

BRIDGEPORT DOWNTOWN SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
September 10, 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  
Callie Heilmann, Made in Bridgeport, Secretary  
Javier Ceja, Downtown Strategic Group  
Alicia Cobb, Downtown Resident  
Jason Cohen, Bordentown DB, LLC  
Gemeem Davis, Bridgeport Generation Now  
Karolyn Egbert, Trefz Corporation  
Philip Kuchma, Kuchma Corporation  
Tony Sherwood, AMS Real Estate  
Barbara Sreckovic, Downtown Resident  
Andy Toledo, City of Bridgeport (Ex Officio)

Staff

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

Guests

Dianalys Bonilla, City of Bridgeport  
Fred Frassinelli, AMS Real Estate  
Ira Jacoby, Felner Corporation  
Joseph Katz, City of Bridgeport  
Kathy Maher, The Barnum Museum

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 Dianalys Bonilla and Joseph Katz from the City of Bridgeport, Fred Frassinelli of AMS Real Estate, Ira Jacoby from the Felner Corporation, and Kathy Maher from The Barnum Museum.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Kuchma made a motion to approve the Minutes of the August 13, 2025, DSSD Board Meeting, as presented. Commissioner Frassinelli seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

IV. TREASURER REPORT

Treasurer Gross was not in attendance, so the July 2025 financial report was tabled until the next meeting.

V. REPORT FROM THE CITY

Mr. Toledo and Mr. Katz gave a combined report with updates on the CT Siting **Council's reversal of the UI Monopole decision**, the date to restripe the Lafayette Circle roadway, the State Street traffic signals service agreement between City and **the State Department of Transportation, changes to the high speed ferry terminal's construction, status of the Congress Street Bridge's reconstruction, and progress towards selecting developers for the Downtown North and Golden Hill Street parcels owned by the City.**

Mr. Katz further elaborated on the locations selected for sidewalk repairs with the funding made available through the federal Department of Housing and Urban **Development, continued engagement with Connecticut's chapter of the Regional Plan Association and Desegregate CT**, and a new collaboration with the Yale School **of Architecture's Housing Clinic** focused on concepts to develop 1340-1390 Main Street and 137-165 Housatonic Avenue.

VI. **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

DSSD President Lauren Coakley Vincent gave an overview of the Downtown **Ambassador team's performance report for the month of August**, which reflected a negligible decrease (1%) in sanitation instances over the past month and an increase (10%) over the previous year due to the number of alcohol containers and trash bags collected. The team saw a decrease (12%) in the amount of time devoted to beautification work from the previous month and an increase (161%) from the same time period in the previous year due to fluctuations in the number of blocks weeded time devoted to watering. The Public Safety category reflected an increase from the previous month (30%) and from the same month in the previous year (207%) due to the number of instances of panhandling. Finally, there was an increase in the number of interactions in the Public Engagement category from the previous month (13%) and from the same month in the previous year (40%).

Ms. Coakley Vincent then gave updates on the Colorful Bridgeport content in August, which focused on **What's Happening events announcements**, DSSD special event features, and public spaces to enjoy in the neighborhood. She repeated the calendar of Downtown events planned for the remainder of the summer and fall, either directly organized by the Bridgeport DSSD or supported by the organization, with special attention to PARK(ing) Day, Bailando Bridgeport Latin dancing nights, and Paws in the Park.

Finally, Ms. Coakley Vincent gave an update on the Downtown wayfinding signage designs, printing, and installation timeline.

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

A. **Executive**

Mr. Pires reported on the Executive Committee meeting that was held on September 3, 2025. The Committee further defined how to approach the next **administrative and leadership objective of the DSSD's strategic plan, to craft a clear articulation of the DSSD's organizational values and a statement of purpose** to complement the vision and mission statements. A survey will be sent to the Commissioners asking to prioritize the remaining strategic plan objectives as part of the process. Ms. Coakley Vincent previewed a survey that would be sent to all Commissioners related to that strategic plan objective.

The Committee then reviewed the status of back payments from the land development agreement properties in the district. Finally, the Committee set the **agenda for this month's board meeting.**

B. Physical Conditions

Mr. Frassinelli reported on the Physical Conditions Committee meeting that was held on August 29, 2025. The Committee prioritized a list of sidewalks to be **repaired with the grant funds that the City's** Office of Planning & Economic Development (OPED) received from the Department of Housing & Urban Development dedicated to Downtown sidewalk repairs. The Committee also **refined the list of priority projects for this year's available beautification grant** funds, and discussed the Downtown wayfinding signage project.

C. Public Safety

Commissioner Iassogna reported on the Public Safety Committee meeting that was held on August 29, 2025. The Committee discussed the increase in the unhoused population in the neighborhood. In addition, the Committee decided to convene a conversation with a targeted list of Downtown property owners about installing overhead lighting, landscaping maintenance, and removal of unattended items at their properties during the month of September.

D. Special Events and Marketing

Commissioner Cobb reported on the Special Events and Marketing Committee meeting that was held on September 2, 2025. The Committee reviewed the Colorful Bridgeport content from the past month and previewed content and event plans for the upcoming months. Finally, the Committee provided feedback and recommendations on the Arcade Food Hall project plan, to be implemented as a winter holiday market in November and December with the goal of extending through the spring should additional funding become available.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Kuchma raised the importance of the Bridgeport DSSD engaging with the Connecticut chapter of the Regional Plan Association (RPA). He mentioned the YIMBY (Yes In My Back Yard) conference taking place later this month in New Haven as an opportunity to invite more engagement with the RPA and planners or developers from across the country.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Pires called for the meeting to be adjourned at 4:44 p.m.