

Middletown Downtown Business District
Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)
Wednesday, August 25, 2021
363 Main Street, Suite 404, Middletown, CT

Attendees:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Jen Alexander (Chair) | |
| Diane Gervais (Commissioner) | Sandra Russo-Driska (Coordinator) |
| Mike DiPiro (Commissioner) | Johanna Bond (Chamber) |
| Marc Levin (Commissioner) | Mike DeSena (PD) |
| Patrick Harding (Commissioner) | Trevor Davis (363 Main LLC) |
| Matt Lefebvre (Commissioner) | Kevin Elak (Health Dept) |
| Tom Ford (Commissioner) | AnnMarie Cannata (Buttonwood) |
| | Cassandra Day (Press) |
| | JR Hargreaves |

Meeting called to order by Jen at 8:31 a.m.

Chair opened the meeting and noted we had quorum so we would move to other business while waiting for others to join:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- Motion made by Diane to accept August 2021 minutes
- 2nd made by Marc
- Marc noted to correct the spelling of Kleg to Clegg
- All in favor with change.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

- Motion made by Diane to accept
- 2nd made by Tom
- All in favor

Patrick noted we are switching from Excel to Quick Books and the expenses were normal with payouts for grants. Mike commented that it will take a few months to see the running balances with the new year just starting in July.

CITY PARTNER UPDATES:

DBD Pg 2

Mayor-Absent

Police-

Mike DeSena reported things are very busy with the warm weather and they are working closely with St. Vincent's and Mr. Thomas on the panhandling issue. Panhandling is down a bit. They have made an arrest on a frequent panhandler and are seeking social services intervention. New officers were sworn in on 9/3/21 and 4 were already certified so can begin soon than the 2 new recruits that need to go to the academy.

Public Works- Absent

Economic Development/Parking-

Jen noted that P & Z passed the sale and utilization of cannabis with the exception of the Downtown Business District.

She asked that the commissioners email Sandra on any downtown items of this nature in the future so they can be shared with the entire commission.

Jen reported on the 1st Parking Commission meeting with Marie, Marc, Jen and Diane. Welles Guilmartin was present also. Heard from the consultant and they focused on new parking however there is a concern that all of parking is not being managed the right way. The committee would like much more data and information to conduct meaningful meetings in the future.

Health-

Kevin Elak reported they are continuing to monitor Covid cases. Approx 10 new every day. Down South cases seeming to plateau, hopefully in the next few weeks. They are holding Covid clinics in a few hours at City Hall and another at Piper Olson Vets and AME Zion in back parking lot. Vaccines are now available at all pharmacies and doctor offices and all have testing capacity as well. Pfizer is seeking FDA full approval authorization. Boosters for immune compromised is pending FDA authorization for immediate distribution and then for general public after that around Sept. 10. You need to wait 8 months after 2nd dose for booster. Pfizer and Moderna have asked for FDA approval on booster and J & J should follow.

COMMUNITY PARTNER UPDATES:

St. Vincent's-

Sandra reported that the Mayor attend the last meeting of the St. Vincent's Outreach Committee and he was very positive and stated he would proceed to advocate for the \$12,000 needed to continue the program from October through Spring. Sandra will follow up on the progress of the funding with Maryellen.

- Holiday on Main is meeting and planning for this year. Santa's Sleigh will be used again thanks to Jen and her crew at Kidcity.
- Hoping for in person tree lighting but have to monitor the numbers
- Chamber focus is helping businesses to thrive and not just survive.
- Informational workshop on vaccine mandates (or not) in the workplace was held and the 1 ½ hour seminar is on the Chamber website and very informational.

Wesleyan-

Sandra noted she is in touch with Rani at Wesleyan and they have collaborated on some great ideas. The new Wesleyan student will be very helpful in communicating with students on campus. This is all in progress as we work to get a work-study student to assist with social media/website.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Advertising- On Hold

Promotion- Brochure is in final phases of updates and will go to print this week.

Beautification- It was noted that planters are looking great.

Gift Cards- Diane ordered new cards and negotiated the new contract and is waiting to review.

Special Projects-

- Matching Grants- Almost complete. Waiting on a few businesses that asked for extensions
- Event Grants- Businesses may delay due to Covid numbers. They are communicating with Sandra on their plans.

DBD Coordinator Report:

Sandra reported she is in process of working with Jen on unlocking the grant for the Vacant Storefront Project.

Also, she met with JR Hargraves at the old roller rink building and he toured her the building and shared plans for the vision of the space. Very exciting for the North end and he hopes the City will be supportive and help with funding.

925 Report-

Lenscrafter building was mentioned and if there is blight the City can look into. Sandra will inquire. Tom asked about the 423 Main space (old Dunkin').

AnnMarie inquired about a second round of event grant funding. Jen noted we needed to complete the current rounds and see where the finances were and then make a decision.

AnnMarie announced there will be an Indian Dance on Sept. 18 on the stage at Holy Trinity.

Adjournment:

- Motion made by Marc to adjourn at 9:00 am
- 2nd by Patrick
- Meeting adjourned