



**MINUTES**

**MIDTOWN MANAGEMENT DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**October 4, 2023**

The Board of Directors of the Midtown Management District held a regular meeting, open to the public, on Wednesday, October 4, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. in the **1<sup>st</sup> Floor conference room of the Midtown Management District's offices** located at **410 Pierce Street, Houston, Texas 77002**, inside the boundaries of the District and the roll was called of the duly appointed members of the Board, to-wit:

|        |                        |         |                          |
|--------|------------------------|---------|--------------------------|
| Pos. 1 | Darcy John Lefsrud     | Pos. 10 | Daniel Arguijo           |
| Pos. 2 | Gloria Haney           | Pos. 11 | Debbie Tyler-Dillard     |
| Pos. 3 | Vacant                 | Pos. 12 | Muddassir Siddiqi, Ed.D. |
| Pos. 4 | James Llamas           | Pos. 13 | Marylene Chan            |
| Pos. 5 | Ryan M. LeVasseur      | Pos. 14 | Christopher Johnston     |
| Pos. 6 | Maggie Segrich         | Pos. 15 | Jeanette Criglar, Ph.D.  |
| Pos. 7 | Desmond Bertrand-Pitts | Pos. 16 | Kelly A. Young           |
| Pos. 8 | Lewis Goldstein        | Pos. 17 | Vacant                   |
| Pos. 9 | J. Allen Douglas       |         |                          |

All of the above were present except Directors Douglas and Siddiqi.

In addition, present at the meeting, Katina Midtown Staff members Matt Thibodeaux, Cynthia Alvarado, Vernon Williams, Kandi Schramm, David Thomas, Amaris Salinas, Jaime Giraldo, Mechelle Phillips, Marlon Marshall, and Chrystal Robinson-Davis; CPA Consultant Melissa Morton (via video conference), Peggy Foreman of Burney and Foreman, Clark Lord of Bracewell, LLP, Ashely Small of Medley, Inc., Jeri Brooks of One World Strong, Mya Ford of Ford Momentum (via video conference), Katina Baldwin of Coalition for the Homeless and Clinton Turner and Jennifer Gribble of Super Neighborhood #62.

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND VERIFY THAT A QUORUM IS PRESENT.**

Chair Lefsrud called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

Mrs. Robinson-Davis called the roll of the Board of Directors and verified that a quorum was present.

**2. RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Katina Baldwin of the Coalition of the Homeless introduced herself and invited the Board to attend a Coalition for the Homeless corporate mixer. The event will occur at Brenner's Steakhouse on November 16, 2023, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. She stated a formal invitation will come forth via email to the staff after the board meeting.

**3. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE SEPTEMBER 6, 2023, BOARD MEETING.**
- B. APPROVE FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2023.**
- C. APPROVE PAYMENT OF INVOICES FOR SEPTEMBER 2023.**
- D. APPROVE EQUI-TAX REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2023.**
- E. APPROVE THE AMENDED EQUI-TAX REPORT FOR AUGUST 2023**
- F. RATIFY LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD ACCESS AND EQUITY CAPITAL GRANT APPLICATION**

Ms. Alvarado presented the various items on the Consent Agenda. She stated that the District's Assessor/Collector, Equi-Tax, reported to the staff that during a review, it came to their attention that one of the entries on the District's Assessment Collection Report for August 2023 was incorrect. Specifically, the number showing the year-to-date 2021 Assessment Collected as (\$11,274.92) on the original report was incorrect and has been changed on the "Corrected Report" to (\$11,204.78). A copy of the corrected report is in the Board Packet.

Director Haney made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Tyler-Dillard and carried by a majority vote.

**4. REVIEW, DISCUSS AND TAKE NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING AND ORDER SETTING THE RATE OF ASSESSMENT FOR YEAR NINE OF THE SERVICE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND ASSESSMENT PLAN (2015-2024).**

Director Young stated that the current assessment rate is \$0.1181 per \$100 of assessed valuation. She stated that based on the preliminary budget, the Finance Committee was recommending that the rate of assessment for year Nine (9) of the Service and Improvement Plan and Assessment Plan

remain the same. Peggy Foreman presented the Order Setting the Rate of Assessment. Director Criglar made the motion to approve the assessment rate of 0.1181. The motion was seconded by Director Segrich. Following all discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

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

**A. Service and Maintenance Committee – Christopher Johnston, Chair**

Director Johnston presented the Service and Maintenance Committee report. There were no action items. He reported that the Midtown Field Services Team has continued their regular schedule of landscape maintenance, trash and debris removal, along with bi-weekly power washing in the public right of ways within the District. He further reported that the Midtown Maintenance Team is working on additional repairs to the irrigation system and the dome lights in Baldwin Park. Director Johnston also reported that the MRA has been in conversation with Center Point regarding lighting in the District. CenterPoint is updating data and mapping existing lights and plans for locations where lighting could be added. Also, CenterPoint is working with manufacturers and anticipates that within the next 30-45 days it will install pilot luminaires to test and observe lighting differences. Director Johnston announced that he asked representatives of the Midtown Super Neighborhood #62 to advise the District of particular locations where pilot luminaires could be installed. He stated that the Committee is waiting to receive feedback from the City of Houston regarding the proposed Urban Forestry Management Plan for Baldwin Park. Director Johnston also reported that the Committee is working to finalize its budget requests for projects for FY 2024. Finally, Director Johnston reminded everyone that the next Service and Maintenance Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 16, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

**B. Urban Planning Committee – James Llamas, Chair**

Director Llamas presented the Urban Planning Committee report. There were no action items. The Letter of Support included in the board packet and approved as item “F”. He reported that the Committee also received a report regarding the status of procurement of an on-call contractor to assist with the completion of several pending projects. Director Llamas reminded the Board that the next Urban Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 16, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

**i. Midtown Parking Benefit District Advisory Committee**

Director Llamas reminded the Board that the Midtown Parking Benefit District Advisory Committee is charged with recommending projects to be funded with a portion of parking meter revenues generated within the District in accordance with the provisions of a city ordinance and an interlocal agreement between Midtown Management District and the City of Houston. The Advisory Committee met on Thursday, September 14, 2023, to discuss implementation of a the previously

recommended and approved Loud Noise Overtime Initiative by the South-Central Division of the Houston Police Department (HPD). Commander Caroleta Johnson and other representatives of HPD, South Central Division answered questions regarding operations and reporting under the Loud Noise Overtime Initiative. The Advisory Committee also received a report from Midtown Redevelopment Authority's consultants regarding pending capital projects and potential opportunities to fund certain portions of the projects. Director Llamas stated that the Advisory Committee is gathering information regarding several other potential projects being considered for funding. He invited board members and others to submit any and all project ideas for future consideration by the Advisory Committee. The next Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 12, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

#### **C. Marketing & Economic Development Committee – Debbie Tyler-Dillard, Chair**

Director Tyler-Dillard presented the Marketing & Economic Development Committee report. There were no action items. She reported that the Staff is currently drafting a letter regarding District activities for inclusion with the annual assessment billing statement to be mailed to Midtown property owners in October/November 2023. Director Tyler-Dillard also reported that the 10-Year Impact Report is anticipated to be completed in March 2024.

Ms. Ashley Small of Medley, Inc., reported on the social media numbers and media placements and impact for August 2023. She stated that there were 8 media placements and a media reach of approximately 2 million viewers/readers, with a total publicity value of \$31,000. She stated that the top media placements were ATG News and Travel Pulse. She also gave a brief explanation of how the publicity value of media placements was determined.

Finally, Director Tyler-Dillard announced that the next Marketing & Economic Development Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 17, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.

#### **D. Cultural Arts & Entertainment Committee – Desmond Bertrand-Pitts, Chair**

Director Bertrand-Pitts presented the Cultural Arts & Entertainment Committee report. There were no action items. He reported that the application deadline for vendors to participate in the 2023 Mistletoe Market event was October 2, 2023 and that of the 35 applicants, 32 vendors were accepted for participation in the event. He stated that the Committee is still waiting for the announcement of recipients of the Bloomberg Public Art Challenge grant. Director Bertrand-Pitts reminded the Board that the Hispanic Heritage Month Midtown Sign Wrap was installed on Thursday, September 7, 2023, and will be on display at Bagby Park until Monday, October 23, 2023. Finally, he announced that the next Cultural Arts & Entertainment Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 17, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.

#### **E. Finance Committee – Kelly Young, Chair**

Ms. Melissa Morton presented the financial reports on behalf of Director Young for August 2023. She summarized the written financial reports and the Equi-Tax assessment and collections report for August 2023. Director Young stated that the Committee and Staff

continue to work with the various committees on the budget requests for FY 2024. Finally, Director Young announced that the next Finance Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, at 11:00 a.m.

#### **F. Community Activity Report – Christopher Johnston, Liaison**

##### **i. Super Neighborhood #62**

Director Johnston announced that Super Neighborhood #62 resumed its monthly meetings on September 14, 2023. The meetings will be held at South Main Baptist Church. There was general discussion regarding various neighborhood issues. He stated that the next meeting is on October 12, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. and that certain City Council members have been invited to attend a forum on issues affecting the Midtown community.

#### **G. Public Safety Committee – Jeanette Criglar, Chair**

Mr. Jamie Giraldo presented the Public Safety Committee report on behalf of Director Criglar. There were no action items. He announced that National Night Out and Coffee With a Cop were canceled due to the inclement weather. He reported that he was able to get refunds or credits on most of the food and equipment ordered for the event, however, food ordered from one vendor which could not be cancelled was being sent to the police and fire stations in the area as a thank you to Midtown's first responders. Mr. Giraldo shared information regarding various public safety efforts throughout the District. He stated that using the services of an additional SEAL Security officer to help address excessive loitering on sidewalks had made an observable difference in certain locations in the District. Mr. Giraldo announced that the HPD Noise Ordinance Overtime Initiative is expected to start operations within the next 30 days.

Director Criglar stated that she has observed noticeable improvements in the noise levels at certain bars/clubs. Additionally, the number of people occupying the sidewalks seems to have decreased and fewer resident complaints are being lodged at the monthly Public Safety Committee meetings. She said the Committee and staff are looking at ways to highlight and thank those bars/clubs/restaurants that are being good neighbors and abiding by the sound ordinance requirements in an effort to improve quality of life in Midtown.

Director Criglar announced that the next Public Safety Committee meeting is on Tuesday, October 17, 2023, at 11:30 a.m.

#### **H. Service and Improvement Plan – Jeanette Criglar, Co-Chair Kelly A. Young, Co-Chair**

Jeri Brooks of One World Strong Strategy Group reported that she and Maya Ford of Ford Momentum are currently working on drafting a survey for the community. The questions that inform the survey are based on the feedback received from the recently held Focus Groups. She stated that the Focus Groups were relatively well attended, and that good feedback was

provided. Ms. Alvarado reported that a QR Code that links to the survey will be included with the annual assessment billing being sent to all Midtown property owners. She asked that the QR Code for the survey not be shared publicly or on social media, since this survey is designed specifically for Midtown property owners and stakeholders who have a vested financial interest in the continued success of the community. Ms. Brooks announced that the Midtown community survey will be available beginning Friday, October 6, 2023, and continue through Saturday, November 11, 2023. The data from the survey will be aggregated by the end of December 2023, and the Board can determine when and how it will be made available for the public.

#### **I. Executive Committee – Darcy Lefsrud, Chair**

Chair Lefsrud stated that all matters discussed at the Executive Committee meeting were addressed in the various other Committee activity reports.

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

Mr. Marlon Marshall presented the following reports regarding the status of current Midtown Redevelopment Authority capital improvement projects:

**Caroline Street** – The Design team is awaiting a response from the City of Houston on review of pilot areas identified to implement proposed corrections to punch list items not addressed by the TxDOT contractor. The City of Houston has approved and accepted the cathodic protection system for the new water line.

**Brazos Street** – The Design team is continuing to work on plans for public engagement regarding the project. An online survey is being drafted and is targeted to occur in October 2023.

**Brazos Street Bridge Landscape Improvements** – Contractors are targeting mobilization for construction during the week of October 16, 2023. The project will enhance the landscaped area at the Bagby and Elgin intersection into the green space adjacent to the Brazos Bridge facing Bagby Street. The scope of work includes tree planting, shrub and groundcover planting, site cleanup, irrigation, traffic control, and reinstallation of existing signage.

#### **PARTNER PROJECTS**

**Safe Street and Roads for All** – Projects are moving forward through the Design Concept Review process with the City of Houston.

**Parks and Public Spaces Master Plan** –A planning meeting was held with the Mayor’s Office of Special Events to discuss a proposed temporary installation project near Midtown Park incorporating some of the recommendations from the approved plan. METRO requested additional information regarding the proposed Main Street closures.

**Gray Street Buffer designs** – An on-call pavement marking and maintenance services re-advertisement is scheduled for first advertisement on October 6, 2023. Proposals for the project are due on October 24, 2024.

**Urban Forestry Plan** – The plan is awaiting review and approval from the City of Houston Forestry Department on the proposed priority pruning and the fertilization plan. Pending City approval, work will be performed and documented in the final version of the plan.

**Mill and Overlay of Streets** – The City of Houston has completed the mill and overlay segment of the Capital Mill and Overlay project and is working on striping to complete the project.

**North Houston Highway Improvement Project** – The Design Team presented conceptual designs for the Caroline/Wheeler Deck Park to the MRA Board. The TxDOT project schedule requires a decision by December 2023 for additional infrastructure to be included in the final project design, therefore, TxDOT is requesting a commitment from MRA regarding financial participation relating to the Caroline/Wheeler Deck Park project.

**7. WITH RESPECT TO THE FOREGOING AGENDA ITEMS, THE BOARD MAY CONDUCT AN EXECUTIVE SESSION WITH REGARD TO THE FOLLOWING AS APPROPRIATE AND NECESSARY**

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

The Board convened in a closed Executive Session at 12:10 p.m. The Board ended the closed Executive Session at 12:44 p.m.

**8. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

NEXT MEETING DATE

Chair Lefsrud announced that the next Midtown Management District Board of Directors meeting will be held on **Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.**

There were no other announcements.

**9. ADJOURN**

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

  
Marylene Chan  
Secretary

11/1/23  
Date