBaldo on the necessary presentation and materials. Mr. Anderson noted that this is a good time to present the program to the Board of Directors.

Mr. Anderson reported that the Elevator Study for the former Peter's building came in with an estimated cost of \$34,000 to make needed repairs.

Mr. D. DuBaldo noted that the goal of Work_Space (Axis901) to help entrepreneurs grow is working. He has signed leases with two businesses that started at Work_Space: a business consultant and a design business. Mr. Anderson stressed the importance of telling this story.

Other Reports

President, GMCC, April DiFalco – Absent.

Gary Anderson, Director of Planning and Development

Potential Zoning Code Changes:

- **Update to Downtown Architectural Guidelines** - Mr. Anderson reported that he intends to place this item in his FY 18-19 budget. The Guidelines were last done in 1991. New Guidelines would be a joint effort between the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Special Services District. Mr. Quast indicated he would like to serve on the committee as a Downtown District representative.

- **Accessory Assembly Use** – Mr. Anderson noted that current Guidelines do not allow churches and asked if the commissioners wish to consider allowing this use.

- **Other** – Mr. Anderson indicated that he may have rekindled interest in use of the Key Bank rear space.

Other Report – Mr. D. DuBaldo pointed out the need to fill the officer position of Vice Chair with the resignation of Mr. Carter. He called for volunteers. He then entertained a motion to have Mr. Tunila become Vice Chair. Mr. Bayer moved the question. Mr. Carter seconded the motion. All voted in favor with Mr. Tunila abstaining. (6-0-1)

Administration

Manager's Report- Ms. Parseliti gave a brief report on special event planning and preparation.

Public Comment – Ms. Sottile questioned how businesses should deal with panhandlers? Their presence is increasing. Some are approaching people in their cars. No one seems to be getting a good response when it is reported to the Police Dept.

Mr. Carter said that the commission needs to lead the charge for Downtown safety with the Chief and/or Board of Directors.

Ms. Sottile related a positive story about assistance rendered by Constable Johnson to a Downtown customer that was commended by the commissioners.

Adjourn

Mrs. Gentile moved to adjourn. Mr. Tunila seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion carried (7-0-0). The meeting adjourned at 7:25PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tana Parseliti, Downtown Manager
Recorder