

**BRIDGEPORT DOWNTOWN SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
May 13, 2026
Annual Meeting Minutes**

The DSSD Board of Commissioners Meeting took place at Ursa, 245 Fairfield Avenue, 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, Secretary
Javier Ceja, Downtown Strategic Group
Alicia Cobb, Downtown Resident
Jason Cohen, Bordentown DB, LLC
Gemeem Davis, Bridgeport Generation Now
Karolyn Egbert, Trefz Corporation
Hugh Hallinan, Downtown Cabaret Theatre
Philip Kuchma, Kuchma Corporation
Tony Sherwood, Mighty 190, LLC
Barbara Sreckovic, Downtown Resident
Andy Toledo, City of Bridgeport (Ex Officio)

Staff

Lauren Coakley Vincent, DSSD President
Marcella Kovac, DSSD/The Bananaland
Charles Suarez-Penn, DSSD/SMG

Guests

Maritza Adazme
Paul Antinozzi
Brenden Bish
Dianalys Bonilla, City of Bridgeport
Ivan Bracho
Bill Coleman, City of Bridgeport
Jonathan Delgado, City of Bridgeport
TJ Elgin, Full Moon Brewing
Liz Esposito, UI/Avangrid
Fred Frassinelli, AMS Real Estate
Sherylyn Garner
Thomas Gaudett, City of Bridgeport
Jeremy Goun, 78 Elm, LLC
Niels Heilmann, The Post Hotel
Raquel Huffman, 881 Lafayette Blvd, 4I
Joseph Katz, City of Bridgeport
Marc Krasnow, 35 Cannon Street
Denise Lecky, All Things Eyes
George Logan, Aquarion Water Company
Sarah Lopez, Office of Sen. Murphy
Lauri MacLean, Downtown resident
Seila Mosquera-Bruno, CT Dept. of Housing
Nelly Osorio
Seung Hyeon Park, 162-166 Elm Street, LLC
Taneaka Parker, Skeletons in My Closet
Takina Pollock Shafer, Skateport
Chief Roderick Porter, Bridgeport Police Department
Andrea Raices-Lugo, City of Bridgeport
Daniel Roach, City of Bridgeport
Karin Smith, Kindred Thoughts Bookstore Constance
Vickers, 881 Lafayette Blvd, 1B

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

Chairman Pires called the meeting to order at 4:26 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.

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 67 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 property owner and leaseholder candidates seeking a seat on the Board of Commissioners. 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. Commissioner Gross made a motion to close nominations. Mr. Lassogna seconded the motion, it was approved unanimously.

An official count of the ballots was conducted by DSSD Elections Committee member Fred Frassinelli and DSSD President + CEO Lauren Coakley Vincent. Mr. Frassinelli indicated all 82 ballots had been counted and a quorum having been present and established, that he wished to congratulate Commissioners Heilmann and Sherwood on their re-election to the Board; and newly elected Commissioners Goun and Elgin to the Board. As stated by Mr. Pires, the terms were for three years beginning at the July 2026 Board of Commissioners meeting.

V. COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

While the votes for the election of Commissioners were being counted, two community presentations were given. City of Bridgeport Police Department Chief Roderick Porter delivered a presentation on safety issues within the Downtown, noting the decreasing trends in violent crime. Niels Heilmann provided an update on the progress toward developing 49 Cannon Street, into The Post Hotel – a 36-room boutique hotel.

President + CEO Lauren Coakley Vincent walked the meeting attendees through of the DSSD's [2025-2026 annual report](#) and thank yous to the DSSD's various volunteers and sponsors. A special moment of thanks was given to Phil Kuchma for his years of service to the Bridgeport DSSD and to the development of Downtown Bridgeport. Commissioner Pires made a motion to convey Mr. Kuchma with Commissioner Emeritus status upon his retirement from the DSSD Board. Commissioner Gross seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

VI. REPORT FROM THE CITY

Mr. Roach, Mr. Gaudett, Mr. Toledo, and Mr. Coleman from the City of Bridgeport gave remarks about various projects and initiatives aimed at strengthening the community and local economy of Downtown Bridgeport. Connecticut Housing Commissioner Mosquera-Bruno was invited to make impromptu remarks about current and upcoming housing developments in Bridgeport.

VII. REPORTS OF STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES

A. Executive

Mr. Pires reported on the Executive Committee meeting that was held on May 6, 2026. The Committee discussed preparations for the annual meeting, planning for new initiatives in fiscal year 2027, the Special Events and Marketing Committee's recommended community event partnership funding allocations, and the idea to hold a walking board meeting in the new fiscal year. In addition, the Committee reviewed the Commissioner board attendance from the past quarter and year.

B. Physical Conditions

Mr. Frassinelli reported on the Physical Conditions Committee meeting that was held on April 24, 2026. The Committee discussed the recent Colorful Crew beautification and clean up day held on Earth Day in collaboration with Skateport, the City of Bridgeport, and the Trust for Public Land. In addition, the Committee reviewed the urban forestry report created by CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Urban Forestry Coordinator for Downtown Bridgeport, which identifies action items for beautification plans over the coming year.

C. Public Safety

Mr. Iassogna reported on the Public Safety Committee meeting that was held on April 24, 2026. The Committee discussed recent safety issues in the Downtown, with special attention to individuals displaying mental health challenges. The Committee also discussed the role of the new public safety ambassador included in the fiscal year 2027 budget, and in particular how they might gather insights from residents and business owners to advocate for changes from the police department and other City departments.

D. Special Events and Marketing

Ms. Cobb reported on the Special Events and Marketing Committee meeting that was held on May 5, 2026. 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, as well as reviewed content plans for the upcoming months. The Committee also provided input on and finalized the funding allocations for the community event partnership applications.

E. Elections

Ms. Heilmann reported on the Elections Committee meeting that was held on April 17, 2026. The Committee prepared the annual meeting notice, candidate guide, and ballots for mailing.

VIII. PRESENTATION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2027 PROPOSED BUDGET

Treasurer Gross explained that the process for creating the fiscal year 2027 budget, spanning the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, began in March 2026. 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 2027 budget. Commissioner Iassogna seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

IX. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the Minutes of the April 15, 2026, DSSD Board Meeting. Commissioner Gross 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 2026 – June 2027 for adoption.

July 8, 2026	August 12, 2026	September 9, 2026
October 14, 2026	November 11, 2026	December 9, 2026
January 13, 2027	February 10, 2027	March 17, 2027
April 14, 2027	May 12, 2027	June 9, 2027

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 Davis and second by Commissioner Gross, the motion was approved unanimously.

XI. TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Eric Gross presented the fiscal year 2025 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, 2025.

Mr. Gross provided an explanation of the March 2026 financial report as provided by the bookkeeper. The DSSD ended the month of March 2026 with assets totaling \$231,445, of which \$352,964 was cash spread across two bank accounts. Liabilities totaled \$107,303, encompassed by a mix of Accounts Payable, Refundable Advances, and lease liability. Net Assets at the end of the month totaled \$124,142. The accrued revenue was \$550,748 – primarily accrued from City of Bridgeport tax assessment payments. Expenses for the same period totaled \$661,256 – primarily related to streetscape maintenance and organizational operations. Accrued expenses exceeded revenue for the period by \$110,509. Commissioner lassogna made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. Commissioner Kuchma 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, 2026. The slate of officers nominated were:

- Commissioner Heilmann for the role of Chair. The motion was made by Commissioner Pires. Commissioners Ceja, Cobb, Davis, Frassinelli, Heilmann, and Pires approved the nomination. Commissioners Cohen, Egbert, and lassogna opposed the nomination. Commissioners Gross and Kuchma abstained. The nomination was approved.
- Commissioner Sreckovic for the role of Vice Chair. The motion was made by Commissioner Frassinelli. Commissioners Ceja, Cobb, Cohen, Davis, Egbert, Frassinelli, Gross, Heilmann, lassogna, and Pires approved the nomination. Commissioner Kuchma abstained.
- Commissioner Gross for the role of Treasurer. The motion was made by Commissioner Pires. Commissioners Ceja, Cobb, Cohen, Davis, Egbert, Frassinelli, Gross, Heilmann, lassogna, and Pires approved the nomination. Commissioner Kuchma abstained.
- Commissioner Cohen for the role of Secretary. The motion was made by Commissioner Pires. Commissioners Ceja, Cobb, Cohen, Davis, Egbert,

Frassinelli, Gross, Heilmann, lassogna, and Pires approved the nomination.
Commissioner Kuchma abstained.

XIII. OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

The Board of Commissioners voted as follows on whether to end trash removal from sidewalk waste receptacles effective as of July 1, 2026 due to the City's failure to allocate funds to the Bridgeport DSSD in its budget:

- Yea: Philip Pires, Eric Gross, Callie Heilmann, Javier Ceja, Alicia Cobb, Jason Cohen, Gemeem Davis, Philip Kuchma, Tony Sherwood
- Nay: David lassogna, Karolyn Egbert
- Not present: Hugh Hallinan, Barbara Sreckovic

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

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pires called for the meeting to be adjourned at 5:44 p.m.