



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved DOWNTOWN COORDINATING COMMITTEE

*Consider: Who benefits? Who is burdened?
Who does not have a voice at the table?
How can policymakers mitigate unintended consequences?*

Thursday, October 15, 2020

5:30 PM

Via Virtual Meeting

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Present: 11 - Michael E. Verveer; Patrick W. Heck; Kathy L. Marks; Gregory O. Frank; Adam J. Plotkin; Ted Crabb; Barbara Harrington-McKinney; Davy Mayer; Sandra J. Torkildson; Lori J. Henn and Madison T. Taychert

APPROVAL OF September 17, 2020 MINUTES

A motion was made by Crabb, seconded by Frank, to Approve the September 17, 2020 Minutes. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. [61242](#) Public Comment

Scott Severson, 642 State Street, registered to tell the Committee about the issues that his tenants have been facing on the 600 block of Sate Street using these difficult times

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

Greg Frank disclosed that he is on the Business Improvement District (BID) Board

Since Captain Donahue has to leave early for another meeting it was moved that Item 3 be moved up on the agenda. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

3. [48742](#) Downtown Police Update

Captain Kelly Donahue gave an overview of police activities and issues in the Downtown. She mentioned that the new group "Catalyst for Change" has had a great impact on working with people downtown who are both experiencing homelessness and/or other addictions, and behavioral issues.

2. [59936](#) Report of Mall Maintenance and Special Events 2020

Mark Kiesow, Parks Staff introduced Spencer Wagner, the new Central/Mall Supervisor who is replacing Chad Hughes. Kiesow gave the Committee an update on the continued work of the mall staff, and noted some staffing changes, including the addition of two re-deployed City staff who will be helping through the winter. Mall staff has been working with several City Agencies in advance of the winter to work on procedures for snow plowing around the Streeter Program.

Kiesow said that he followed-up on the committee's request on the stone being put in the

bases of the new tree grates downtown. He said there are still 92 trees with the 2" stones in the tree grates, but that all new trees are being planted with 1" stone in the bases. Verveer asked if Mall staff can remove the 2" stone. Kiesow said that it is a larger project than Mall staff can handle. Verveer asked Parks staff to follow up with Streets/Forestry on plan to remove the remaining 2" stone.

4. [62434](#)

Amending the apportionment policy for the State Street Mall/Capitol Concourse Special Charge to approve the schedule of Special Charges for the State Street Mall/Capitol Concourse for 2019/20 Maintenance Charges.

Tiffany Kenney, registered neither in support or opposition and wishing to speak.

Tiffany Kenney, BID Executive Director, thanked Mall staff for all that they have done in this extremely difficult year to help the downtown. Mark and his staff have been such great partners and willing to go the extra mile on just about everything during these unprecedented times. Kenney appreciates the substitute resolution that mitigates the increases that would have normally occurred this year. Kenney said that she is worried about the future, and as the cost share fully increases to a 50/50 split, Downtown property owners wish that they could be part of the discussion on how maintenance and other services are rendered. Property owners are worried about potential cuts to the program even as their share increases. They would like to figure out a way to be a part of those discussions and decisions moving forward.

Eric Knepp, City Parks Superintendent gave an overview of the changes to the Special Charges and noted that the change in the billing cycle this year both helps mitigate the need for an increase in the charges and also gets the billing cycle on a better schedule for the future. The final bills that will go out this year will have a 2.42% decrease from last year's billing. Knepp said that the Committee has been given a new substitute resolution that should be considered this evening.

Frank thanks the Mall Staff for their amazing dedication and work over the last year. He is worried about budget cuts in the future that would decrease important services. Crabb said that potential future cuts are a central issue for this committee and would like the DCC to be a part of those discussions. Harrington-McKinney has spent some time downtown and has been hearing about how many business owners feel like they have been abandoned by the City.

A motion was made by Verveer, seconded by Crabb, to Return to Lead with the Recommendation for Approval of the proposed Substitute to the FINANCE COMMITTEE. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

5. [62410](#)

Approving the 2021 Operating Plan for Madison's Central Business Improvement District.

Tiffany Kenney, registered in support and wishing to speak.

Tiffany Kenney, Madison Central Business Improve District (BID) Executive Director, gave a brief overview of the BID Operating Plan for 2021. Kenney said that the BID will also be making many difficult cuts, such as going from 3 staff to 2, as well as greatly limiting the paid ambassador program, and relying much more on volunteers in the coming year. While the property assessment

and City Programming funds are expected to be the same as last year, the BID's ability to raise funds through outside sources has been greatly diminished due to the pandemic.

A motion was made by Crabb, seconded by Harrington-McKinney, to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

6. [62249](#)

Consideration to remove or reconfigure three benches in the 500 Block of State Street

Colin Smith, 508 State Street, explained the continuing struggles with drug activity and large groups gathering on the benches in the 500 Block of State Street.

Scott Severson, 642 State Street, said that the very same activity was occurring on the 600 block of State Street, and all of the benches should be removed.

Heck asked the committee to re-visit this issue at this meeting, as there have been continued complaints in the last month about behaviors at the benches.

Torkildson said that this is a difficult time, and the lack of regular pedestrian activity has exacerbated the problems that we have been hearing about tonight. Colder weather also greatly affects many of the behavior issues, and winter will change the dynamics of State Street.

Marks said that we have been asked to listen to the businesses, and to help them through this difficult time. Given what we are hearing, the benches are problematic, and we should remove them through the pandemic.

Mayer said that removing benches doesn't cure anyone from addiction, and that the amenities are there for the public to use. We need to make sure there are places for everyone on State Street.

Verveer asked how many benches were remaining on the two blocks. Staff approximated that there are 3 remaining on the 500 block and 4 on the 600 block.

A motion was made by Crabb, seconded by Frank, to Approve staff removal all of the remaining benches on the 500-600 block of State Street on a temporary basis due to the large groups gathering amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and shall be re-installed on or before April 1, 2021. The motion passed by the following vote:

Ayes: 8 - Michael E. Verveer; Patrick W. Heck; Kathy L. Marks; Gregory O. Frank; Ted Crabb; Barbara Harrington-McKinney; Lori J. Henn and Madison T. Taychert

Noes: 2 - Adam J. Plotkin and Davy Mayer

Non Voting: 1 - Sandra J. Torkildson

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Crabb, seconded by Mayer, to Adjourn at 7:20 p.m. The motion passed by voice vote/other.