

**BRIDGEPORT DOWNTOWN SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
June 12, 2024
Meeting Minutes**

The DSSD Board of Commissioners Meeting took place at the offices of the Bridgeport DSSD, 938 Broad Street, Bridgeport, CT 06604. In attendance:

Commissioners

Phil Pires, C & W Associates II, Chair
David Iassogna, M&T Bank, Vice Chair
Eric Gross, John Broadcannon, Treasurer
Javier Ceja, Downtown Strategic Group
Jason Cohen, Bordentown DB, LLC
Karolyn Egbert, Trefz Corporation
Fred Frassinelli, AMS Real Estate
Callie Gale Heilmann, Made in Bridgeport, LLC
Andy Toledo, City of Bridgeport (Ex Officio)

Staff

Lauren Coakley Vincent, DSSD President

Guests

Devon Brown
Alicia Cobb, Art Simplificated
Gemeem Davis, Bridgeport Generation Now
Chris DeAngelis, Cabezas-DeAngelis Surveyors & Engineers
Ira Jacoby, The Felner Corporation
Marcella Kovac, The Bananaland
Sue Purefoy
Constance Vickers, City of Bridgeport

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pires called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m.

II. RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Mr. Pires opened the meeting by welcoming guests Devon Brown, Alicia Cobb of Art Simplificated, Gemeem Davis of Bridgeport Generation Now, Chris DeAngelis of Cabezas-DeAngelis Surveyors & Engineers, Ira Jacoby from The Felner Corporation, Marcella Kovac of The Bananaland, Sue Purefoy, and Constance Vickers from the City of Bridgeport.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Gross made a motion to approve the Minutes of the May 8, 2023, DSSD Annual Meeting, as presented. Commissioner Iassogna seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

IV. TREASURER REPORT

Treasurer Gross provided an explanation of the April 2024 financial report as provided by the bookkeeper. The Bridgeport DSSD ended the month of April 2024 with \$259,624 in assets, of which \$261,609 was cash spread across two bank accounts. Liabilities totaled \$162,604, encompassed by a mix of Accounts Payable, Short-Term Liabilities, and lease liability. Net Assets at the end of the month totaled \$97,020. The accrued revenue was \$899,108 – primarily City of Bridgeport tax and contract payments. Expenses for the same period totaled \$942,656 – primarily related to streetscape maintenance and creative placemaking programming (\$719,676). Accrued expenses exceeded revenue for the period by \$43,548. Commissioner Frassinelli made a motion to approve the April 2024 financial report. Mr. Iassogna seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

V. REPORT FROM THE CITY

Mr. Toledo provided updates on the status of the State Street blinking light letter follow up with CT Department of Transportation, the discussions with UI regarding the City's opposition to the monopole siting plan, the recently closed request for engineering services proposals for work at the Sliver by the River site, funding to complete construction on the Congress Street Bridge, and parking enforcement policy for Downtown Bridgeport.

VI. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

DSSD President Lauren Coakley Vincent gave an overview of the Downtown Ambassador team's performance report for the month of May 2024, which reflected a slight increase in sanitation instances over the past month (5%) and over the previous year (7%) due to the

number of alcohol containers, graffiti, and bills/stickers removed. The team saw a significant increase (209%) in the amount of time devoted to beautification work from the previous month, but a decrease (60%) from the same time period in the previous year due to more frequent rain that cut down on the time devoted to watering. The Public Safety category reflected no changes in the volume of reporting metrics from the previous month and from the same month in the previous year. Finally, there was a small increase (4%) in the number of interactions in the Public Engagement category from the previous month and from the same month in the previous year (3%).

Ms. Coakley Vincent shared a recap of the DSSD events in April and May:

- Sliver by the River development grant announcement on April 18, 2024 at the Sliver by the River
- Spotlight on Main with CT Main Street Center and the City's Office of Planning & Economic Development on April 18, 2024 at the Stress Factory Comedy Club
- Jane's Walk Bridgeport on May 4, 2024 leaving from the Bridgeport DSSD office and featuring the Bridgeport Pride Center
- Colorful Crew seasonal plantings with Groundwork Bridgeport, M&T Bank, and Pullman & Comley volunteers
- Neighborhood public art walks with students from the Thomas Hooker School and the Yale School of the Environment

VII. REPORTS OF STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES

A. Executive

Mr. Pires reported on a special meeting of the Executive Committee that was held on May 23, 2024. The Committee debriefed the DSSD's annual meeting before reviewing the state enabling legislation and local municipal ordinance sections pertaining to the composition of the Board of Commissioners, as well as guidance from the City Attorney, Tyisha Toms, on how to approach making revisions. The Committee decided to share the ideas discussed in the meeting as a starting point for the discussion with the board, not as a formal recommendation for the amendment language. Ms. Coakley Vincent shared with the Committee that the DSSD was awarded \$102,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding, which was \$80,000 over the amount requested. The Committee decided to refer the project budget revision to the Physical Conditions Committee for recommendations to the board.

Mr. Pires also reported on the Executive Committee meeting that was held on June 5, 2024. The Committee reviewed recommendations from the Physical Conditions and Special Events and Marketing Committees on the fiscal year 2025 budget. The Committee discussed next steps from the special meeting pertaining to the DSSD's board composition and changes to the municipal ordinance related to that matter. Lastly, the Committee finalized the agenda for this month's board meeting.

B. Physical Conditions

Mr. DeAngelis reported on the Physical Conditions Committee meeting that was held on May 31, 2024. The Committee discussed recommendations for scaling up beautification projects in fiscal year 2025 with the increased funding from the Community Development Block Grant program. Specific recommendations included to focus on tree beds in the neighborhood and to invest in new equipment for the Clean Team.

C. Public Safety

Commissioner Iassogna reported on the Public Safety Committee meeting that was held on May 31, 2024. The Committee discussed recent safety incidents and quality of life issues impacting residents and business owners, as well as the impact of improving weather conditions will have on the number of incidents in the neighborhood. The Committee also discussed the uptick in foot traffic from recent events at the Amphitheater and Arena.

D. Special Events and Marketing

Ms. Cobb reported on the Special Events and Marketing Committee meeting that was held on June 4, 2024. The Committee reviewed the Colorful Bridgeport content for the past month, including the Colorful Crew volunteering days and upcoming event promotions, as well as reviewed content plans for the upcoming months. The Committee discussed the busy summer and fall season of upcoming events, including the Downtown Farmers Market, Skateport, Bridgeport Pride, Downtown Thursdays, Bridgeport Film Festival, PARK(ing) Day, Bridgeport Art Trail, and a possible holiday vendor market. Finally, the Committee made recommendations for community event partnership funding allocations in fiscal year 2025.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

The group discussed the ways in which the Bridgeport DSSD may expand its board composition to include a broader cross section of Downtown stakeholders, such as business owners, leaders of anchor institutions, residents, and workers in the district. After reviewing the language of the current municipal ordinance and identifying the steps necessary to formally change the DSSD’s enabling legislation, the group shared input on the value that those more diverse perspectives would bring to strengthen the work of the organization. The group then identified a series of key questions, both strategic and tactical, critical to answer to identify the path forward to the necessary ordinance, bylaws, and stakeholder recruitment changes. The group decided to continue the planning conversation at the next board meeting, with the goal of finalizing the municipal ordinance language by the August 2024 board meeting.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Pires appointed the chairs of the Administrative and Program Committees of the DSSD:

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES

<p>Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Phil Pires • Committee Members: Eric Gross, Callie Gale Heilmann, David Iassogna, Phil Kuchma <p>Elections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Callie Gale Heilmann • Committee Members: Fred Frassinelli 	<p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Eric Gross • Committee Members: Karolyn Egbert, Fred Frassinelli, Phil Pires <p>Human Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Phil Pires • Committee Members: David Iassogna
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PROGRAM COMMITTEES

<p>Physical Conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Chris DeAngelis • Committee Members: Karolyn Egbert, Fred Frassinelli, David Iassogna <p>Special Events & Marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Alicia Cobb • Committee Members: Laurence Caso, Javier Ceja, Gemeem Davis, Suzanne Kachmar, Phil Kuchma, Kim Morque, Brendan Toller 	<p>Public Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: David Iassogna • Committee Members: Javier Ceja, Jason Cohen, Chris DeAngelis, Curtis Denton, Karolyn Egbert, Fred Frassinelli, Chief Roderick Porter
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X. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Pires called for the meeting to be adjourned at 4:55 p.m.