

**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Newton Downtown SSMID Board**  
Via Zoom & City Website: [www.newtongov.org](http://www.newtongov.org)

*May 10, 2022*

ROLL CALL

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: R. O'Brien; J. Maki; A. Leber; J. Prendergast

STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Craig Armstrong, Development Specialist; Erin Yeager, Newton Main Street Executive Director ; Nick Cummins, Parks Operations Superintendent; Jody Rhone, Public Works Director; Erin Chambers, Community Development Director

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A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 8:01 a.m. by Chair O'Brien.

**Review of Minutes.** The Minutes of the SSMID Board Meeting on March 8, 2022 were reviewed and approved. MOTION by Maki, seconded by Leber. Voice Vote (Unanimous).

**Finance Report.** The April 30, 2022 Finance Report was reviewed and approved. MOTION by Prendergast, seconded by O'Brien. Voice Vote (Unanimous).

**New Business.**

*a. Status of Christmas Decorations (storage challenges; installation criteria; options for new placement).* Staff submitted a Report on Holiday Street Decorations, noting that the space for storage in Prendergast's warehouse would not be available going forward, that new pole locations not interfering with banner placements or traffic signals would need to be identified and that there were perhaps other locations in the community where the decorations could be utilized.

O'Brien proposed that the decorations be placed on E 4<sup>th</sup> Street S, leading up to Maytag Park where the large Christmas light displays are located. Prendergast noted that there was a great response from citizens about last year's display and the downtown retailers would be very disappointed if they were taken out of downtown. She also stated that using more durable attachment hardware was an easy fix to the problem of attachment brackets breaking and allowing the decorations to blow off in the wind. Maki asked Rhone if the City could put up the decorations and Rhone stated that wasn't possible, due to road use tax funds being ineligible for projects not directly related to street maintenance. Rhone stated that the banner installations were a Maytag era streetscape project and had a different funding source than road use tax. O'Brien asked if the SSMID board could bring the request to have Public Works install the Christmas Decorations to Council for approval and Rhone indicated that was possible, but that Council would need to approve a General Fund for the project.

O'Brien inquired if the City could store the decorations and Rhone replied that there was no space unless a new structure was built. O'Brien asked Cummins where Parks stored the Maytag Park lighted Christmas decorations and Cummins replied that they were kept in the Maytag Park caretakers house. Cummins offered the basement of the caretakers house as an option, but cautioned that there may not be room to get the large format Holiday Street Decorations down the stairs. Maki offered space in a dead-end walkway behind his office where the decorations could be stored and covered to avoid sun and wind exposure. O'Brien requested that a test of one of the decorations at the Maytag Park caretakers house be conducted to determine if they could fit down the basement staircase.

O'Brien asked Rhone to calculate a budget for Public Works to install the decorations at the same time they install the banners. Maki asked Rhone to specify locations for the decorations, but Rhone stated that the

SSMID board needs to decide where they want the decorations to be displayed and reiterated that they could not be attached to traffic signals or block access to the banner brackets. Rhone further stated that, while it may be possible for General Fund budget to be used for installation, it would have to be approved and come through the Finance Division and SSMID could still opt to sue their own funds for the installation.

*b. Downtown Beautification Infrastructure (Flagpoles, Flags; 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue Banner Brackets, Banners).* Staff submitted two reports pertaining to downtown beautification infrastructure: One on flags and flagpoles and the other on banners and banner brackets. Key findings were that Public Works had agreed that the Streets division will be responsible for the maintenance of the flagpoles and flagpole hardware, as well as the banner brackets and installation of downtown banners, and that the flags and banners themselves would need to be purchased by SSMID or another downtown-oriented community organization.

O'Brien noted that there wasn't anything approved in the current SSMID budget for purchase of flags, but suggested that the board approve the purchase as they have in past years. Prendergast agreed, but said the City should buy the banners. Leber stated that he believed flags should come first and then if the budget allowed, banners could be considered. MOTION by O'Brien to table the issue of purchasing banners until the November quarterly SSMID meeting; seconded by Leber. Voice Vote (Unanimous).

MOTION by O'Brien to authorize Main Street to spend up to \$3,800.00 on the purchase of flags for the next year, changed quarterly, and to be reimbursed by SSMID; seconded by Prendergast. Voice Vote (Unanimous).

*c. Decision on in-person quarterly board meetings.* O'Brien called for and received a consensus of all board members on meeting in person at future quarterly SSMID board meetings, which will be held in the City's Legacy Plaza offices, 5<sup>th</sup> floor large conference room.

#### **Old Business.**

*a. Discussion on merging SSMID projects – FY 22-23: Purchase flags for Courthouse Square.* Decided in New Business (b. above).

*b. Other.* None.

**Lighting Round:** Prendergast reported that DDNA members are beginning their busy season and are excited about having Wild Cat Country Fest downtown, as well as Thunder Nites, to draw potential shoppers to our downtown retail area.

**Meeting Adjournment:** At 9:19 a.m. – MOTION by O'Brien, seconded by Maki. Voice Vote (Unanimous).