

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

**April 9, 2025
8 AM**

Meeting held at Work_Space, 903 Main Street

MEMBERS PRESENT: Daniel Mulligan, Chair
Nicholas DuBaldo, Secretary
Tarek Ambia, Finance Co-Chair
Sophia Dzialo
Esther Jeffery

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

ALSO PRESENT: Nick Sanguinetti
Adam DeLaura

STAFF PRESENT: Caroline Socha, Downtown Manager

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joseph Datta
Ryan Fagan

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS
ABSENT: Millie Texidor – GMCC Representative

Call to Order:

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

Roll Call:

- Mr. Mulligan noted those present and absent.

Minutes:

- A motion to approve the minutes of March 12, 2025 is made by Ms. Dzialo, seconded by Ms. Jeffery. All approve.

Public Comment:

- O&G Industries – Mr. Sanguinetti reports that construction is going well and concrete has started for the foundations. The old bank has been removed, and they are averaging one footing per three days. The middle of June should see the structure begin to be raised and things are on schedule. April 9, 2026 is the current projected completion date. Mr. Mulligan asks about the increase in the price of steel and if that will impact the construction. Mr. Sanguinetti states that the majority of the steel is domestic, though some ore is sourced from Canada, and that he hasn't heard of anything that would negatively impact the costs.

District Chair Report:

- None at this time

GMCC Report:

- None present

Manager's Report:

- Nothing additional

Finance:

- Ms. Socha reports that the budget has been submitted but has not been confirmed. Mr. Mulligan is okay with adjusting the salaries line to accommodate the overage elsewhere.

Downtown Development Specialist Report:

- Mr. Anderson introduces Mr. DeLaura who is the new Downtown Developmental Specialist. Roughly half his role will cover the Downtown and he will work to make Downtown as great as it can be. Mr. DeLaura says that he is ready and happy to help whenever and however he can. Ms. Jeffery asks if there is an interested business, would he act as the conduit for the Downtown to ensure that people understand the zoning and other regulations within the Downtown? Mr. DeLaura confirms that is one of the ways he will be assisting. Mr. Anderson updates the board on outdoor dining; there have been two approved outdoor dining requests; one at Audacity, one at Mulberry Street. He reiterates that the permitting is only for sidewalk service, not takeout and dine at a table. Ms. Socha notes that the Angry Egg requested that the cobblestones be able to be used as an outdoor dining space. Mr. Mulligan says that the Board's position was that parking spaces not be utilized for dining. Mr. Anderson states that they could inquire with their landlord to see if they would be allowed usage of the non-frontage space for tables.

Parking:

- Mr. Mulligan reports that he and Mr. Fagan walked the street with Constable Patrick and saw how the processes work. One of the concerns Mr. Mulligan has is that the uniform is quite lacking and doesn't make him visible; perhaps safety colors could be integrated into a new polo design. He would also like to ensure that the title be stated as "Ambassador" and not "Constable". He believes that there's uniformity in all the processes like warnings and citations and those procedures should be written down. Ms. Socha reports that with our citation portion of the parking is the most costly part of the parking. Permitting and pay by time or pay by day are less expensive but can be a little cumbersome integrating with other vendors. She is still researching the cost-effectiveness of other vendors. She would like to explore comparing what the Manchester Police are using to our

system and see if there is a way to tack into it if it fits our needs. Mr. Mulligan says that it's illegal in Connecticut for a gas vehicle to park in electric charging stations but our chargers take up 4 spaces each, he would like to see clarity to make sure that we have correct signage for two charging spaces per station. He also notes that the yellow and white painted lines don't appear to have been enforced with regularity but should resume. Ms. Socha would like to audit the lines in the parking lots because Silk City Coffee has all yellow spaces in the lot directly behind them and no designated customer spaces.

Marketing:

- Ms. Dzialo reports that the spring and summer events are being planned out beginning with the Butterfly Stroll (the largest event of the year aside from Holiday on Main). The concept of the Butterfly Stroll will remain the same of having to stroll the street in its entirety; that will continue through Second Saturdays to encourage full street travel. The social was well-received and we are exploring having those on a quarterly basis and at a revolving location. The marketing and event position has been whittled down to three candidates. A motion to empower the marketing committee to extend an offer to their preferred candidate is made by Mr. Ambia, seconded by Ms. Jeffery. All approve. Ms. Socha says there were over 40 candidates for the position. Ms. Socha reports that our year to year views on Google has risen by 100-400%. She has been honing our Locable profile and that of other businesses who haven't claimed their business. Ms. Dzialo says that there is an immense value to Locable and when people are searching Downtown businesses, our results are coming up before many of the businesses'.

Maintenance & Beautification:

- None at this time

Old Business:

- None at this time

New Business:

- Ms. Socha says that Mountain View has planted the planters and have furnished a quote of \$2500-\$3500 to paint all the planters and bins plus supplies. She found some historical data stating that the previous maintenance commitment was good from 2012 through nine years. Mr. Ambia wonders why we would paint them if so many are damaged. Ms. Socha says it's really difficult and expensive to repair them. Mr. Mulligan feels that painting is better than purchasing new ones just prior to the streetscape plan. Ms. Socha says that 50-70% have visible damage. Mr. Mulligan would like to see some alternative quotes. A motion to proceed with the project after receiving approximately two to three quotes not exceeding

\$4500 including supplies and with approval or consultation of the Chair. Ms. Dzialo motions, Ms. Jeffery seconds.

Public Comment:

- None at this time

Other Business:

- None at this time

Executive Session:

- A motion to enter executive session to discuss personnel is made by Ms. Jeffery, seconded by Mr. Ambia at 9:03.
- A motion to exit executive session is made by Ms. Jeffery at 9:10, seconded by Mr. Ambia with no actions taken.

Adjourn

- There being no further business, a motion to adjourn is made by Ms. Dzialo at 9:11 AM, seconded by Mr. Ambia. All approve.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicholas DuBaldo, Secretary DMSSD

Recorder