

**Downtown Business District  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, August 26, 2020  
330 Main Street, Middletown, CT. 06457**

**Attendees: VIA ZOOM MEETING WITH COMMISSIONERS**

Marie Kalita (Chair)	Sandra Russo-Driska (DBD Coordinator)
Diane Gervais (Commissioner)	Capt. Rich Davis (MPD)
Marc Levin (Commissioner)	Kevin Elak (Health Dept)
Mike DiPiro (Commissioner)	Chis Holden (Public Works)
Jen Alexander (Commissioner)	Cathy Duncan (Chamber)
Patrick Harding (Commissioner)	

Meeting called to order by Chairperson Kalita @ 8:36AM

**Police Report –**

Capt. Davis addressed panhandling on Main Street. Needs direction and backing from City Hall. Marc recommended a meeting with Commission, Capt. Davis, and the Mayor. Jen noted social services rep must be part of the solution. Capt. Davis noticed a real uptick in homelessness. Coalition on Homelessness Committee is now aware and working on it.

Discussion to have DBD Coordinator set up appointment with the Mayor and find out information on his position directly from him and share with the Commission for next steps.

Discussion on social services being a major part of solution.

Capt. Davis informed the Commission of a protest happening on Main St. on Thursday evening at 7pm from Rapallo to Green.

**Parking Report – Roger out of office.**

Marie asked that Sandra meet with Roger and ask about ticketing and Diane suggested warnings instead of ticket, especially if there is access to know if the plate had been tagged before.

## **Public Works –**

Chris Holden reported on tour with Jane Harris and Sandra on trees on Main Street and plan to replant is forthcoming from Jane.

Garbage containers being overflowed was an issue and was addressed.

Discussion about where we can relocate homeless/street individuals. Trying to sanitize port-o-potties twice per week. Commission discussed how businesses should not become public restrooms for these individuals.

Discussion from Marie about current condition of all sidewalks. Chris reported the front of Davita Dialysis is being replaced soon.

Sandra will set up meeting with Chris and Rick Romano to walk Main St and create a plan and report.

Discussion from Diane on lights being out and getting addressed.

Discussion from Mike asking about rainfall being an issue in front of his building with run off.

## **Health Department –**

Office is very busy. COVID-19 cases have been ebbing and flowing, but rate remains low.

Wesleyan is back and have a massive area for testing on campus. Students tested 2x per week. Large impressive testing area. Good plan in place and no positive cases so far, hoping it continues.

School will be returning and working with them on procedures and make determinations on steps in the event any positive cases appear.

Vinyl /Mercy /Xavier/St John Paul are all in person learning.

Middletown Public will be hybrid model learning.

Kevin discussed with the Mayor the possibility of putting signs along Main Street as a reminder to people to wear masks, social distance, be safe, etc. Looking for guidance on signs to get people attention to take protocols seriously on Main St. Looking for catchy slogans or ideas for a campaign.

Commission did not think signs were necessary, however, they feel maybe the Health Dept. or Police can hire a person to walk around with masks and information on the mandates and wearing a mask.

Jen suggested Sandra and Kevin meeting to come up with a sheet on protocols and Sandra can pass along to all businesses.

## **Chamber of Commerce –**

Cathy discussed September meeting agenda is complete. Holiday on Main St. is being planned in new way.

All meetings still Zoom. Organizations are getting creative on new ways to have events.

Sandra reported she was asked to be on Holiday on Main Committee to represent DBD and will report back to committee.

Cathy reported no race will be held on Main St. this year. It will be held Nov. 22 at a school.

Halloween on Main St. is up in the air right now. Sandra will stay on top of information and relay commissions sentiments that businesses are having a very hard time during Covid restrictions and this may not be the best thing to have on Main St. given the expense of the candy and personnel needed. Also, concerns on social distancing was raised.

## **Minutes-July 2020**

- Motion made by Marc to approve minutes.
- Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jen
- All in favor. Minutes accepted

## **Treasurer's Report**

Mike reported we are in surplus and in very good condition. No concerns at this time.

Discussion on tax payments being delayed until Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> and Sandra will request 1<sup>st</sup> installment payment then.

Motion by Marc to approve financial report

2<sup>nd</sup> by Diane

All in favor. Report accepted

## **Commissioner Reports**

Diane reported gift cards are selling well and Main St has been busy.

March discussed taking out full page ads in Sept, Oct, and Nov CT magazine. Focus will be on new website and what the DBD does for businesses.

Diane notes 1<sup>st</sup> ad is photos off website of downtown that highlight the Main St. businesses that won the Best of CT Magazine contest.

Middletown Businesses were mentioned, Amato's, Mallove's, Pocket/Posies.

(Commission Reports-Cont'd)

Marie asked for the proof to be sent out to the Commission.

Jen suggested highlighting on Face Book the other Best of CT businesses that were not yet listed.

Sandra is now admin on FB and will continue to focus on social media creation and a plan for implementation with Instagram over the next few weeks.

Discussion about TagTeam and commercials running with Marc. He will be discussing with them.

Patrick reported that 2 locations: Schlien's Building and Diane's building, to focus on for painting and facades. Another issue is mashed glass doors are an issue. 460 and 468 Main Street.

Jen suggested Sandra find owners and try to establish relationship to see if something can be done.

Mike noted there seems to be much more graffiti on garbage containers downtown. Sandra will address this with Public Works and follow up with photos and police if needed.

Discussion on Mohawk construction with Arrigoni Bridge followed. Sandra reported she attended the Zoom meeting yesterday and no reports of any issues were mentioned. She noted that the 4 corners of Main and Washington will be on hold for 4 weeks while the north end of Main St has, sidewalks and bump out installed.

### **New Business**

Marie proposed increasing Sandra's hours from 20 to 25 given the new social media responsibility as well as the many other new items she is handling for the DBD.

Motion by Jen to approve

2<sup>nd</sup> by Marc

All in favor. Motion passes

### **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by Patrick

2<sup>nd</sup> by Jen

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 AM