

Downtown Business District
Meeting Minutes-Annual and Special Meetings
March 22, 2023
363 Main Street, Suite 404 Middletown, CT 06457

Attendees:

Jen Alexander (Chair)	Dep Chief Rich Davis (MPD)
Chris Conley (New Commissioner)	Sara Mendillo (Chamber)
Diane Gervais (Commissioner)	Maryellen Shuckrow (St. Vins Director)
Matt Lefebvre (Commissioner)	Cathy Duncan (Chamber)
Marie Kalita (Commissioner)	Kevin Elak (Health Director)
Tom Ford (Commissioner)	Cassandra Day(Middletown Press)
Mike DiPiro (Commissioner)	Emily Ford (Hajjar Dev Group)
Katie Hughes-Nelson(Commissioner)	Trevor Davis (363 Main LLC)
Patrick Harding (Commissioner)	Ken Ahnell (DBD Beautification Mgr)
Sandra Russo-Driska (DBD Coordinator)	Bobbye Peterson (City of Middletown)
	Ricardo Airo (Building Owner)
	Chris Holden (Public Works Director)

Annual Meeting Call to Order-

Annual Meeting was called to order by Chair, Jen Alexander at 8:32 a.m.

FY 23-24 Budget:

- Motion to approve by Diane Gervais
- 2nd by Patrick Harding
- All in favor. FY 23-24 DBD budget is adopted as presented.

Commission Vote:

Coordinator Sandra Russo-Driska read the slate of candidates as presented:

Jen Alexander- Kidcity

Tom Ford-Hajjar Development

Diane Gervais-Amato's Toy and Hobby

Patrick Harding-Harding Development

Matt Lefebvre-Middlesex Music Academy

Katie Hughes-Nelson- Perk on Main

Chris Conley- Guilmartin, DiPiro & Sokolowski

Brent Thomsen- Inn @ Middletown

Marie Kalita- Middletown Representative

The chair asked if there were any nominations from the floor, twice. Hearing none she called for a vote on the slate as presented.

- Motion made by Diane Gervais to approve the slate as presented.
- 2nd by Patrick Harding
- All in favor. Commission slate is approved.

Adjournment of Annual Meeting:

- Motion to adjourn the annual meeting made by Diane Gervais
- 2nd by Marie Kalita
- All in favor.

CALL TO ORDER- Regular Meeting:

The regular monthly meeting was called to order by Chair Jen Alexander at 8:42 a.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR TERM MARCH 2023-MARCH 2024

Sandra read the slate of officers:

Slate as follows:

Chair- Jen Alexander

Vice-Chair - Matt Lefevbre

Secretary- Katie Hughes-Nelson

Treasurer- Patrick Harding

Jen noted that officer terms are for a maximum of 3 years, and this is her last year if elected.

She then asked for any other nominations from the floor. Hearing none she asked for a motion to approve.

- Motion made by Diane
- 2nd made by Marie
- All in favor. Officers are duly elected for a one-year term.

CITY PARTNERS

Mayor- Not Present

Police- Deputy Chief Davis reported the PD is working with the City Attorney on strengthening the panhandling ordinance to allow the areas in front of businesses to be considered private areas for the purpose of enforcement. Jen added a suggestion to also include language about a person in a stationery position not being approached as well.

He noted the warming center is closing Saturday and they are expecting an inflection downtown so they are preparing to have extra policing.

He noted they are working on understanding exactly what the Forbidden Llama is doing with respect to their business.

Bobby Peterson noted that there have been several meetings on the issue, and they are being addressed.

Public Works- Jen started by thanking Public Works for addressing Kings Ave. so quickly.

Chris Holden then reported that tree trimming on Main is scheduled and sidewalk improvements will be addressed soon as well. He commented on the \$300k grant the DBD secured from ARPA being transferred to Public Works for streetscape projects and they are working to make this happen. Chris then reported on the 2 poles around Mondo are getting installed and fixed. He reported the back in parking pilot is being replaced with a lighting project. Discussion followed.

Economic Development/Parking-

Bobbye reported working on blight issues on buildings. Prepping for nice weather and outdoor dining. Jen inquired about the LensCrafters building and issues. Discussion followed.

Health Department-

Kevin reported all counties are at lowest risk levels possible for flu, RSV and Covid. We may change to an endemic and not pandemic phase soon.

He announced the State Food Code is updated for all restaurants, and several educational sessions were held.

April 22 is Drug Take Back Day.

Kids Health and Safety Day is looking for sponsorships.

Warming center closing April 1st.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

St. Vincent's-

Mary ellen is very busy with meal programs. She announced she is keeping James and one other person doing recovery work. 3 Quinnipiac students will be coming on board to assist with programs. She will be policing out in front of the building now that warmer weather is coming.

They will be closing on Liberty Street property April 11 and will be relocating tenants and fencing in the property and taking the building down. The new building is 20,000 s/f with showers, baths, and will house more individuals than the warming center currently holds. Discussion followed.

The cleaning crew is out once per week, if we would like them 2x, the DBD can partner again with gift card funding to support the program.

There has been an uptick of 25% at Amazing Grace. They have a robust supply and are operating smoothly.

Chamber-

Sara noted the following meetings:

-Monday 3/27 Senate Majority Leader Duff @ Sheraton Rocky Hill

-Monday 4/3 US Senator Rosa DeLauro 2 the Sheraton Rocky Hill-made in America event to follow

-Wed 4/5 Matt Ritter at the Inn at Middletown and the Career Fair at the Courtyard Cromwell

-Thurs 4/6- Business After Work at Sheraton Rocky Hill

-Comedy Night and Auction at the Elk's 4/15

-Larry's retirement dinner at the Aqua Turf May 10th, tickets selling fast.

Cathy reminded everyone that the next CBB meeting will be 4/6 Virtually as the downstairs is still not able to be used.

Wesleyan- Not present

Approval of Minutes

- Motion made by Diane to approve March Annual and Regular minutes
- 2nd by Matt
- March Annual and Regular minutes approved.

Treasurer's Report

- Motion to approve Treasurer Report made by Diane
- 2nd by Matt
- All in Favor. Treasurer's report accepted.

DBD COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Advertising/Promotion- No updates

Gift Cards- Sandra reported they are selling great and companies are ordering groups of them for employees.

Maintenance & Beautification- We are doing another round of outdoor improvement grants, matching up to \$500. Ken Ahnell commented he is working with St. Vincent's on the clean up crew and also with Public Works on the items Sandra and he have on their list.

Special Projects- Jen commented we are continuing to work on the second round of funding for the Storefront Grant project and will update when more info is available.

925 Report- Various items discussed.

Adjournment:

- Motion to adjourn at 9:35 a.m. made by Matt
- 2nd by Diane
- All in Favor. Meeting Adjourned.