

**BRIDGEPORT DOWNTOWN SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
May 14, 2025  
Annual Meeting Minutes**

The DSSD Board of Commissioners Meeting took place at the Penthouse at Soundview, 855 Main 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 Heilmann, Made in Bridgeport, LLC, Secretary  
Javier Ceja, Downtown Strategic Group  
Jason Cohen, Bordentown DB, LLC  
Karolyn Egbert, Trefz Corporation  
Philip Kuchma, Bijou Square, LLC  
Tony Sherwood, AMS Real Estate

**Staff**

Lauren Cookley Vincent, DSSD President

**Guests**

Dianalys Bonilla, City of Bridgeport  
Vivian Bordeaux, Bridgeport Public Library  
Matthew Broder, Downtown property owner  
Paul Brown, Grill II and In The City  
Jason Chandersingh, City of Bridgeport  
Mi-Shyyah Chisholm, Downtown resident  
Alicia Cobb, Art Simplified  
David Cottingham, City of Bridgeport  
Cris Dam, Ursa Gallery  
Douglass Davidoff  
Gemeem Davis, Bridgeport Generation Now  
Chris DeAngelis, Chris DeAngelis, PE  
Jonathan Delgado, City of Bridgeport  
Elizabeth Esposito, UI/Avangrid  
Carla Ford, Rum & Tequilla Fusion  
Fred Frassinelli, AMS Real Estate  
Alexander Geula, Pillar Property Management  
Arnold Gold, Hearst Media/CT Post  
Jeremy Goun, Sound View Tower, LLC  
Brianna Gurciullo, Hearst Media/CT Post

**Guests (continued)**

Ricardo Guzman  
Hugh Hallinan, Downtown Cabaret Theatre  
Niels Heilmann, Made in Bridgeport, LLC  
Daryl Howell  
Raquel Huffman, Downtown property owner  
Ira Jacoby, Felner Corporation  
Aaron Johnson  
Carly Jurman, Downtown Cabaret Theatre  
Joseph Katz, City of Bridgeport  
David Kreutz, Bridgeport Harbor Station  
Christopher Landino, Career Resources  
Denise Lecky, All Things Eyes  
MIA Lipstick, Downtown resident  
George Logan, Aquarion  
Sarah Lopez, Office of Sen. Chris Murphy  
Justin McAfee, Downtown resident  
Brysen Moore, B Moore Creative  
Lynn Mosher-Howell, Rapha Massage  
Simba Muhwati, SquashBridge  
Taneaka P, Skeletons in my Closet  
Chad Parks, Bridgeport Harbor Station  
Daniel Pizzaro, 109 Wall Street, LLC  
Roderick Porter, Bridgeport Police Department  
Daniel Roach, City of Bridgeport  
Dave Schneider, Jimmy's  
Luke Scott, dogsname  
Rasean Shelby  
Brandon Smith, Whiskey & Oxfords  
Nate Smith, Downtown resident  
Joyiesha Smoak, Bridgeport Public Library  
Barbara Sreckovic, Downtown resident  
Constance Vickers, City of Bridgeport and  
Downtown property owner

**I. CALL TO ORDER, PRESENTATION OF THE ROLL, AND RECOGNITION OF GUESTS**

Chairman Pires called the meeting to order at 4:22 p.m. Mr. Pires presented the list of properties by property location as sorted in the voting record. Mr. Pires asked those present to hand in ballots and proxies with ballots. He then invited Luke Scott and Jeremy Goun from the Soundview building management to speak and welcome the audience to the meeting.

**II. PROOF OF SERVICE TO OWNERS**

Mr. Pires said in accordance with their bylaws, Bridgeport DSSD staff sent out by first class mail an election packet to Holders of Record of Taxable Property in the district or their representative, which meets their requirement for sending the package no later than ten days before the election. Mr. Pires said instead of sending a package to each individual property, packages were sent to groups of property owners that own more than one property. The package included the meeting notice, candidate guide, ballot, and proxy form.

### **III. ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM**

Mr. Pires explained that there are 172 properties included on the 2024 Grand List TD District Report. Of that list, 40 were condominium units in the 881 Lafayette Blvd building, and per the DSSD's bylaws, the condo building receives one vote toward the annual meeting election process. As such, having 68 voting properties present would constitute the majority needed to establish a quorum. Mr. Pires announced that a quorum had been achieved based on the responses to the presentation of the roll.

### **IV. ELECTION OF COMMISSIONERS**

Mr. Pires explained that the process to elect Commissioners would be conducted by ballots submitted from the certified list. He noted that the mailed ballot listed the Commissioners whose terms had expired and running for re-election, including Commissioner Javier Ceja, Commissioner Jason Cohen, and Commissioner and Chair Philip Pires. In addition, the ballot included candidates for the newly created leaseholder seats: Alicia Cobb, Gemeem Davis, Hugh Hallinan, Tamekia Lemus, Lynn Mosher-Howell, Nate Smith, and Barbara Sreckovic. The ballots needed to have the nominees checked, the property address, and whether it was a proxy. All ballots submitted by proxy needed to have the signed proxy form attached.

Mr. Pires announced that he would entertain any other nominations from the floor at that time. Mr. Pires noted that there were no nominations from the floor, and thus nominations were closed.

An official count of the ballots was conducted by DSSD Secretary Callie Heilmann, Elections Committee member Fred Frassinelli, and DSSD President + CEO Lauren Coakley Vincent. Ms. Heilmann indicated all the ballots had been counted and a quorum having been present and established, that she wished to congratulate Commissioners Ceja, Cohen, and Pires on their re-election to the Board; and newly elected Commissioners, Alicia Cobb, Gemeem Davis, Hugh Hallinan, and Barbara Sreckovic to the Board. As stated by Mr. Pires, the terms would range from one to three years beginning at the July 2025 Board of Commissioners meeting.

### **V. COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS**

While the votes for the election of Commissioners were being counted, three community presentations were given. First, City of Bridgeport Deputy Chief of Staff Constance Vickers made remarks about the progress Downtown Bridgeport, and the Bridgeport DSSD, has made in recent years to engender a welcoming, inclusive community. Then, Bridgeport Police Department Chief Roderick Porter delivered a presentation on safety issues within the Downtown, noting the decreasing trends in violent crime. Finally, David Kreutz and Chad Parks provided an update on the progress toward redeveloping the Bridgeport Harbor Station property, formerly the PSEG utility plant, into a productive mixed-use site.

### **VI. REPORT FROM THE CITY**

Mr. Toledo was not able to attend, so Ms. Coakley Vincent shared updates on restriping the roadway around Lafayette Circle and the lack of response from CT Department of Transportation regarding the State Street blinking light request.

### **VII. REPORTS OF STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

#### **A. Executive**

Mr. Pires reported on the Executive Committee meeting that was held on May 7, 2025. The Committee discussed preparations for the annual meeting, previewed the DSSD office refresh design, and discussed progress in contacting property owners with land development agreements in the DSSD service area to resolve past billing discrepancies.

#### **B. Physical Conditions**

Mr. DeAngelis reported on the Physical Conditions Committee meeting that was held on April 25, 2025. The Committee walked the district with Ms. Coakley Vincent and Downtown Ambassador Operations Manager Charles Suarez-Penn, identifying areas where additional

detailed cleaning was needed, as well as sites for special or seasonal beautification projects.

**C. Public Safety**

Mr. Iassogna reported on the Public Safety Committee meeting that was held on April 25, 2025. The Committee discussed the series of recent window break ins at Jimmy's and reviewed crime statistics for Downtown Bridgeport provided by the Bridgeport Police Department.

**D. Special Events and Marketing**

Ms. Cobb reported on the Special Events and Marketing Committee meeting that was held on May 6, 2025. The Committee reviewed the Colorful Bridgeport content for the past month, including Colorful Crew volunteering opportunities, What's Happening videos and Monthly Mosaic event promotions, Poetz Realm feature for National Poetry Month, as well as reviewed content plans for the upcoming months. The Committee provided input on the list of proposed signature events for the summer and fall, and ended the meeting with a brainstorming session on how to activate persistent vacant storefronts Downtown.

**E. Elections**

Ms. Heilmann reported on the Elections Committee meeting that was held on April 22, 2025. The Committee debriefed and evaluated the outreach and recruitment process for prospective Commissioner candidates. The Committee then reviewed the vote counting process planned for the annual meeting and assigned tasks to committee members.

**VIII. PRESENTATION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 PROPOSED BUDGET**

Treasurer Gross explained that the process for creating the fiscal year 2026 budget, spanning the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, began in March 2025. He circulated the draft budget and provided insight into what projected revenue and expenses were included in the plan for the delivery of organization's programming in that fiscal year. Commissioner Heilmann made a motion to approve the proposed fiscal year 2026 budget. Commissioner Iassogna seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

**IX. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Gross made a motion to approve the Minutes of the April 9, 2025, DSSD Board Meeting. Commissioner Iassogna seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

**X. ADOPTION OF 2024-2025 REGULAR MEETINGS SCHEDULE**

Mr. Pires asked the Board of Commissioners to review the schedule of Board Meetings for July 2025 – June 2026 for adoption.

July 9, 2025	August 13, 2025	September 10, 2025
October 8, 2025	November 12, 2025	December 10, 2025
January 14, 2026	February 11, 2026	March 11, 2026
April 8, 2026	May 13, 2026	June 10, 2026

Mr. Pires indicated that the Board meeting schedule would remain as it had in the past, which was the second Wednesday of each month, to be held at from 4:00 p.m. at the offices of the Bridgeport DSSD (938 Broad Street, Bridgeport, CT 06604). Upon a motion by Commissioner Gross and second by Commissioner Iassogna, the motion was approved unanimously.

**XI. TREASURER'S REPORT**

Treasurer Eric Gross presented the fiscal year 2024 audited financial statements for the organization. Mr. Gross detailed the assets and liabilities, including principal changes in the assets and liabilities, as well as the revenue and expenses of the District all as of the last day of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

Mr. Gross provided an explanation of the March 2025 financial report as provided by the bookkeeper. The DSSD ended the month of March 2025 with assets totaling \$184,492 in assets, of which \$242,839 was cash spread across two bank accounts. Liabilities totaled \$75,755, encompassed by a mix of Accounts Payable, Refundable Advances, and lease liability. Net Assets at the end of the month totaled \$108,73. The accrued revenue was \$592,533 – primarily accrued from City of Bridgeport tax assessment and grant payments. Expenses for the same period totaled \$605,507 – primarily related to streetscape maintenance and organizational operations. Accrued expenses exceeded revenue for the period by \$12,975. Commissioner Kuchma made a motion to approve the Treasurer’s report. Commissioner lassogna seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

## **XII. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Mr. Pires asked for nominations of officers for the Board of Commissioners to take effect in the new fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2025. The slate of officers nominated were:

- Commissioner Pires for the role of Chair. The motion was made by Commissioner Gross, seconded by Commissioner Heilmann, and unanimously approved.
- Commissioner lassogna for the role of Vice Chair. The motion was made by Mr. Pires, seconded by Commissioner Gross, and unanimously approved.
- Commissioner Heilmann for the role of Secretary. The motion was made by Mr. Pires, seconded by Commissioner Gross, and unanimously approved.
- Commissioner Gross for the role of Treasurer. The motion was made by Mr. Pires, seconded by Commissioner lassogna, and unanimously approved.

## **XIII. NEW BUSINESS**

President + CEO Lauren Coakley Vincent walked the meeting attendees through of the [DSSD’s 2024-2025 annual report](#) and thank yous to the DSSD’s various volunteers and sponsors. A moment of remembrance was held for Joan Trefz.

There being no other new business, the section of the agenda was closed.

## **XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Pires called for the meeting to be adjourned at 5:13 p.m.