



**Czech Village New Bohemia SSMID Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2020 | 8:30-10:00 a.m. | Zoom Meeting**

The Czech Village New Bohemia SSMID Commission met virtually in regular session. Those present are listed below. The meeting was held as an electronic regular Commission meeting because a meeting in person was impossible or impractical due to concerns for the health and safety of Commissioners, staff and the public presented by COVID-19.

Present: Craig Byers, Lijun Chadima, Ben Dillon, Mary Kay Novak McGrath, Chad Pelley, James Piersall, Bob Schaffer

Absent: Stephanie Jelinek, Ana McClain

Guests: Abby Huff & Monica Vernon – Main Street, Jennifer Pratt – City of Cedar Rapids, Kelsey Worcester – HBK Engineering

Economic Alliance Staff: Jessica Komisar, Doug Neumann, Phil Wasta

Welcome and Call to Order

Piersall welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Chadima moved approval of the agenda with Byers seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

Byers moved approval of the July minutes with Dillon seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

Financial Update

Wasta said the total balance of \$83k is what is currently being held by the City in our account. No statements have been received since May as the City works on balancing the books on all SSMIDs. Additional tax revenue will be coming in from the Assessor's Office. Anticipate a new statement in October. The Economic Alliance has been paying some SSMID payables in anticipation of funds moving to a SSMID controlled checking account from the City. The total of payables that the SSMID owes the Economic Alliance is \$26k. Wasta is waiting to have a meeting with Casey Drew and Pratt which is scheduled for mid-late October. Pratt recommended that instead of the Economic Alliance continuing to pay, package up some of the payables and send to the City so they can reimburse the Economic Alliance in the interim period while funds get released to a SSMID controlled account. Piersall said that makes sense and there's no reason that the Economic Alliance should act as the SSMID's "banker." Wasta said Drew would have to get us documentation for Piersall to sign stating that the SSMID would be liable and responsible for funding and vowing to the City that the SSMID is responsible for spending funds in a tax appropriate manner and committing to an audit only if one is requested. Wasta said on behalf of the Medical SSMID, he had started the practice of presenting once a year to the City's Finance and Admin committee to recap what SSMID dollars had been used for and field questions. Piersall said the CVNB SSMID has participated in that in the past.

Mucha Meets Iowa Mural Update

The Public Art committee has been meeting on a regular basis and are preparing for the public unveiling on September 29. An e-blast and a save the date hard copy invitation have been sent and the Economic Alliance is working on a press release and another e-blast. The unveiling will be used to let SSMID constituents know what their tax dollars are going towards. The unveiling schedule includes gathering for cider, coffee and kolaches, a short program with Piersall, Cecilia Rokusek and Dale Todd and an opportunity to mingle and meet Ali Hval. The committee also discussed sending SSMID

constituents a signed photograph of the mural from Ali with a letter from Piersall. The Czech Museum is also interested in working with the SSMID to sell postcards with an image of the mural.

Piersall said we have received several donations totaling approximately \$7k. Donor names will be added to a big banner for the unveiling but once the donor list is complete, we will produce a permanent plaque on the wall. Vernon said in addition to the monetary donations, we received several in-kind donations including the paint, primer and background paint labor, the lift, etc.

Piersall said the committee will also be looking into security cameras and lighting for the mural. Huff said she is in contact with over 50 other communities and have had 5 or 6 ask for Ali's contact information.

Beautification Update

Holiday Décor

The beautification committee will meet on Monday to discuss holiday décor. The NewBo area has a variety of damaged light poles that may need to be fixed before we can decorate or those poles just won't be included in the décor plan. Piersall asked what the latest word was on when the 16th Ave bridge would be open as it would be nice to include that in the holiday décor plan. Vernon said last they heard was November 1st. Worcester asked if there is a budget for additional décor. Neumann said there are some mural costs in the beautification budget line item but the intent was to continue to grow the holiday décor program and we can look more into the budget offline and we will have more budget discussion next month. Neumann said we also have the opportunity to take funds out of reserves if we need to.

Spring Planters

Worcester said our Spring of 2021 plant order will be due this month to the greenhouse. As of right now, the plan is to order the same annuals as this year.

Other Projects

Piersall said the idea of a pocket park using the lot adjacent to the mural is nothing we've committed to but something to consider. Dillon and Byers said it's a good option and encouraged us to keep pursuing this option. Piersall said if we want to start this project, we would want to go to the City and talk about a longer commitment from them regarding the lot relationship with the SSMID and potentially the option to purchase the lot from the City. Wasta said the 3rd Ave and 8th Street pocket park in the MedQuarter was purchased by the MedQuarter and they own the property, but they had to develop it into the pocket park. Komisar asked where the presented renderings and cost estimates came from. Huff said she produced the estimates and renderings herself and noted that when doing the estimates, she estimated high. Piersall said the City agreed to mow the lot for the rest of this season but next year the SSMID will be responsible for mowing. The SSMID needs to arrange for snow removal starting this winter. The beautification committee also presented estimates on new benches and trash cans throughout the district, Piersall said we aren't prepared at this time to make decisions on those next steps and we will defer to a later meeting date, potentially next month when we discuss budget.

Previous Financial Request Review

- Kolache Benches – Neumann said Huff has been involved with the Iowa BIG students for this project and because of the uncertain start of school, they haven't met yet and we asked them to present at the October meeting.
- Economic Relief Committee/Funding – will be in better position next month to discuss.

2021 Budget Discussion

Piersall requested a budget proposal for 2021 to be available for the October meeting. Wasta asked if we should add a pocket park maintenance line item to keep that top of mind for snow removal/mowing and insurance. Piersall said we could add that under the existing streetscape maintenance line item.

Adjourn

Chadima moved to adjourn the meeting with Pelly seconding. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.