



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

**August 2, 2017**

The Board of Directors of the Midtown Management District held a regular meeting, open to the public, on Wednesday, August 2, 2017, at 6:00 p.m. in The Ensemble Theatre, located at 3535 Main 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
Ben Robles	Jesus Davila
Allen Douglas	Gary Noble
Jason West	Charles Washington

All of the above were present, except for Directors Morris and Chan, thus constituting a quorum.

In addition, present at the meeting were Midtown Staff members Cynthia Alvarado, Michelle Ashton, Marlon Marshall, Vernon Williams, and Matt Thibodeaux; Peggy Foreman of Burney & Foreman; Mechelle Phillips of One World Strategy Group, LLC.; Eoles Whitaker II of Representative Garnet Coleman's office; Sgt. Odell Haynes, Deputy Karen Jordan and Deputy Tanita Roe of Precinct 7 Constable's office; Jesse Sampson and Paul Reese of S.E.A.L. Security Solutions, LLC.; André Wagner of Councilmember Dwight Boykins' office; Ngam Nguyen of Councilmember Ellen Cohen's office, Bert Baker of Central Bank Houston, Theola Petteway, Executive Director of OST/Alameda Redevelopment Authority (TIRZ #7); Gary Bernard, General Manager of 2016 Main, Gail Mebane of Harambee Gallery and Elia and Noah Quiles of UPART Studios and Midtown residents and guests, Thomas Wang, Robert Clark, Richard Greene, Lynda Guidry, Anderson Stouth, Oneigi Mims, Ernesto Hilbarrana Dan Lasell, Steven Hadley, Emma Alexander, Christopher Johnston, Karen Jacob, Gayle Fortson, Leo Kuzadinos, Mo Robinson, Art Smart, and Derek Shelton.

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

Chair Franks called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

**RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Derek Shelton, a Midtown resident, thanked the Board members for their service on the Board. He expressed concern about the traffic on Heiner St. and Gray St. He stated that he had some low-cost solutions to traffic issues as well as some ideas to improve drainage, and pick-up of trash and dog waste that he would like to share with Board members following the meeting.

André Wagner brought greetings from Councilmember Boykins and extended the Councilmember's apology for not being able to attend personally. Mr. Wagner stated that the District D Council office is always available to respond to citizen's concerns.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE JULY 5, 2017 BOARD MEETING**
- B. APPROVE FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE 2017**
- C. APPROVE PAYMENT OF INVOICES FOR JULY 2017**
- D. APPROVE EQUI-TAX REPORT FOR JULY 2017**
- E. RATIFY LETTER TO TXDOT**
- F. RATIFY THE RENEWAL OF THE DISTRICT'S INSURANCE POLICIES FOR 2017-2018**
- G. RATIFY INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF HOUSTON**

Director Coleman made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Woodruff 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 Committee – Darcy Lefsrud, Chair**

Director Lefsrud reported that SeeClickFix has been a valuable tool to collect maintenance reports and the Committee has added categories to report light outages, overgrown trees that are blocking lights, along with a category to help identify new locations to plant additional trees. He stated that upgrades to Elizabeth Glover Park will continue this fall with improved drainage, new seating options, ground cover, and trees. He also shared that the Committee worked with the Midtown Redevelopment Authority to complete \$75,000 worth of sidewalk repairs/installations this past spring and summer, and plan to complete an additional \$25,000 worth of sidewalk repairs/installations this fall. Finally, he stated that seasonal planting, tree maintenance, and park maintenance will also continue.

Director Lefsrud encouraged all to submit their project ideas to the Committee, since the budgeting process has begun for FY 2018.

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

Director Washington reported that the Committee hosted an annual town hall meeting in January 2017 with four other committees. He shared that the Committee participated in the Super Bowl's Game City Showcase in January 2017 and hosted the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) annual Midtown Art in the Park in April 2017, which had the highest attendance of any previous Art in the Park events. He reported that the Committee also successfully hosted several pop-up markets throughout the year featuring local artists and vendors and announced that the next market is the Mistletoe Market which will be held in early November 2017.

Director Washington reported that the Committee continues to participate in the city-wide mini-mural project, with the latest mini-mural being installed on Louisiana St. at Holman St. He announced that the Committee will participate in the "Via Colori" festival for the first time in mid-November 2017 and has purchased ad space in the *Houston Press's* upcoming Cultural Arts Guide.

Director Washington invited all to attend the Committee meetings and share their ideas for cultural arts and entertainment projects.

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

Director Tyler-Dillard reported that in 2017, the Committee relaunched the community newspaper, renamed the *Midtown Buzz*, and that, to date, two editions have been printed and distributed throughout Houston. She also stated that the Committee will release a revised Cultural Arts and Entertainment Guide this fall. She reported that the Committee placed ads in various publications this spring, including *Houston Press*, *Modern Luxury*, and *Texas Monthly* and will continue to look for opportunities to advertise. Finally, she announced that the Committee launched the first annual Midtown Houston Awards and that nominations were collected via social media in June and voting occurred in July with over 400 votes cast. She stated that there will be an event announcing the winners this fall.

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

Director Douglas reported on the activities of the Urban Planning Committee. He stated that the Committee is currently helping to craft the Midtown Strategic Plan, which encompasses studies and proposals for the best use of public spaces in Midtown. He stated that as the Plan is developed there will be opportunities for community engagement and citizen input regarding the needs and wants for future development in Midtown. He further reported that the Committee funded a BCycle station in Elizabeth Baldwin Park and is helping to secure funding from other groups for additional BCycle stations in Midtown. Director Douglas also reported that the Committee sponsored a community bike ride in partnership with BikeHouston in April 2017, which had approximately 50 participants. He shared that a fall bike ride to explore the east side of the city is currently being planned.

Director Douglas shared that the Committee submitted a letter to the Texas Department of Transportation discussing the Board's concerns about the impact of the North Highway Improvement Project on Midtown. He reported that the Committee has also been reviewing and responding to variance request letters from the city's Planning Department. Finally, Director Douglas stated that the Committee is working to establish a farmer's market in Midtown in partnership with Urban Harvest and will be conducting a survey to gauge the community's interest in the project.

**E. Finance and Budget Committee – Marylene Chan**

Director Woodruff reported that the district's finances are in good shape and that the Finance Committee continues to review monthly spending by each Committee to ensure that such spending is within budget. She reported that the 2016 audit was completed and has been posted on the Midtown website. She stated that she was pleased to report that the district received a clean opinion from the auditors. Director Woodruff reported that as of early August, 97% of the 2016 assessment revenues have been collected. She stated that the various Committees are working on their Fiscal Year 2018 budgets and that the Board anticipates setting the 2017 rate of assessment at the October 2017 Board meeting.

**F. Nominations Committee – Nancy Darst, Chair**

Director Darst reported that the Committee is currently soliciting resumes to fill two (2) positions on the Board. She asked that anyone interested in serving on the Board please submit their resume to Cynthia Alvarado by Friday, August 11, 2017.

**G. Public Safety Committee – Ben Robles, Chair**

Director Robles reported that the Committee continues to work closely with the city on issues related to homelessness and substance abuse in Midtown. He stated that the Committee participated in the Mayor's "Real Change Not Spare Change" project, which encourages a more efficient and sustainable form of philanthropy by asking Midtown residents and others to take action by donating to or volunteering at the Houston Coalition for the Homeless. He reported on the interlocal agreement with the City of Houston pursuant to which, the district will provide personnel and equipment to assist the city in addressing sanitation and public health issues alongside roadways and underneath freeways in Midtown and surrounding areas.

Director Robles stated that the district continues to contract with Harris County for Precinct 7 Deputy Constables to provide additional law enforcement services in Midtown. He further reported that the district engaged S.E.A.L. Security Solutions, LLC., a private security firm, to assist with public safety efforts in Midtown. Director Robles stated that a part-time security coordinator was hired as of July 1, 2017 to serve as the district's liaison to the following agencies; Houston Police Department (South Central and Central Patrol Divisions), Homeless Outreach Team; Harris County Precinct 7 Constables' Office, S.E.A.L. Security Solutions, LLC., Metropolitan Transportation Authority Police Department, Houston Community College Police Department, and City of Houston Public Intoxication Transport Team/Sobering Center. He reported that the security coordinator will also assist the district in developing and implementing security, public safety, and crime prevention programs to publicize and increase awareness within the district regarding security and public safety issues.

Director Robles reported that there was a good turnout of Midtown business owners and residents at the recent Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission hearing regarding Club Myst. He stated that the club owner did not show up and that the judge has 60 days to decide whether to renew the club's TABC permit. Director Robles stated that according to the judge, the club can legally operate for the next 60 days and that anyone experiencing concerns or issues with Club Myst should contact HPD or Precinct 7.

Director Robles encouraged all to attend the following events: Public Safety Committee meetings, Coffee with a Cop, PIP meetings, and National Night Out.

He reminded attendees that the SeeClickFix app is not the place to report noise concerns, trespassing, or other criminal activity and that all such concerns should be reported directly to law enforcement officials, either HPD or Precinct 7 or both.

Finally, Director Robles reported that the Committee distributes a monthly public safety blog on topics of importance and encouraged guests to please follow the Midtown Facebook page and sign-up to receive the weekly Midtown eNews.

### **MIDTOWN PARKS PROGRAMMING**

Michelle Ashton stated that work continues daily to get Midtown Park ready for its grand opening this fall. She stated that Midtown Park will be an arts destination with three commissioned public art pieces, including the recently installed interactive sculpture. Ms. Ashton reported that in response to the community's requests, monthly programming has expanded from the four monthly events in Bagby Park and now includes a family-friendly event, "Second Sunday," in Elizabeth Baldwin Park and a monthly "Yappy Hour" in Elizabeth Glover Park. She stated that future events will include movie nights in Bagby Park and the second annual Mistletoe Market this November. She encouraged everyone to subscribe to the Midtown eNews list on the contact page of the website, follow Midtown on social media, and check the website calendars to stay informed about activities in Midtown. Ms. Ashton also suggested that everyone pick up a copy of the latest edition of the *Midtown Buzz* since it lists ongoing events, important contact information, and details about the progress of Midtown Park.

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

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

Midtown Park – Midtown Park is close to substantial completion, with work focusing on the signage, deck repair, and installation of playground equipment. He stated that inspections will begin in a few weeks and he anticipates that the Park will open to the public shortly thereafter.

Main St. – The "back of curb" improvements have started on the west side of Main St. and electrical and irrigation work has been completed on the east side of Main St.

Holman St. – Streetscape and road overlay is largely complete. Bike and parking signage is being updated and is expected to be complete in the next 30–45 days.

Entry portals – Still awaiting installation of permanent electricity by CenterPoint at the I-45/Bagby St. and at the Spur 527/Elgin St. entry portals.

Caroline St. – The construction kick-off meeting is scheduled for August 22, 2017 and construction is expected to begin shortly thereafter and last 15–18 months.

**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.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**


Chair Franks thanked the Board, staff, and community for their involvement in keeping Midtown on the cutting edge and encouraged attendees to continue to participate by attending Board and Committee meetings as well as other Midtown events.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next Midtown Management District Board of Directors meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 6, 2017, at 11:00 a.m. at the Midtown offices, 410 Pierce St.

**ADJOURN**

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

  
Eileen Morris  
Board Secretary

9-12-2017  
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Date