

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

May 9, 2023

ROLL CALL

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: R. O'Brien; 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 8:02 a.m. by Chair O'Brien.

Review of Minutes. The Minutes of the SSMID Board Meeting on February 14, 2023 were reviewed and approved. MOTION by O'Brien, seconded by Prendergast, to approve the Minutes. Voice Vote (Unanimous).

Finance Report. The April 30, 2023 Finance Report was reviewed and approved, following a short discussion of the Ending Fund Balance and a reminder by Armstrong that the SSMID Finance Report is presented on a Fiscal Year basis, while SSMID operates on a calendar year basis. MOTION by Prendergast, seconded by Leber, to approve the Finance Report. Voice Vote (Unanimous).

New Business.

a. Discussion: Venue for SSMID quarterly meeting. O'Brien asked the board if they wanted to move to the Council Chambers where the proceedings of the SSMID board meeting would be broadcast on Mediacom's local access channel and recorded. After some discussion, it was the consensus of board members to have the quarterly SSMID board meetings remain in the large conference room at the City's Legacy Plaza offices.

b. Other. There was a discussion regarding paying for a fall and spring district-wide cleanup. Yeager stated that Main Street would be undertaking the spring cleanup, utilizing staff and persons served from Progress Industries' Dayhab program. No further action was taken.

Old Business.

a. Downtown Beautification Infrastructure (flags, benches, flower pots, etc.) – Spring '23 Update. Yeager reported that the free-standing flower pots have been placed and will be planted this month. Spring flags have already been displayed and all flags for 2023 have been purchased. The benches around the Courthouse Square are not in need of maintenance at this time. Yeager said that no decisions by the Jasper County Board of Supervisors regarding demolition and removal of the concrete have been made to date.

b. Discussion: SSMID projects for 2023 (Hanging Flower Pots, etc.). Armstrong reported that Public Works Director Joe Grife had confirmed that hanging flower baskets on light poles downtown would be permitted, with certain specifications. The board consensus was that the cost of installation, flower plantings and maintenance of the flower pots for all light poles in the SSMID district would not be affordable in consideration of the current and projected financial status of SSMID, and the project will be set aside for this year. O'Brien suggested that we spend the c. \$3,700.00 over budgeted expenses on amenities for Harmony Park such as benches or sculptures. The consensus was to earmark those funds for Harmony Park amenities, with a decision on specific purchases deferred until board members had more specific information on the planned amenities for the park, likely available by early autumn of this year.

c. Christmas Decorations - maintenance status; attachment hardware upgrades (Prendergast). Prendergast estimated that the cost of additional, stouter attachment hardware for the decorations, plus retrofitting each decoration with brighter LED lights, would be c. \$2,000.00. It was further estimated that the decorations would need to be replaced on a rotational basis going forward, and that the replacement cost of two (2) decorations per year would be c. \$1,500.00. MOTION by Prendergast, seconded by O'Brien, to allocate \$2,000.00 for Christmas Decoration attachment hardware, LED lights and maintenance of the fixtures. Voice Vote (Unanimous).

d. Other. None.

Good of the Order. Yeager reported that Newton Main Street is fundraising for renovating/upgrading the alleyway between Aleya and Uncle Nancy's. O'Brien asked the commissioners to consider the possibility of expanding the SSMID district to raise additional funds for district improvement projects, and to come prepared to discuss the concept at the next quarterly SSMID board meeting on Tuesday, August 8.

Adjournment: At 8:54 a.m. - MOTION by O'Brien, seconded by Winchell. Voice Vote (Unanimous).