

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Thursday, August 1, 2019
Mansfield Town Hall
Town Council Chambers
4:30 PM**

MINUTES

Present: Steve Bacon, John Carrington, Frank Gifford, Prabhas KC, John McGuire, Toni Moran, Diana Pelletier, Jessie Richard, Paul Shapiro, Sean Vasington, and Cara Workman

Board Member Emeritus: Betsy Paterson

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm

1. Call to Order

President Steve Bacon called the meeting to order at 4:35.

2. Opportunity for Public to Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes of June 18, 2019

Jessie Richard made a motion to approve the minutes of June 18, 2019. Frank Gifford seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Mr. Bacon introduced John Carrington who was appointed interim Town Manager by the Town Council and then to the Partnership Board of Directors. Board members introduced themselves.

4. Executive Director Report

Cynthia van Zelm said she was continuing to review parking operations with a focus on a comprehensive system for the entire Downtown. Surrounding property owners are interested in reviewing various options. She will talk further with Board President Steve Bacon and Finance and Growth Chair Paul Shapiro.

The Board discussed the current parking situation.

Ms. van Zelm will come back to the Board with some options.

5. Review of Public Spaces Design Options

Mr. Bacon reviewed the current resources for implementation of the public spaces plan that the Board reviewed at its June meeting - \$30,000 from the Town, \$10,000 from the Partnership, and \$2,500 from CT-AARP.

After design and costs were evaluated by Dinep & Schwab, it was determined that the budget was about \$12,000 over the available resources.

Mr. Bacon referred to Executive Director Cynthia van Zelm's memo regarding options:

- 1) Original – Design and Cost Estimates: This is what the Board reviewed on June 18 (trees, seat walls, stoops, plantings for Wilbur Cross Way East, and bistro lights for Dog Lane Courtyard) minus the stage and the Instagram wall. Estimated total cost is \$49,426.27; \$11,926.27 over budget.
- 2) Alternative 1 – Design and Cost Estimates: Retains Dog Lane bistro lights. Wilbur Cross Way East seating is reduced to one granite seat wall from two seat walls. Wilbur Cross Way West planters are reduced to two planters from four planters (and accompanying trees). Wilbur Cross Way West arc loop seating is reduced from four to three. Estimated total cost is \$42,331.27; \$4,831.27 over original cost.
- 3) Alternative 2 – Design and Cost Estimates: Retains Dog Lane bistro lights. Retains Wilbur Cross Way East design in Original Scheme. Wilbur Cross Way West is eliminated from the initial project along with the crosswalk painting. Estimated total cost of \$34,307.87; \$3,192.13 under original cost.

Mr. Bacon reminded the Board that Kristin Schwab and her students had previously prepared a comprehensive plan for public spaces downtown. There may be limited resources to get all the public space improvements done.

Sean Vasington suggested focusing on Dog Lane Courtyard, and Wilbur Cross Way East projects. He thought the focus should be on trying to achieve the best result in just a few areas. He also noted that Wilbur Cross Way West was not part of the original request in the Request for Qualifications.

The Board also discussed whether lights in the Wilbur Cross Way East could be accomplished.

Toni Moran made a motion to adopt Alternative 2. Cara Workman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Moran made a motion that plans include consideration of lights in the trees on Wilbur Cross Way East, not to exceed the Alternative 2 budget. Jessie Richard seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

6. Review of June 30, 2019 End of Year Financials

Ms. van Zelm reviewed the preliminary June 30, 2019 Financials. She noted that the fund balance at the end of the year was \$20,522.

With respect to the Fund 270 (events) fund, the June purchasing cards have not been reconciled yet so there will be some more expenses through July 1. She said Festival revenue is still coming in.

Ms. van Zelm said she worked with Bike Mansfield to buy bike symbols to be placed along the railings on Betsy Paterson Square that were intended to serve as bike racks. The bike symbols are complete and need to be picked up. Ms. van Zelm said the Partnership and Bike Mansfield will each contribute \$496.

Ms. Moran asked why the ticket revenue for current year was \$93,320.45 and \$47,385.05 the year before. Ms. van Zelm will follow-up with LAZ Parking.

7. Business Outreach

In light of some of the recent articles in local paper, Ms. van Zelm updated the Board on some of the Partnership's business outreach efforts.

Ms. van Zelm said she will have a summary of the business visits conducted by Board members for the September meeting.

She advocated for continued visits by Board members.

Ms. van Zelm said she hopes to schedule another meeting of the Executive Director business roundtable this fall.

With respect to marketing, the Partnership staff team has been sending out weekly updates on the Partnership's activities, especially its events, through social media. The Partnership will continue to focus on marketing the entirety of Downtown Storrs.

With respect to events, the goal is to increase the focus on promoting Paterson Square to others to hold events. With full staffing, this will become more of a priority. Other goals are to look into other Partnership events as time, staffing, and funding allow.

Other areas of focus for the Partnership are the public spaces, clean-up/beautification, and public transportation.

The Board discussed Ms. van Zelm's comments and how best to convey to businesses on how they can benefit from Partnership events and programs.

8. Report from Committees and Task Forces

Celebrate Mansfield Festival

Chair Jessie Richard said Parsonsfield is the headliner for the Festival. She has been hearing positive reaction to having the Festival on a Saturday.

Executive

Ms. Moran made a motion to decouple Partnership staff salaries from the Town compensation process and approve a 2.25 percent increase for the Executive Director and the Communications and Special Projects Manager, and to consider separate salary consideration for the Event Coordinator after her six month probationary period. Ms. Richard seconded the motion.

Ms. Moran noted that Partnership staff works hard. During discussion of the Partnership budget at its April Board meeting, there was discussion of coupling any staff increases along the lines of Town management increases. Town management increases have not been determined yet. The Executive Committee is recommending moving ahead with Partnership staff increases.

Mr. Bacon noted that Partnership staff received no salary increases last fiscal year when the office was under staffed for several months.

The motion was approved unanimously.

9. Upcoming Agenda Items

Ms. van Zelm said Courtney Hendricson, Vice President for Municipal Services for CERC, will update the Board at its September meeting on the work CERC is doing with the Town and UConn on Mansfield's Opportunity Zone.

John McGuire noted that he staffed several UConn Orientations. He suggested the Partnership have give aways next year. Ms. Workman concurred and said candy is always a good draw. Mr. McGuire said the UConn maps were helpful. Mr. Bacon suggested coupons from businesses. Ms. van Zelm said a list of deals including coupons was used a few years ago but not many people took the businesses up on those deals. Sean Vasington suggested there be a list of Downtown Storrs businesses that accept Husky Bucks. He also received questions about regional bus service i.e., to Buckland Hills Mall. Is it the Partnership's job to promote the region? UConn?

10. Adjourn

Paul Shapiro made a motion to adjourn. Diana Pelletier seconded the motion. The motion was approved. The meeting adjourned at 6:05 pm.

Minutes taken by Cynthia van Zelm.