Downtown Business District
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 22, 2022
330 Main Street, Suite 404, Middletown, CT. 06457

Attendees: Marc Levin (Acting Chair) Sandra Russo-Driska (DBD Coordinator)
Diane Gervais (Commissioner) Chris Holden (Public Works Director)
Mike DiPiro (Commissioner) Kevin Elak (Health Director)
Patrick Harding (Commissioner) Chief Erik Costa (MPD)
Matt Lefverbre (Commissioner) Capt. Mike Desena (MPD)
Marie Kalita (Commissioner) Dep. Chief Rich Davis (MPD)

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order by Marc at 8:32 AM

Police Report –
Capt. Desena reported issues with panhandling have been on the rise however, bike patrol is out and resources for the issue are improving. Looking to get more officers on bike patrols.

Dep. Chief Davis asked the commission to let PD know if there are any events, or activities where more police presence may be needed.

Chief Costa reported the Pride events were outstanding and went extremely well from their perspective. He also noted bike patrols will be increasing.

Public Works-
Chris Holden reported that they have added Saturday garbage pick up and that will continue downtown.

Kim and Sandra were working together on the new garbage receptacles and will be compiling information and pricing.

Rick Romano will be starting up the sidewalk maintenance program again and reviewing lips and hazardous areas for repair and replacement. They are looking into the wooden poles in front of Forbidden Llama. They have a new company hired for repairing certain sidewalk issue. He noted that Riverview plaza by the PD has light issues and concrete repairs to be made.

The commission congratulated Chris on his appointment to Public Works director.
Economic Dev & Parking-
Tom Murano reported the Riverfront reveal is Sat. July 2nd with a presentation in the Council Chambers at 10 am and tour buses. 9 seats are left. Final design was based on 1200 people giving input along with other factors.

Parking Report
Parking lot behind the PD had the RFQ sent out. There is a review committee for that being set up by the Mayor. There are several good groups with lots of experience and have ideas for lots of new opportunities. They hope to have a contract negotiated by the end of the year and begin construction next year.

He announced he is retiring July 8th. The commission wished him well and thanked him for his work.

Health Department –
Kevin Elak reported cases of Covid are receding and seem to be on the decline. New data for Middlesex County will be out tomorrow and we will most likely go from high risk to medium risk hopefully, if numbers are down as they expect. FDA/CDC have approved vaccine for 6 mo - 5 year olds. Pediatricians in town believe they will have both Moderna and Pfizer. 2 doses will be required. This is good news for parents. CHC will also offer the vaccines.

They have been busy with new restaurants and or restaurants changing hands.

Marc asked for clarification on an employee testing positive for Covid. Kevin noted that the employee must be out for 5 days, after that if no fever or symptoms for 24 hours, they can come back wearing a mask an additional 5 days, or stay home for 10 days. Discussion followed.

The commission congratulated Kevin on his appointment to Health Director.

Chamber-
Sara thanked the DBD for the grant program that helped pay for the planters. She also thanked us for our support of the car show and Pride events.

Cathy reported that the Small Business Awards were happening at St. Clements on Wednesday. Sicily was chosen for best new business under 5 years.

There will be a Sexual Harassment Seminar offered Tues. July 12. 2 sessions. 8a.m. and 10 a.m. if anyone needs training.

Business after work will be held at the Courtyard in Cromwell on July 20 from 5p-7p.

CBB will meet in hybrid form on Thurs. July 7. Charles IT is hosting.
Minutes
- Motion by Marie to approve May 2022 minutes
- 2nd to motion by Patrick
- Minutes accepted. All in favor.

Treasurer’s Report
Patrick reported all activity for May was normal with the outdoor grant monies being the additional item of spending.
- Motion made by Maire to approve report.
- 2nd to motion made by Mike
- Treasurer’s report accepted. All in favor.

Commissioners Reports

Advertising— No report. Status quo.

Promotion-
Sandra asked for the commission to support the Go Pink+ project of decorating wooden ducks in the downtown. A $500 donation for the event would allow them to purchase DBD gift cards as prizes. More to come as the event takes shape.
- Motion made by Marc to donate $500 to Go Pink+ event.
- 2nd by Patrick
- All in favor.

Beautification & Maintenance-
Sandra reported the planters are changed out and sidewalks were cleaned by the Hajjar group.

Gift Cards-
Sales are very good. Sandra reported that Middlesex College purchased $750 for the STEM program, and the City continues to purchase as well. Cathy is doing a great job selling at the Chamber. Many are purchasing for teacher gifts.

Special Projects-
Outdoor grant had 19 applicants and 14 have received money with a few more in process.

DBD Coordinator Report-
Sandra reported she attended the St. Vincent’s fundraising event and Maryellen gave a big shout out to the DBD and James on the Outreach Coordinator Program.

CT Main St Group Spotlight will be held in October and programming and planning is in the works.

Sandra thanked the city departments for their great work on the water main break!

Cruise night went extremely well and the DBD gave their award to a 1967 Camaro.
925 Report-

Trevor reported Gov. Lamont’s headquarters in Middletown will be next to the space at Middlesex Adult Ed. Trevor also noted he was having his concert with the DBD grant money the night of the water main break!

Anne-Marie said she had a terrific event and worked great with MPD.

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn by Marie
- 2nd by Mike
- Meeting adjourned at 9:08 AM