

**BOARD OF COMMISSONERS MEETING
DOWNTOWN MANCHESTER SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT**

**September 9, 2009
6:00 PM**

**MANCHESTER ROOM
TOWN HALL
45 CENTER STREET
MANCHESTER, CT 06040**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ed Firestone, Chair
Hope Igdalsky
John Tunila
Glenda Sinnamon
Don DuBaldo
Michael Esposito
Rev. Sal Mancini

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS
PRESENT: Sue O'Connor, GMCC

STAFF PRESENT: Tana Parseliti, Downtown Manager

ALSO PRESENT: Joe Sinnamon, Sinnamon Shop
John Thrall, Cruisin' on Main Street Committee
Gordon Partridge, Cruisin' on Main Street Committee
Bob Barker, Cruisin' on Main Street Committee
Don Janelle, Cruisin' on Main Street Committee

MEMBERS ABSENT: Betsy Treiber

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS
ABSENT: Mark Pellegrini, Dir., Planning & Neighborhood Services

Call to Order

Mr. Firestone called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Minutes – August 5, 2009

Ms. Sinnamon moved to accept the minutes of August 5, 2009 and Ms. Igdalsky seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (6-0-0).

Resolution to Accept Funds

Ms. Sinnamon moved to accept the funds noted in the following resolutions and Mr. Esposito seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (6-0-0).

RESOLVE THAT.....The Downtown Manchester Special Services District accepts \$470.00 in miscellaneous revenue for FY 2009-2010 from the following sources: \$130.00 for tent rental for Cruisin' on Main Street 2009 from Claudette Azevedo; \$100.00 for Cruisin' on Main Street sponsorship from Mulberry Street Pizza; \$210.00 from Cruisin' Club Card sales from Bob & Marie's Pizza (\$10.00); Tires International (\$60.00); Rocco's (\$15.00); Don Janelle (\$90.00); Chau's (\$30.00); Ed Firestone (\$5.00); \$30 in t-shirt sales from Ed Firestone. Funds are to be applied to budget revenue category Miscellaneous Income (4003801 4600) and budget expense category Services Unclassified (27000000 6490).

RESOLVE THAT.....The Downtown Manchester Special Services District accepts \$4.81 in miscellaneous revenue for FY 2009-2010 from the following source: \$4.81 from Harry Delisle for cell phone use. Funds are to be applied to budget revenue category Miscellaneous Income (4003801 4600) and budget expense category Utilities & Transportation (27000000 6424).

RESOLVE THAT.....The Downtown Manchester Special Services District accepts \$150.00 in miscellaneous revenue for FY 2009-2010 from the following source: \$150.00 from the Manchester Garden Club to be used for Downtown planters. Funds are to be applied to budget revenue category Miscellaneous Income (4003801 4600) and budget expense category Repairs to Buildings and Grounds (27000000 6455).

Cruisin' on Main Street

Members of the Cruisin' on Main Street Committee attended this meeting at the invitation of the commissioners to discuss the future administration of Cruisin'. Cruisin' Committee members in attendance included Bob Barker, John Thrall, Gordon Partridge and Don Janelle.

The commissioners recognized the positive impact of Cruisin' for the town and the Downtown retail and restaurant community. They expressed their concern that the amount of staff time devoted to event management continues to grow. Further, as stewards of the District they must be mindful of the financial burden that allocation of staff time represents. Mr. DuBaldo noted the commissioners interest in exploring whether another suitable organization could be identified to take over Cruisin' management.

Cruisin' representatives expressed a strong desire to have the District continue in its management role. They noted that Cruisin' is one of the biggest recognized cruises in the state, drawing show cars and spectators both locally and from surrounding states. It has built a reputation as a quality event, involves hundreds of volunteers and is a significant benefit to local businesses and not for profits. Mr. Janelle noted that the benefit to businesses extends beyond the day of the event as many attendees return to Manchester to visit businesses that they discovered on the day of Cruisin'.

Mr. Partridge pointed to the long-term commitment, dedication and proficiency of the Cruisin' Committee, which comprises approximately 20 members. They are a cohesive unit having worked together for the past nine years. Both Mr. Partridge and Mr. Barker

noted experience with successful events that failed after the organizations that had successfully nurtured and grown these events passed management to another entity.

Mr. Barker suggested that the commissioners' concerns regarding the growth of staff time devoted to Cruisin' could be addressed by developing an event management plan that lightens Ms. Parseliti's workload by shifting tasks to other committee members. He also suggested that the committee begin planning for Cruisin' 2010 immediately, thereby spreading the work over a longer period of time.

Rev. Mancini left the meeting at 6:45 PM.

Mr. Tunila arrived at the meeting at 6:55 PM.

Ms. Igdalsky and Ms. O'Connor cautioned that volunteers often have competing concerns that result in tasks being unexpectedly shifted back to paid staff. Ms. O'Connor suggested that the committee explore the possibility of a paid consultant who would receive a percentage of the profits. Mr. Sinnamon suggested that the committee speak with the Road Race Committee to see how they have been able to successfully work with volunteers to produce their event.

Mr. Barker offered to play a leadership role in ensuring that a new event management plan is put into place that will allow Ms. Parseliti to continue in a management role with a reduced workload. Mr. Janelle volunteered to create an org chart for the new plan. Ms. Parseliti will create a list/description of management tasks that other committee members could assume. The committee will meet within the next several weeks to firm-up the new plan and allocation of duties.

The commission was agreeable to the development of a revised management plan for Cruisin'. They asked that Ms. Parseliti report back to them on the progress of the new plan in January.

Request for Special Event

Love Wins on Main Street - The Trinity Covenant Church contacted Ms. Parseliti to express its interest in holding "Love Wins on Main Street" - a family oriented event - in the Forest Street Parking Lot on a Saturday in November. They expect to submit their request next week. The commission will be asked to provide a letter expressing their support for the event, which was very well received last year. Ms. Parseliti will keep the commission apprised of the progress of this request.

Economic Development

Business Openings - Ms. Parseliti noted the opening of four new businesses on Main Street:

- Sgt. Pepperoni at 956 Main St.
- The Silk Cocoon Designer Consignment Shop at 1073 Main St.
- Desi Grocery and Halal Meat Market at 822 Main St.
- Wireless Champs at 822 Main Street.

Virtual Small Business Office – Ms. O’Connor and Ms. Igdalsky shared information about the proposed Virtual Small Business Office – an online resource to be developed on the Town website that will provide resources, permit info etc. to those opening or considering opening a small business in Manchester. This concept is an offshoot of the Economic Summit hosted by the Town and the Small Business Assistance Group that was formed as a result of the Summit. The Chamber Small Business Group met with Town officials on Sept. 8 to share their experiences and give suggestions on how the website could be made useful and user friendly.

Marketing & Promotions

Downtown Fall Fest – Ms. Parseliti reported that the Marketing & Promotions Committee is planning a Downtown promotion that will focus on the many things to do Downtown during the month of October. A variety of events will be grouped together and will be promoted via flyers, ads, email and the Downtown website. A key element of the month will be a scarecrow display along Main Street coordinated by the Manchester Art Association.

Strategic Plan Review

Ms. Parseliti reminded commissioners that a special commission meeting will be held on Monday, September 21 at 8 AM in the District office to review the current status of the Downtown District Strategic Plan.

Public Comment

None

Other Business

Ms. Igdalsky shared with the commission that she had recently been made aware of a new law regarding use of retail bathroom facilities by individuals who have demonstrated illness. The new law appears to require retailers to allow individuals who are sick to use their bathroom facilities if there is no other public facility in the area. The commission agreed that they would address this issue in the future if it became a problem in the Downtown.

Ms. Sinnamon directed the commission’s attention to a recent article showing how some downtown property owners are renting space to artists at a minimal rate in order to keep their rental properties occupied during the recent economic downturn.

There being no other business Mr. DuBaldo moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 PM. Mr. Esposito seconded the motion and all voted in favor (6-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,

Tana Parseliti, Downtown Manager
Recorder

