

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

March 9, 2022

8AM

Meeting held via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Tunila, Chair
Nicholas DuBaldo, Secretary
Tarek Ambia
Joseph Lipiner
Daniel Mulligan
Ryan Fagan

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS
PRESENT: Gary Anderson, Director Planning and Development
Robert Pagani, GMCC Representative

ALSO PRESENT: Dan Pesce, Downtown Development Specialist
Alex Lehofer

STAFF PRESENT: Joy Press, Downtown Manager

MEMBERS ABSENT: Tammy Gerhard
Sophia Dzialo

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT:
Maj. Michael Himes, Church Representative

Call to Order

- Mr. Tunila calls the meeting to order at 8:01 AM

Roll Call

- Mr. Tunila noted those present and absent.

Minutes

- A motion to approve the February 9, 2022 - A motion to adopt the minutes pending a correction to include Ms. Sottile as attending is made by Mr. Mulligan, seconded by Mr. Ambia, all approve

Public Comment: None present at this time

Commissioner Reports:

- Report of the Chairperson: Mr. Tunila reports that he feels things are moving along appropriately and that there are no large or unexpected issues that he has become aware of. Mr. Tunila inquires about

resuming in-person meetings at Work_Space, all present commissioners and ex-officio are in favor of resuming in-person meetings.

- Report of the Vice Chairperson: Not present.
- Report of the Secretary: Nothing at this time.
- Report of the Finance Chair: None at this time.

Ex-Officio Report GMCC:

- Mr. Lehofer reports that the Chamber was unable to address the letter of support at its meeting; that topic has been added to their agenda for their upcoming meeting. Additionally, the Chamber's annual meeting is April 27 at Villa Louisa.

Committee Reports:

- Finance Committee:
 - Year to Date Budget – Ms. Press reports that our income line on the parking permit fees will need to be adjusted due to the fiscal year being in July and the bulk of our annual permit fees coming in December. Mr. Tunila agrees that with the incentives for annual parking permits, revenue looks strong and appears consistent to prior years. He notes that with current enforcement levels there may be a slight reduction in fees associated with that line item. Ms. Press informs the Board that the current insurance plan appears to cover most events under 250 attendees and we should see some savings from that discovery. She is still awaiting a banner payment from ECHN, and is still exploring website sponsorship opportunities.
 - Use of Fund Balance for Sidewalk Snow Removal – Ms. Press mentions that we do not currently have a line item specifically for snow removal and we will need to create that line so we can pay for the costs of the snow removal which cleared the berms between the sidewalks and street. Mr. Tunila inquires about the increase shown for Print and Other Advertising. Ms. Press reports that the majority of those expenses are directly related to the website redesign and she hopes that the future sponsors will be able to offset those costs.
- Marketing:

- Permit Process Update – Ms. Press reports that IT has constructed the forms necessary for processing the new event permits; she is still awaiting approval from the Chief of Police on a few events.
- Summer Plans – Ms. Press reiterates that our current insurance coverage encompasses the majority of our events and we will expect to see a savings as we will not have to purchase separate policies for each event we hold pending size limitations.
- Locable Update – We have two \$375 credits to gift to whomever we wish, the current recommendation is to gift one to Imagine Main Street, with other possibilities of Sweet Pepper or the Manchester Mall. As this is a no-cost item for the Downtown, the commissioners agree to offer the credits to Imagine Main Street and the Manchester Mall first to explore as they see fit.
- Parking & Maintenance:
 - Parking Report – Ms. Press reports that there were two waiver requests granted last month.
 - Parking Modernization Update– Ms. Press notes that the electronic ticketing needs a few tweaks to the language. Also, Mr. Bockus feels that our signage plans are excessive (though, Ms. Press notes, it is already half of what our vendor recommended) and recommends half of the number we are currently planning. Mr. Bockus also recommends a change from black and white text and background to red and white to fit in with the color scheme of other parking signage in town. Ms. Press reminds the Board that the parking brochure currently states that contractors can park without getting a ticket if they have a letterhead note on their dashboard indicating work to be performed while work is being performed. Mr. Mulligan feels that there are two parts to consider about this policy (if it is one); he is not aware of any other city that allows for a contractor provision. In his estimation, two hours of free parking is ample time to load or unload a truck to a jobsite. He mentions that Ms. Press had previously given an example of a roofing contractor having their entire crew use Main Street parking for the entire duration of the roofing job. Mr. Mulligan proposes a motion to remove the contractor provision from our parking policy, Mr. Lipiner seconds. Mr. Ambia and Mr. Mulligan both state that no other cities in Connecticut have free parking provisions for contractors. Mr. Lipiner declares that he has had to park and pay to make service calls all over the state. All approve.

- Daily Parking Permits Policy – Ms. Press states that last month, we tabled a policy about free daily permits. Work_Space feels that meeting attendees should be able to have free parking in the Purnell Place lot. Mr. Anderson feels that a policy like that would be very important to the success and mission of Work_Space; the town would have to cover costs if there was not a policy to allow for those permits. Ms. Press mentions that there are no other Town-operated departments in the Downtown and that the other businesses who had been utilizing the daily permits are now able to utilize the free parking lots. A motion to approve the provision of the Work_Space permits with a revision proposed by Mr. DuBaldo is made by Mr. Fagan, seconded by Mr. Lipiner. All approve.

New Business:

- Selection of Vice Chair – Mr. Tunila inquires if we would like to fill the vacancy at this time or after the election. No commissioner feels strongly about selecting a Vice Chair at this time.

Old Business:

- Constable Hiring Team – The second constable has several work conflicts and would be considered “extreme” part-time. The Town has reposted the job and we promptly received interest. Ms. Press notes that we are currently in the queue for a license plate reader. Mr. Tunila expresses his disappointment that the consultant/vendor was unable to provide that equipment from the beginning.
- Support for A Downtown Library – Ms. Press reports no changes to the Board’s stance on the library. Mr. Anderson believes that if the Board feels strongly about the library remaining Downtown, the letter certainly addressed that, he also mentions that letters and other public comment can still be submitted to the Board of Directors at any meeting. The current schedule has suggestions being finalized around the end of May or beginning of June 2022.

Other Reports:

- Mr. Anderson, Director of Planning and Development – Mr. Anderson would like to continue the library discussion as they just had several interested parties tour the building. Attendees were the Lutz Museum, Little Theatre of Manchester, Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, and CAST Children’s Theatre. Mr. Anderson notes that the Town Plan on Conservation and Development will be out soon, this is an every 10 years plan. The current plan is to begin branding with

“Manchester Next” and that the previous plan was entitled “Manchester 2020”. The Town is collaborating with TPUDC out of Nashville so that we have people taking a completely fresh look from the outside at our town. Mr. Anderson’s department would like to have a larger community engagement on this plan and will be hosting virtual, watch-party, and in-person brainstorming events in April and May to gather information about the community and the goals for the upcoming decade. He mentions that topical meetings will be advertised to track specific goals.

- Dan Pesce, Downtown Development Specialist – Mr. Pesce reports that Tony from Antonio’s Pizza has retired and that his restaurant space has already been filled by a breakfast/lunch establishment. He also notes that the former 21 Oak location will soon be the home to a Peruvian restaurant. Regarding outdoor dining, Mr. Pesce mentions that permitting is no longer through executive order and will resume through sidewalk permits; however the permitting process will now be performed through Open Forms which should streamline the process. He notes that paper applications are still available. Mr. Pesce and Mr. Anderson are working on a new loan application to submit to the Town which would allow for transformations such as market-rate apartments in the Downtown. Mr. Anderson mentions that there is still time to send input on the Complete Streetscape Plan.
- Manager's Report – Ms. Press reports that we are progressing toward the biennial elections and that documents will be mailed out shortly. Oddball Newt has begun making payments toward the spray paint removal. Celebrate Manchester will begin in June; the Bicentennial will be next year and Ms. Press will keep the Board informed about any important opportunities. She believes that her current work laptop should be able to last through the fiscal year if need be. Mr. Tunila would like to ensure that the manager is able to perform the required tasks on office equipment. Mr. Lipiner feels that a \$1000 cap on replacing the laptop should be sufficient and makes a motion to appropriate up to \$1000 to replace the laptop. Mr. Mulligan seconds. All approve.

Public Comment:

- None present

Adjourn

- There being no further business, a motion to adjourn at 9:04 is made

by Mr. Lipiner, seconded by Mr. Mulligan. All approve.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicholas DuBaldo, Secretary DMSSD

Recorder