

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

**January 10, 2024
8 AM**

Meeting held at Work_Space, 903 Main Street

MEMBERS PRESENT: Daniel Mulligan, Acting Chair
Nicholas DuBaldo, Secretary
Tarek Ambia, Finance Chair
Sophia Dzialo
Ryan Fagan
Esther Jeffery

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

ALSO PRESENT: Richard Clark, Tom Tomko, Joe Datta, Concilla Ndlovu,
Sgt. Christina Krawec

STAFF PRESENT: Bernie LeBel, Downtown Manager

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joseph Lipiner

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS
ABSENT: Millie Texidor – GMCC Representative

Call to Order:

- Mr. Mulligan calls the meeting to order at 8:08 AM

Roll Call:

- Mr. Mulligan noted those present and absent.

Minutes:

- A motion to approve the minutes of December 13, 2023 is made by Ms. Dzialo seconded by Ms. Jeffery. All approve.

Public Comment:

- Ms. LeBel introduces Sgt. Krawec. Sgt. Krawec states that there are some significant staffing issues in the department; right now it's 2 officers and supervisor which is down from 5+. The Manchester Police Department had to triage priorities but still makes their best effort to get things done. She reports that a second officer just started in her unit this past week but their patrols have diminished lately due to staffing issues. She is aware that panhandling has been an ongoing issue as well as speeding. She states that the traffic unit is now one officer and supervisor rather than three +. Right

now, the department is down at least 20 officers; though four officers recently came through the academy, 4 are currently in the academy, and one who is attending another academy. She further states that police shortages are not limited to Manchester but are state-wide and country-wide. Though new officers have been coming in, officers have been leaving typically due to retirement. She would like to see the numbers start to trend in a positive direction.

- Mr. Mulligan asks about the Town traffic officers; Sgt. Krawec states that when complaints come in to the traffic unit, there may be targeted enforcement or alternative enforcement like with the speeding traffic data collectors to better handle those complaints.
- Mr. Datta would like to know how shoplifting is handled; Sgt. Krawec says that they don't have many calls from the Downtown about shoplifting, but if it does happen, please do call and report it. She says that the Department does have some success solving those types of cases after the fact and that most shoplifting complaints are from the larger stores with loss-prevention products. Mr. Datta asks if there rules for allowing or not allowing certain items of clothing on your business premises. Sgt. Krawec states that owners/operators can make whatever rules you want for your business. For example, Cumberland Farms doesn't allow backpacks in their store because of their proximity to the high school. She recommends that Mr. Datta have a sign "for your safety" or the like and have whatever rule he would like regarding his business posted. Sgt. Krawec also recommends having the call-ins about any issues regardless helps the Department to compile data to possibly let them solve future issues or prevent future issues. She states that the Department does have a responsibility to assist and they will do their best with the complaints. As far as panhandling goes, it's not illegal or against ordinance on the sidewalk unless it's aggressive (which requires certain conditions to be met).
- Mr. Anderson asks for clarification about what actually happens out of the substation and if it is staffed? Sgt. Krawec says that all patrol officers can and do utilize that location as an office and that usually District 3 officers will write reports there or possibly take lunch. Additionally, parole and probation officers occasionally meet with their clients there.
- Mr. Tomko would like to know how many cameras are in the Downtown. Sgt. Krawec says that the police are in the middle of switching over to a new camera "flocked" system which allows for license reading; there aren't many right now, but they are being installed and the new system does not completely cover Main Street at this point. The "flocked" cameras will eventually cover the entire street.

- Mr. Clark - Does District 3 keep Spruce Street? Sgt. Krawec says yes, the West Side of Spruce Street.
- Mr. DuBaldo asks about data retention and active monitoring of the cameras. Sgt. Krawec states that data retention requirements are quite long and costly; if there's a crime, those data retention requirements cost even more. Many departments don't have the money to purchase cameras let alone handle the cost of data retention. She doesn't know about the specifics of the retention requirements. Mr. DuBaldo asks about the number of fires in the past month and if there appears to be any relationship between them. Sgt. Krawec states the lieutenant and fire marshal don't believe they all were intentionally set.
- Sgt. Krawec also notes that one officer in her department is oriented for homeless outreach, so if there are any issues with the homeless, they can help assist those individuals. With the new parking constable, there should be a good avenue of communication between Downtown and the Police Department.

District Chair Report:

- Nothing at this time

Manager's Report:

- Ms. LeBel reports that she received an update about the 2-4 Pearl property and that Mr. Soverns has moved the lift and notified the residents that they would need to have parking passes to utilize that lot and that the building would be limited to 10 total spaces. The dumpster would take up 2 spaces and will be available for the restaurant and his other tenants. Ms. LeBel was in contact with Ms. Ladd about the event processes but has not heard back. Ms. LeBel will also reach out to Ms. Acanto about the cross-promotion of events for the coming year. Mr. Bockus will look into opportunities to place recycling barrels on Main Street and what the associated costs could be. Ms. LeBel used the Mark-It form to notify the Town about the poor sidewalks. Ms. Horvath from the Watkins Center expressed concern about an individual who lit her dumpster on fire and watched the fire for roughly 9 minutes. Keith Volkert had received a number of calls about the resetting of the SBM clock; Key Bank is supposed to maintain the time but as of today have not.

Finance:

- 23/24 Budget - Ms. LeBel reports that the budget has been updated but we still haven't received our second installment of taxes. She notes that there is a salary report attached. She reached out to the Assessor's Office to see what the expected tax revenues could be given the re-evaluations greatly affecting property values. The assessor said that we have to set our income levels and then they will set the mill rate accordingly. The actual rate won't

be determined until the end of January. Ms. LeBel states that we did use some of the fund balance several years ago, and we may want to consider utilizing fund balance to offset the unbalanced costs. Ms. LeBel proposes that parking violation revenues remain at \$10,000 because revenues shown only go through November, so if we double that, it should be roughly \$10,000. Mr. Tomko inquires whether Passport takes their fee per ticket with the ticket issued or when the ticket is paid? Also, do they have a report to show us the tickets receivables? Additionally, does Passport process those tickets or do the police, and who gets that revenue (receivables) prior to us? Ms. LeBel will try to focus more on this issue. Mr. Tomko would like to sit in with her with Passport to get the information. Print and Other advertising shows revenue at \$6000, that will be event sponsorships and the like. Mr. Tomko believes that the loss of the Webster and Tong buildings would offset our income by roughly \$4500 once those are off the tax rolls. Ms. LeBel states that we chose deluxe snowflakes as our decorations for the coming winter decorations cycle. Mr. Tomko inquires if the goal is to have events and decorations taking up our time and money or are there other things to better make use of the time and funds? Mr. DuBaldo notes that there is a long history of decorations on the light poles in Downtown and there was interest expressed from a private individual to offset or take over decorating costs for the holiday but there aren't details to report at this time. Ms. LeBel reports that Line 6490 was a use of fund balance that we haven't used in recent history and will be removed. Mr. Tomko asks if there is an interest earned on our fund balance? Ms. LeBel will look into that. Mr. Tomko feels that we don't offer much in the way of a marketing budget or action, so it would be nice to leverage the money to better assist the District businesses. He further states that a bank sweep could easily generate 4+%. A motion to present the budget for the annual meeting as-is is made by Mr. Ambia, seconded by Mr. Fagan. All approve

Parking:

- Ms. LeBel reports there were people who went to Town Hall to update their 30 day passes and those permits renewed from the date they renewed, not extended from their previous term end. She says that there is a ticket in with Passport about that. In December, there was a ticket issued for parking in a handicap space without a handicap permit; that individual went to the police department to clarify things. The police require a handicap placard to park in a handicap space. She further notes regarding contractors working on buildings and parking for the day on the street that the board policy is that contractors can load and unload from the street but are expected to park in the back and pay for parking beyond the three hour limit of that lot. Ms. Jeffery wonders if there could be a contractor permit rate. Ms. LeBel states that the District doesn't offer paid parking for Main Street. Mr. Mulligan notes that there aren't other Towns with paid parking that allow exemptions for contractors and in his experience, he and/or his employees have to abide by

whatever parking fees are required by those municipalities. Ms. LeBel has been logging all events to keep track of her day. Mr. Tomko suggests limiting it to the time-consuming events.

Marketing:

- Mr. Tomko asks about communicating Downtown and how it's done. Ms. LeBel says that Ms. Press is working on improving the layout and content of that information. Mr. Tomko would like to know what the content of the email listing, phone numbers, physical addresses is. Ms. LeBel says that the majority is now through Locable. Ms. Dzialo says that there is a gap in communication between property owners and the Downtown.

Maintenance & Beautification:

- Ms. LeBel reports the contract will be awarded soon with some changes and that the banners will be installed Mid-March rather than late January.

Nominating Committee:

- Ms. LeBel will work with Ms. Parseliti on getting the election process going. Three board members will serve on the committee, Mr. Ambia, Mr. DuBaldo, and Ms. Jeffery will serve on that committee. (Mr. Mulligan exits 9:30, Ms. Jeffery exits 9:32)

Constituent Support Report:

- Not at this time

Downtown Development Specialist Report:

- Mr. Anderson reports that there will be an outreach plan for the updates on the Main Street Plan with dates available around February and beyond.

Old Business:

- None at this time

New Business:

- None at this time

Public Comment:

- Mr. Clark has observed that there aren't many barrels available. Ms. LeBel informs Mr. Clark that the Town removes many of the them from the road race through winter due to snow removal concerns. Mr. Clark feels that trash is a 12 month issue, not an 8 or 9 month issue. He states that he would like to see the manager position increased to closer to full-time.

Other Business:

- None at this time

Adjourn

- There being no further business a motion to adjourn is made by Mr. Ambia at 9:42 AM, seconded by Ms. Dzialo. All approve.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicholas DuBaldo, Secretary DMSSD

Recorder