



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

August 5, 2020

The Board of Directors of the Midtown Management District held a regular meeting, open to the public, on Wednesday, August 5, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. via video and telephonic conferencing, and the roll was called of the duly appointed members of the Board, to-wit:

Pos. 1	Darcy John Lefsrud	Pos. 10	Eileen J. Morris
Pos. 2	Gloria Haney	Pos. 11	Debbie Tyler Dillard
Pos. 3	Amar Mohite	Pos. 12	Dana Woodruff
Pos. 4	James Llamas	Pos. 13	Marylene Chan
Pos. 5	Willie H. Coleman	Pos. 14	Christopher Johnston
Pos. 6	Nancy J.W. Darst	Pos. 15	Herbert Baker
Pos. 7	Julie Tilton	Pos. 16	Gary Noble
Pos. 8	Vacant	Pos. 17	Charles Washington
Pos. 9	J. Allen Douglas		

All of the above were present except Director Coleman thus constituting a quorum.

In addition, present at the meeting were Midtown Staff members Matt Thibodeaux, Kandi Schramm, Vernon Williams, Mark Sullivan, Cynthia Alvarado, Marlon Marshall, David Thomas, Madeline Peña and Mark Leija; Clark Lord of Bracewell LLP; Peggy Foreman of Burney & Foreman; Linda Treviño of Metropolitan Transit Authority; Michael Nichols, CEO; Jessica Preheim, Vice President of Strategic Planning and Public Affairs, and Anna Rausch, Vice President of Operations of the from the Coalition for the Homeless Houston,; Roland Altinger, Chief Appraiser of the Harris County Appraisal District; and Midtown residents, Jim Honey, and Kay Walton.

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

Chair Morris called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS

Linda Treviño of the Metropolitan Transit Authority (“METRO”) introduced herself and stated that she would include her contact information in the chat box if attendees wanted to contact her after the meeting regarding matters related to METRO.

Jim Honey stated that he feels that he has not been provided an opportunity to have more input into the Public Safety Committee's efforts to address crime in Midtown.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE JULY 1, 2020 BOARD MEETING**
- B. APPROVE FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE 2020**
- C. APPROVE PAYMENT OF INVOICES FOR JULY 2020**
- D. APPROVE EQUI-TAX REPORT FOR JULY 2020**
- E. RATIFY LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR PROPOSED WALKABLE PLACES ORDINANCE AND ITS IMPLIMENTATION AS A MIDTOWN PILOT AREA.**

Ms. Alvarado presented the consent agenda. Director Noble made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Haney and carried by unanimous vote.

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

A. Service and Maintenance – Darcy John Lefsrud, Chair

Director Lefsrud reported on the activities of the Service and Maintenance Committee. He stated that the Field Services Team continues to work throughout the District in accordance with the regular maintenance schedule. He reported that CenterPoint has started working on installing additional lighting in the community as part of the Dark Blocks Project. He further reported that the tree trimming efforts are going well throughout the District.

Director Lefsrud also reported that there were 136 responses to the online survey to seek public input regarding the request for additional playground equipment at Baldwin Park. He stated that the survey responses were given to the design team to begin the process of identifying and acquiring appropriate playground equipment. Finally, Director Lefsrud stated that the Committee is also working on its FY 2021 budget requests which will include plans for lighting upgrades in Baldwin and Glover Parks.

B. Cultural Arts and Entertainment Committee – Eileen Morris, Chair

Chair Morris reported on activities of the Cultural Arts and Entertainment Committee. She reminded Board members and attendees that each of the Committees would be working to finalize their respective budget requests during August and September. She stated that anyone is welcome to attend any of the Committee meetings and offer ideas and input. She encouraged Midtown residents, and business owners and property owners to participate in the Committees' budget process, so that community voices can be heard.

Chair Morris reported on matters discussed at the combined meeting of the Cultural Arts and Marketing and Economic Development Committees. She reminded the Board that the Committee was in the process of accepting, reviewing and evaluating applications and making recommendations to award \$35,000.00 in MidtownHOU Arts Micro Grants to cultural arts organizations and individual artists. She stated that the money for the MidtownHOU Arts Micro Grants is coming from a City of Houston grant awarded to the MRA and administered by the District. Chair Morris also reported that the Committee is working with 2 local artists for

installation of two new mini murals in the District and that plans are underway to make the 2020 Mistletoe Market a virtual event.

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

Director Tyler-Dillard reported that the staff is continuing to work on editing the Spring/Summer 2020 digital edition of the Midtown Buzz. She also reported that the staff is working on four unique short videos that highlight the work of certain committees and showcase different aspects of the District. Director Tyler-Dillard stated that the videos are part of a larger effort to market the Midtown Community. She announced that the next meeting will also be a combined meeting with the Cultural Arts & Entertainment Committee and will be held on Tuesday, August 18, 2020 at 3:30 p.m.

D. Urban Planning Committee – Allen Douglas, Chair

Director Douglas reported on the activities of the Urban Planning Committee. He stated that the Committee is continuing to work on the STEPS program, which is an initiative to install certain pedestrian enhancements designed to increase and promote pedestrian safety at intersections in Midtown. He reminded the Board that two intersections have been identified for an initial pilot project.

Director Llamas reported that the Houston City Council adopted the Walkable Places Ordinance with Midtown as the Pilot Community. He explained that future development in Midtown will have to comply with certain design elements to promote and encourage walkability. Director Llamas thanked everyone who worked on the effort over the past three and a half years and stated that he believes that implementation of the Walkable Places Ordinance will garner national attention for Midtown.

Director Douglas announced that the next meeting will be held virtually on August 20, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

E. Finance and Budget Committee – Dana Woodruff, Chair

Director Woodruff gave the Finance Committee report. She reported that according to Equi-Tax Inc., approximately 98% of 2019 assessments have been collected as of July 31, 2020.

She also reported that there were no significant deviations from the current FY 2020 budget, except for certain funds that were not spent due to the cancellation of certain events due to COVID 19.

Director Woodruff stated that the various committees are working on their respective budget request for Fiscal Year 2021 and reminded everyone of the budget timeline which included a schedule of events and the necessary deadlines to allow for timely approval of the Fiscal Year 2021 budget.

i. FY 2019 AUDIT PRESENTATION

David Thomas introduced Jessica Ortiz and Alyssa Hill of Carr Riggs Ingram who presented the Fiscal Year 2019 Audit and advised the Board that the District received a clean opinion and that no material weaknesses or usual entries were found. Ms. Ortiz described the process used

to conduct the Audit, walked through the Audit report, and answered questions from Board members.

Director Douglas made a motion to accept the Fiscal Year 2019 Audit as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Baker. Following all discussion, the motion carried by unanimous vote.

F. Community Activity Report – Christopher Johnston, Liaison

i. SUPER NEIGHBORHOOD #62

Director Johnston stated that he attended the July 9, 2020 meeting of Super Neighborhood #62, which featured a presentation from Wayne Young, Executive Director of The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD regarding the Diversion Center and the services provided to persons with substance abuse and mental health issues. Director Johnston reported that other speakers at the Super Neighborhood #62 meeting included Michele Onken of the Harris County District Attorney’s Office who provided information regarding the process used for referrals to the Diversion Center and Heather Cook from City Attorney’s Office, who spoke about State statutes which can be used to help address and abate nuisances on certain properties in the neighborhood.

Finally, Director Johnston reported that Director Llamas also attended the meeting and provided information regarding proposed design enhancements for the Tuam Street Water Line Improvement Project.

G. Public Safety – Willie Coleman, Chair

i. SECURITY COORDINATOR’S REPORT

Security Coordinator Mark Leija reported on various public safety issues impacting the Midtown Community and efforts to address those issues. Some examples of issues addressed include unsecured dangerous buildings, increases in burglary of motor vehicles in certain sections of the District, and an increase in graffiti within the District.

Mr. Leija stated that he continues to meet and communicate with the Command Staff and officers for the various law enforcement agencies and SEAL Security regarding public safety issues in Midtown. He reported that officers with the various law enforcement agencies and SEAL Security officers continue to implement anti-crime initiatives, patrol the District, reach out to businesses and respond to calls for service.

Director Llamas stated that certain correspondence was provided to him by the manager of a Midtown business regarding the increase in burglaries of motor vehicles in the area surrounding his business. Mr. Leija and Ms. Alvarado reported that they had been in contact with the manager regarding the situation and described their efforts to assist by asking for increased patrols in the area and offering to provide Midtown’s Take It Lock It signs which could be posted on the exterior of his building. Ms. Alvarado reported that unfortunately the business owner declined to have the signage posted on his building.

Finally, Mr. Leija announced that the next Public Safety Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 18, 2020 at 11:30 a.m.

H. Nomination Committee – Nancy Darst, Chair

Director Darst reported that due to changed circumstances, Terry Puster, one of the candidates recommended for appointment to the Board, had to withdraw his name from consideration because he no longer met the qualifications to serve on the Board. Director Darst stated that the Committee will meet to consider the current and potential Board vacancies and determine how it will proceed with efforts to identify potential candidates to serve on the Board.

Chair Morris asked Board members and attendees to help spread the word that the District would soon be accepting resumes of prospective qualified candidates for consideration to serve on the Board.

I. Executive Committee – Eileen Morris, Chair

Chair Morris reminded the Board and staff that Clark Lord of Bracewell will be making several small group presentations regarding board governance and other matters in August 2020. She reported that most Board members indicated they would attend one of the presentations. She thanked Board members and staff for all of their hard work on behalf of Midtown.

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

Marlon Marshall gave the following report on the status of current Midtown Redevelopment Authority capital improvement projects:

Bagby Park. The Contractor is making progress on the construction of the storage building and restrooms. The underground utilities for the storage building and restrooms have been installed, the slab has been poured and framing has begun. The kiosk tenant, La Calle, is moving forward with some modifications and anticipates opening in the fall of 2020.

Caroline Street Reconstruction. The Contractor is making steady progress on the initial paving phase. Traffic has been switched to the newly paved section on the east side between Elgin and Dennis Streets. Paving continues on the east lanes between Dennis and McGowen Streets. Pending work includes the relocation of a manhole cover by AT&T, roadway excavation on the west lanes between Elgin and McGowen.

Other Pending Projects. Midtown staff met with City's Public Works Department representatives to discuss adding certain design improvements including bicycle facilities and other pedestrian enhancements to the City's Tuam Street Water Line Improvement Project. Based on the initial meetings, the City's representatives are receptive to expanding the project to incorporate the bicycle facilities and other pedestrian enhancements recommended by the District's Urban Planning Committee. The Midtown staff has reached out to Harris County Precinct One Commissioner Rodney Ellis' office to discuss a potential partnership with Harris County to fund a portion of the cost of the requested improvements and is awaiting a response.

Midtown consultant, Walter P. Moore, is wrapping up the initial design plans for certain pedestrian enhancements to improve pedestrian safety at intersections in Midtown. Once completed, the designs for pedestrian safety enhancements will be presented at a future Board meeting.

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).**

There was no executive session.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

PRESENTATIONS

Roland Altinger –Chief Appraiser - Harris County Appraisal District

Mr. Altinger gave a brief presentation regarding the role and function of the Harris County Appraisal District (HCAD). He explained how business is currently being conducted at HCAD in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, including how informal and formal tax protests are being processed. Mr. Altinger answered questions from Board members and others in attendance.

Jessica Preheim – Vice President of Strategic Planning & Public Affairs – Coalition for the Homeless

Ms. Preheim gave a presentation about the Coalition for the Homeless and the actions being taken to minimize homelessness in Houston and Harris County. She shared information about the recently announced \$65M partnership between the City of Houston and Harris County which has a goal of housing 5,000 homeless individuals over the next 2 years in order to reduce homelessness and help limit the spread of COVID-19 in Houston and Harris County.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Chair Morris advised the Board that the next Midtown Management District Board of Directors meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 2, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. via video and telephonic conferencing.

ADJOURN

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

DocuSigned by:

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Marylene Chan, Board Secretary

9/2/2020

Date

