

**BRIDGEPORT DOWNTOWN SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
January 15, 2025
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 were:

Commissioners

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

Staff

Lauren Coakley Vincent, DSSD President
Charles Suarez-Penn, DSSD/SMG

Guests

Alicia Cobb, Art Simplified
Lt. Angelo Collazo, Bridgeport Police Dept.
Chris DeAngelis, Chris DeAngelis, PE, LLC
Ira Jacoby, Felner Corporation
Kathy Maher, The Barnum Museum
Yolanda Petrillo, Read's Artspace
Chief Roderick Porter, Bridgeport Police Dept.
Karin Smith, Kindred Thoughts Bookstore

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pires called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

II. RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Mr. Pires opened the meeting by welcoming guests Alicia Cobb of Art Simplified, Chief Roderick Porter Lt. Angelo Collazo from the Bridgeport Police Department, Chris DeAngelis of Chris DeAngelis, PE, Ira Jacoby from the Felner Corporation, Kathy Maher from The Barnum Museum, Yolanda Petrillo from Read's Artspace, and Karin Smith from Kindred Thoughts Bookstore.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Kuchma made a motion to approve the Minutes of the December 11, 2024, DSSD Board Meeting, as presented. Commissioner Iassogna seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

IV. TREASURER REPORT

Treasurer Gross provided an explanation of the October and November 2024 financial reports as provided by the bookkeeper. The Bridgeport DSSD ended the month of November 2024 with \$195,951 in assets, of which \$214,853 was cash spread across two bank accounts. Liabilities totaled \$102,896, encompassed by a mix of Accounts Payable, Refundable Advances, and lease liability. Net Assets at the end of the month totaled \$93,055. The accrued revenue was \$332,355 – primarily City of Bridgeport tax payments. Expenses for the same period totaled \$361,01 – primarily related to streetscape maintenance and administration of the organization (\$265,872). Accrued expenses exceeded revenue for the period by \$28,657. Mr. Iassogna made a motion to approve the November 2024 financial report. Commissioner Egbert seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

V. REPORT FROM THE CITY

Mr. Toledo shared the list of Downtown storefront improvement grant awardees, shared updates on the timeline for repairs to McLevy Hall, noted that the active land development agreements have been shared with the Bridgeport DSSD for review, advised on the status of development projects active in the neighborhood, and reported out on the timeline to implement the Congress Bridge construction project.

VI. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

DSSD President Lauren Coakley Vincent gave an overview of the Downtown Ambassador team's performance report for the month of December 2024, which reflected a decrease in sanitation instances over the past month (9%) and at the same time in the previous year (3%) due to a drop in the quantity of bills/stickers, alcohol containers, and trash bags collected. The team saw a decrease in the amount of time devoted to beautification work from the previous month (86%) and an increase (81%) from the same time period in the previous year due to fluctuations in the amount of leaf bags collected. The Public Safety category reflected no change from the previous month and an increase (48%) from the same month in the previous year due to instances of panhandling. Finally, there was a decrease in the number of interactions in the Public Engagement category from the previous month (21%) and from the same month in the previous year (2%).

Ms. Coakley Vincent then provided a recap of the Colorful Bridgeport holiday season content as well as the community events that the DSSD supported in the month of December, including Breakfast with Santa and Photos with Krampus at the Arcade Mall. She noted that the Shop Locally, Give Colorfully campaign resulted in 19,730 engagements from Colorful Bridgeport's community of social media followers and newsletter subscribers, a 53% increase over last year's campaign. Finally, she previewed the desktop and mobile versions of the new Colorful Bridgeport website, which will launch in March.

VII. REPORTS OF STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES

A. Executive

Mr. Pires reported on the Executive Committee meeting that was held on January 8, 2025. The Committee discussed how to approach the Downtown property owners with land development agreements that do not currently pay into the DSSD assessment. The Committee also 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 January 3, 2025. The Committee provided feedback on holiday season lighting installed by the Downtown Ambassador team, discussed the McLevy Hall roof repair project, and provided input on the proposed UI light pole lighting enhancements.

C. Public Safety

Commissioner Iassogna reported on the Public Safety Committee meeting that was held on January 3, 2025. The Committee discussed recent safety issues in the Downtown, the DSSD's involvement in the newly established homeless and open air drug use task force, and continuing instances of illegal parking during evening hours.

D. Special Events and Marketing

Ms. Cobb reported on the Special Events and Marketing Committee meeting that was held on January 8, 2025. The Committee reviewed the Colorful Bridgeport holiday season content and participation in events of the past month, as well as content plans for Black History Month and Women's History Month content. The Committee previewed the new website design. Finally, the Committee discussed how the DSSD might be more directly involved in site development of Post Office Square with the City's Office of Planning & Economic Development.

E. Elections

Ms. Heilmann reported on the Elections Committee meeting that was held on January 14, 2025. The Committee previewed the Commissioner Nomination Form and discussed the outreach plan to distribute information about the board seats, training session, and nomination form application process. The Committee then planned out the how to run for a Commissioner seat training session scheduled for February 18th.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Bridgeport Police Department Chief Roderick Porter and Lt. Angelo Collazo presented the Department's strategic plan and implementation of 21st Century Policing practices. Details of the presentation are accessible on the Police Department's website: <https://www.bridgeportct.gov/government/departments/police-department/mission-vision>.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Pires called for the meeting to be adjourned at 5:25 p.m.