

Minutes of Meeting
Newton Downtown SSMID Board
Community Development Office – Building 18 in Legacy Plaza
5th Floor, Large Conference Room

February 14, 2023

ROLL CALL

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: R. O'Brien (phone); J. Maki; J. Prendergast; A. Leber; S. Forbes Winchell

STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Craig Armstrong, Development Specialist; Erin Yeager, Main Street

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 8:01 a.m. by Vice Chair Maki.

Review of Minutes. The Minutes of the SSMID Board Meeting on November 8, 2022 were reviewed and approved. MOTION by Leber, seconded by O'Brien. Voice Vote (Unanimous). The Minutes of the Special SSMID Board Meeting on December 15, 2022 were reviewed and approved. MOTION by O'Brien, seconded by Leber. Voice Vote (Unanimous).

Finance Report. The January 31, 2023 Finance Report was reviewed and approved, following a short discussion of the budgetary impact of the new rollback/backfill legislation. MOTION by Prendergast, seconded by Maki. Voice Vote (Unanimous).

New Business.

a. Discussion: Budget & SSMID projects for 2023. Armstrong briefly explained that FY 23 revenue projections were still valid and SSMID tax receipts would be as estimated for March, 2023 property taxes. The budgetary constraints will not affect the outcome of anticipated SSMID projects in calendar year 2023, but will definitely be a factor in FY 24 and calendar year 2024. A discussion of potential SSMID projects to undertake this calendar year ensued, with consensus that beautification of the bunkers around the Courthouse Square and purchase and placement of hanging floral baskets on the light poles around the Square would be desirable. Yeager will verify if/when the bunkers are slated for demolition and Maki agreed to obtain costs for painting/sealing and attaching decorative tiles to the bunkers. Armstrong & Maki will check with Public Works Director Joe Grife to see if hanging flower baskets may be attached to the light poles around the Square. Prendergast stated that Randy Ray should be consulted for a price to water and maintain the hanging floral baskets. Yeager agreed to obtain prices to purchase the floral baskets.

b. Status of Christmas Decorations. Maki reported that Van Maanen Electric had removed and stored the Christmas Decorations attached to light poles around the Courthouse Square. One of the decorations blew off in a windstorm in January and sustained serious damage that may not be repairable. Two others blew off in the two previous Christmas seasons and sustained some level of damage. The battery-powered lights in the Christmas Decorations are difficult to see at night, due to the glare of streetlights, but the Decorations shimmer in the breeze and are very noticeable day or night. Prendergast agreed to contact the Decorations vendor to see if heavier duty brackets or tethers are available, as well as replacement parts for the damaged Decorations and the possibility of retrofitting the Decorations with LED lights.

c. 2023 Downtown Cleaning & Floral Maintenance contract. Armstrong reported that the Request for Bid was posted on the City's website, with a deadline of Friday, Feb. 3rd for all bids to be received. Armstrong stated that he had sent letters and bid packets to five potential bidders, with no response from two, questions but no bid from another, and a fourth calling to decline the opportunity to bid. Only one (1) bid was received (Randy's Lawn Care & Snow Removal), which was at the same pricing structure as in 2022. Since Main Street also contracts with Randy's Lawn Care & Snow Removal for maintenance of certain downtown flower pots,

etc., Maki suggested that SSMID simply pay Main Street for the annual services in the SSMID contract and have Main Street manage the entire agreement with Randy's Lawn Care & Snow Removal. Prendergast objected, stating that SSMID funds paid to Main Street would not be acceptable to many business owners. There being no further discussion on the matter, a motion to act on the sole bid was solicited. MOTION by Prendergast to accept the bid for Downtown Cleaning & Floral Maintenance from Randy's Lawn Care & Snow Removal, seconded by O'Brien. Voice Vote (Unanimous).

d. Other. None.

Old Business.

a. Downtown Beautification Infrastructure (flags, benches, flower pots, etc.) - Update (Yeager). Flower pots will be placed and planted in May. Spring flags will be going up at the same time.

b. Other. None.

Lighting Round: Prendergast reported that DDNA is now called "DNA" (Destination Newton Alliance) and has included all areas of the city.

Meeting Adjournment: At 8:50 a.m. - MOTION by Prendergast, seconded by Leber. Voice Vote (Unanimous).