

Minutes of Special Meeting
Newton Downtown SSMID Board
Via Zoom & City Website: www.newtongov.org

September 20, 2021

ROLL CALL

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

STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Craig Armstrong, Development Specialist; Erin Yeager, Newton Main Street

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Chair O'Brien.

New Business.

a. Decision on purchase of additional lighted Christmas Decorations for the Courthouse Square. Chair O'Brien noted that there were many projects that could be undertaken by SSMID that would have a longer term impact on the district and was not convinced that additional Christmas Decorations represented the best use of limited funds. Maki stated that the mission statement of SSMID seemed to indicate that projects with short-term impact requiring a large investment were not in accordance with the intent of SSMID's mission. Pryke stated that she was not in favor of a large investment to augment the Christmas Decorations that had been purchased last year. Leber agreed that the SSMID board should not invest in additional Christmas Decorations, but added that it might be advisable to move the existing decorations to other locations in the district. Prendergast stated that she believed the Christmas Decorations were a good investment in that they added to the vibrancy of the downtown area during a important retail season and that the value of a downtown area is diminished if the environment isn't vibrant. Prendergast agreed that the Christmas Decorations were a short-term project, but maintained that was a feature rather than a drawback. Prendergast also stated that the SSMID board should poll downtown property owners for feedback on potential projects. Pryke agreed that a poll was a good idea, but stated that the list of potential projects should contain no more than four or five options. Chair O'Brien asked the board members to bring ideas for the poll to the October 12th regular SSMID board meeting. Development Specialist Armstrong agreed to locate a SSMID district property owners mailing list and to research projects undertaken by SSMID districts in cities similar to Newton.

Chair O'Brien asked for a Motion on the question of approving the purchase of nine additional lighted Christmas Decorations for the Courthouse Square area, for a total price (including installation, shipping and additional batteries) of \$6,500.00. MOTION by Prendergast, seconded by Pryke. Roll Call Vote: O'Brien - Nay. Prendergast - Yea. Maki - Nay. Leber - Nay. Pryke - Nay. (Five "nay" and one "aye" - motion defeated).

b. Other. None.

Old Business.

None.

Meeting Adjournment: At 9:54 a.m. - MOTION by Prendergast, seconded by Pryke. Voice Vote (Unanimous).