



**MINUTES OF THE MIDTOWN MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

April 5, 2017

The Board of Directors of the Midtown Management District held a meeting, open to the public, on Wednesday, April 5, 2017, at 11:00 a.m. in the third floor conference room of the Midtown Management District's offices, located at 410 Pierce St., Houston TX 77002, inside the boundaries of the District, and the roll was called of the duly appointed members of the Board, to-wit:

Darcy John Lefsrud	Eileen J. Morris
Amar Mohite	Debbie Tyler Dillard
James Llamas	Dana Woodruff
Willie Coleman	Marylene Chan
Nancy J.W. Darst	William R. Franks
Diane Cervenka	Jesus Davila
Ben Robles	Gary Noble
Allen Douglas	Charles Washington
Jason West	

All of the above were present, thus constituting a quorum.

In addition, present at the meeting were Midtown Staff members Cynthia Alvarado, Kandi Schramm, Marlon Marshall, Amaris Salinas, Matt Thibodeaux, Michelle Ashton, Jonathan Smith and David Thomas; Peggy Foreman of Burney & Foreman; Clark Lord of Bracewell, LLC; Eoles Whitaker, II from State Rep. Garnet Coleman's office; Mechelle Phillips of One World Strategy Group, LLC.; Sgt. Odell Haynes of Precinct 7; S.E.A.L. Security Solutions, LLC officers Paul Reese and Jesse Sampson; Maya Ford of Ford Momentum; Julie Farr, Executive Director of the Houston Museum District; along with Midtown Residents and visitors Thomas Wang, Eric Botts, Linda Stonebraker, Jonathan Smith, James Holston, Ricky Harrison, Elaine Shirley, and Demelrice Taylor.

Cynthia Alvarado called the roll of the Board of Directors and verified that a quorum was present.

Chairman Franks called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE FEBRUARY 1, 2017 BOARD MEETING**
- B. APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE MARCH 1, 2017 BOARD MEETING**
- C. APPROVE FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2017**
- D. APPROVE PAYMENT OF INVOICES FOR MARCH 2017**
- E. APPROVE EQUI-TAX REPORT FOR MARCH 2017**

Director Coleman made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Woodruff and carried by unanimous vote.

SUPPORT FOR CITYWIDE SOLICITATION/PANHANDLING CAMPAIGN

Director Robles gave an overview of the City of Houston's efforts to address issues relating to homelessness and panhandling throughout the City including an anti-panhandling campaign which is a part of the Mayor's holistic six-point plan to eradicate homelessness in Houston. He stated that the campaign is intended to address panhandling by asking citizens to not enable panhandlers by giving money to individuals but rather to contribute to organizations, such as the Homeless Coalition, that are working to help get people off the streets permanently. Director Robles stated that the total cost for the campaign is \$150,000, which will be divided equally among 15 management districts (\$10,000 per district) and that the money would be used to develop an iPhone App for contributions to support the efforts to provide permanent housing, produce PSAs and for billboards. He reported that the Public Safety Committee is recommending approval of the \$10,000 to support this campaign.

Director Robles made a motion to approve \$10,000 in funding for the City's Solicitation/Panhandling campaign. The motion was seconded by Director Coleman. Following all discussion, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

RECEIVE COMMITTEE ACTIVITY REPORTS AND REVIEW, DISCUSS AND TAKE NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING THE FOLLOWING, AS APPROPRIATE:

A. Public Safety Committee – Ben Robles, Chair

Director Robles reported that there was a good turnout for the March 2017 Public Safety Committee meeting which was held at Crime Stoppers' Dave Ward building. He thanked Crimestoppers for hosting the meeting at their new facility.

Director Robles reported that Operations Manager, Cynthia Alvarado continues to represent Midtown and work with the City on the homeless initiative. He also reported on the Dark Block Project which is being led by Director Jason West the goal of which is to identify areas in the District with no lighting or low lighting, or where there is a need to trim tree branches near street lights. Director Davila recommended a recent Kinder Institute study that examined issues relating to lighting and demographics, which he volunteered to share with the Committee.

Director Chan reviewed the Tableau monthly report and advised the Board that the data shows that most incidents can be attributed to a few locations in Midtown. Chairman Franks thanked Director Chan for her hard work on the Tableau report and highlighted its usefulness in identifying "hotspots", which can be used to help focus the attention of law enforcement officers and S.E.A.L. Security Solutions, LLC (S.E.A.L.) officers. Director Noble stated that he was pleased that Midtown businesses are calling S.E.A.L. for help with dealing with trespassers and panhandlers at their locations.

Director Robles stated that Committee members are carefully reviewing the monthly reports from S.E.A.L. and are looking at criteria for evaluating their performance. He invited Board members to share any information, thoughts and recommendations they would like the Committee to consider.

Director Tyler-Dillard announced that the County Attorney's office sought and was successful in obtaining a temporary injunction against Club Life.

Finally, Director Robles announced that “Coffee with a Cop” is scheduled for Friday, April 14, 2017 from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. at Bagby Park and that the next Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, April 18, 2017 at 11:30 a.m.

B. Marketing and Economic Development Committee– Debbie Tyler Dillard, Chair

Director Tyler-Dillard reported that almost all of the remaining Midtown newspapers have been distributed and the Committee is working on a summer edition to be published in July 2017, after the opening of Midtown Park. She stated that the Committee ran an ad in the *Houston Press*' restaurant edition which had a wide distribution. Finally, Director Tyler-Dillard stated that the Committee is engaged in planning for the Midtown Awards. She announced that the next Committee meeting is Wednesday, April 19th at 4:00 p.m.

C. Service and Maintenance Committee – Darcy Lefsrud, Chair

Director Lefsrud reported that Phase I of the sidewalk project has been completed and that the Committee is compiling locations for Phase II. He also stated that the Committee is working on a partnership with Midtown Parks Conservancy to increase the number of hours that the graffiti abatement team will work in Midtown from four (4) to eight (8) hours per month. Finally, he reported that efforts are still underway to work with Trees for Houston to bring more trees to Midtown. Director Lefsrud announced that the next Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 17th at 3:30 p.m.

D. Urban Planning Committee – J. Allen Douglas, Chair

Michelle Ashton reported that the March 2017 Committee meeting was held in the offices of Powers Brown Architects and included a presentation of a proposal for the Pierce SkyPark. She stated that approximately 45 community members attended the meeting and overwhelmingly expressed support for the project. Ms. Ashton reported that Page Architects are currently finalizing a plan for an economic study to help solidify community and political support for the project and that the Committee will continue to monitor the project and be actively engaged as the plan develops.

Ms. Ashton announced that Plan Downtown will hold a neighboring connectivity workshop as part of the next Committee meeting on Thursday, April 20th at 6:00 p.m. at Trinity Midtown (1015 Holman St., Houston, TX 77004) and that the Committee is working to host a presentation from TXDOT on the I-69 cap and other relevant projects at either the May or June Committee meeting.

Director Darst stated that she and Thomas Wang are still working on a business plan for a Farmer's Market in Midtown. She stated that they have talked with Urban Harvest about developing the project and that the Committee is recommending approval of a \$500 consulting fee to Urban Harvest to provide technical help with the business plan and to explore possible funding sources for the Farmer's Market.

Ms. Ashton reported that the Committee is exploring the possibility of working with Midtown Redevelopment Authority and Design Workshop on a strategic plan for Midtown and that more information will be presented at future meetings.

Finally, Ms. Ashton announced that the Committee is sponsoring a bike ride led by BikeHouston on Saturday, April 15, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. starting and ending at Bagby Park. She stated that the ride will showcase how to access neighboring communities safely, including Downtown, Buffalo Bayou, and Montrose. She stated that more information is available on the website and social media and invited everyone to come out and join the ride.

E. Cultural Arts and Entertainment – Eileen Morris, Chair

i. 2017 MIDTOWN ART IN THE PARK

Director Morris reported that Art in the Park 2017 was a huge success with approximately 2,000–2,500 attendees. She stated that there were 44 booths with 45 diverse artists participating and six (6) musical performances. She reported that there has been great feedback about the musicians and the quality of the art offered. Cynthia Alvarado thanked Central Bank and Cultural Collision for their sponsorship of the event. She also thanked Gail Mebane for her work curating the artists along with participating Midtown arts organizations including the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Bayou City Performance, The Ensemble Theatre, Harambee Art Gallery, and Community Artists' Collective. Director Washington commented that changing the date of Art in the Park 2017 so as not to conflict with certain other longstanding Houston events was helpful and that as an artist he thought the event was fantastic.

ii. LETTER OF SUPPORT COMMUNITY ARTISTS' COLLECTIVE

Ms. Alvarado stated that the Community Artists' Collective is proposing a temporary public art installation in front of their building that honors quilting for the International Quilt Festival. She stated that the Board has been asked to offer a letter of support for their grant application to the Texas Commission on the Arts. Director Morris stated that the Cultural Arts and Entertainment Committee considered the request and is recommending approval. Director Coleman made a motion to issue a letter of support for the project as requested. The motion was seconded by Director Washington. Following all discussion, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Director Morris shared that the Mother's Day Market will be held on Friday, May 12, 2017 in Bagby Park and will include curated artists selling gifts appropriate for Mother's day. She invited all to attend the next Committee meeting on Tuesday, April 18th at 3:30 p.m.

F. Finance Committee – Marylene Chan, Chair

Director Chan reported that 93% of the assessment revenue has been collected. She stated that the District is still awaiting receipt of the electricity bill from the City, and that 2017 expenditures are within budget. David Thomas reported that the auditors are finalizing their work and that a draft audit report should be issued soon..

Director Chan stated that the Committee received a presentation from Jim Webb of The Goodman Corporation and is looking at opportunities for the District to find available grant funding for Committee projects. Director Chan stated that she will reach out to Committee chairs for a short list of four (4) to five (5) specific programs that might be eligible for grant funding.

ii. Executive Committee – William Franks, Chair

Chairman Franks stated that he is pleased with the Committees' work and thanked everyone for their efforts to improve Midtown.

REPORT ON CAPITAL PROJECTS OF THE MIDTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (MRA).

Marlon Marshall presented the following report on the status of the current MRA capital improvement projects:

Midtown Park Project – The construction crew is currently finishing detail work on the water feature, bayou plumbing, dog park, game courts, and site preparation for artwork installations. The park is expected to be open to the public in mid to late June 2017. Planning is underway for opening festivities in the park.

Caroline St. Project – TXDoT accepted bids yesterday. The lowest bid received is within the amount budgeted for the project. TXDoT will review the bids and the Staff anticipates that the contract for the project will be awarded in the next 30 days with construction to begin in the fall of 2017.

Holman St. Project – The contractors are scheduling inspections and completing punchlist items. Landscaping is on hold until the City completes installation of water meters.

Main St. Project – Work is progressing between Holman St. and Elgin St., including sidewalk demolition. Flaggers from METRO are now available so the contractors will be able to restart work in the median.

WITH RESPECT TO THE FOREGOING AGENDA ITEMS, CONDUCT AN EXECUTIVE SESSION WITH REGARDS TO THE FOLLOWING, AS APPROPROATE AND NECESSARY.

- a. **Consultation with attorney (Section 551.071, Texas Government Code);**
- b. **Personnel matters (Section 551.074, Texas Government Code).**

The Board did not conduct an executive session at this meeting.

PRESENTATION: DISTRICT WIDE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY – FORD MOMENTUM

Maya Ford of Ford Momentum presented the methodology and results of the District-wide Community Outreach and Engagement Survey that ran from October 15, 2016 until January 15, 2017 and gave the following report:

Qualtrics was the vendor used to administer the survey and perform analysis of the results. Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous, unless participants wanted a copy of the survey mailed to them or registered to win gift cards which were given randomly to encourage participation in the survey. Street teams, social media, postcard mailings, eblasts, and the website were used to share the survey. 1,600 people responded, with 1,480 completing the full survey.

The survey was organized into five (5) segments, including communication preferences, priorities, organizational literacy, demographics, and satisfaction. The survey showed high communication preferences for mail, email, and social media. This information helped influence the new editions of the Midtown newspaper. The priorities participants identified were safety, service and maintenance, parks, and cleanliness. Organizational literacy is important to measure since it informs how and what we need to communicate about each affiliated organization; 73% of participants were familiar with MRA activities, 44% were familiar with MMD activities, and 57% were familiar with MPC activities. Demographics were informative: 43% of respondents live in Midtown and the majority identified as single, Anglo, educated, millennial females over several income brackets. Finally, satisfaction questions demonstrated that respondents are dissatisfied with overall communication and engagement, but moderately satisfied about communication around specific programs and services.

Ms. Ford stated that the survey points to several areas of opportunity for Midtown and pointed out that many of the recommendations are already being implemented by the Midtown Staff. Ms. Ford stated that she and her staff will continue to review and study the data to best leverage it to improve transparency and communication.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Clark Lord updated the Board on a recent Texas Senate Committee hearing on proposed legislation, which would have a significant impact on TIRZs. He stated that there was a good showing of attendees at the meeting who opposed the bills and were supportive of TIRZs.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Midtown Management District Board of Directors meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 3, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. at Central Bank Houston, 2217 Milam St., Houston, TX 77002.

ADJOURN

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.



Eileen J. Morris, Board Secretary

Date: 5/3/17