

**MIDTOWN REDEVELOPMENT BOARD
MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, November 10, 2020**

The regular meeting of the Midtown Redevelopment Board was held Tuesday, November 10, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers, Daytona Beach City Hall, 301 S. Ridgewood Avenue, Daytona Beach, Florida. The following people were present:

Board Members Present

Mr. Shawn Collins, Chair
Ms. Terica Charles
Mr. Byron Cogdell
Mr. Pierre Louis
Ms. Renee Richardson
Mr. Milverton Robinson (Planning Board appointee)
Ms. Valencia Stubbs

Board Members Absent

Ms. Tangelia Hardy

Staff Members Present

Mr. Reed Berger, Redevelopment Director
Ms. Kira Honse, Assistant City Attorney
Ms. Sara Kirk, Code Enforcement Officer
Capt. Scott Goss, Daytona Beach Police Department
Ms. Jennifer Lynch, Office Assistant

1. Call to Order

Mr. Collins called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

The roll was called and attendance was noted as stated above.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Invocation

Mr. Louis gave the invocation.

5. Approval of Minutes

October 13, 2020 Regular Board meeting

A motion was made by Mr. Louis, seconded by Ms. Charles, to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of October 13, 2020 as presented. The motion carried (6-0).

6. Staff Reports

Police Department

Capt. Scott Goss provided a report to the Board on crime statistics from January 1, 2020 to October 31, 2020. Capt. Goss stated crime has decreased in all categories in Midtown and noted there have only been 19 burglaries and 14 auto thefts in Midtown since January 1, 2020. Capt. Goss stated there has been a large number of shoplifting incidents at the Dollar General and Midtown and the Police Department is working with the store to help address the situation. Capt. Goss stated he feels Midtown is a safe place to be.

Ms. Charles asked about the number of sexual battery cases in Midtown.

Capt. Goss stated there have been two and there has not been a significant increase in that category.

Mr. Cogdell asked what the Department is doing to prepare for a possible increase in crime during the holiday season.

Capt. Goss stated certain units are being re-focused to help with assignments in the Midtown area.

Mr. Collins asked what the number of drug arrests are in Midtown in comparison to the rest of the city.

Capt. Goss stated the majority of the drug sales are in vehicles and noted most "buy busts" are done throughout the city. Capt. Goss stated there is a low number of street level drug sales in Midtown. Capt. Goss stated he feels overall drug sales in Midtown is a problem but great strides have been made in addressing the situation.

Mr. Louis stated the statement made by Capt. Goss that Midtown is safe is a marketable statement. Mr. Louis stated he feels we should say to people that they can invest in Midtown because it is a safe area.

Capt. Goss stated he would like to wait until after January 1, 2021 to provide statistics for the entire year which then could be used by the Board for promotion of Midtown.

Ms. Charles stated she feels she has seen a change in the last 7 years, based on efforts of the Police and Code Enforcement Departments.

Mr. Robinson expressed concern about the number of shoplifting incidents in Midtown.

Capt. Goss stated there have only been 28 incidents so far this year and the majority are from one business.

Code Enforcement

Sarah Kirk, Code Enforcement Officer, stated during the month of October 27 new cases were opened in Midtown, three of which were opened and closed in the same month. Ms. Kirk provided a report to the Board showing the number of cases she has closed during the last month.

Other Board Discussion:

Mr. Collins stated he would like to add an item to the monthly agenda to approve the agenda as presented and to include a section of "Spotlight Midtown." Mr. Collins stated there are business owners from Midtown in attendance and he would like to provide them an opportunity to speak at this time.

Board Action:

A motion was made by Mr. Louis, seconded by Ms. Charles, to discuss the suggestion of "Spotlight Midtown." The motion carried (6-0).

Sharon Hawkins stated she is a business and residential property owner in Daytona Beach. Ms. Hawkins stated she is renovating her business on Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune and the area is not safe. Ms. Hawkins stated there is a drug problem in the area and new businesses do not want to move into the area. Ms. Hawkins stated rezoning is needed in the area to help to draw new business. Ms. Hawkins stated there is a concern about speeding drivers through the area. Ms. Hawkins stated a Police presence is needed in Midtown.

Mr. Collins stated he asked for the Public Works Director to attend tonight's meeting but was told he was not available. Mr. Collins stated he would like the Public Works Director to attend every Midtown meeting

since the Public Works Department oversees the funding for the projects in Midtown.

Ms. Charles stated some business owners tolerate drug sales on their property and she has seen the interactions on video. Ms. Charles stated she is optimistic that the new Police Chief will help address concerns in Midtown. Ms. Charles stated she has not known of the residents ever getting together to help address the concerns that have been expressed.

Mr. Robinson suggested Ms. Hawkins speak with Capt. Goss about her concerns and also suggested forming a Neighborhood Watch group.

Mr. Louis stated there currently are Neighborhood Watch programs in Midtown. Mr. Louis stated the concerns about drugs cannot be fixed by this Board because it is an economic issue.

Ms. Charles asked how the drug problem can be addressed when there are so many Medical Marijuana businesses permitted in the area, noting the businesses bring drugs to the area that are medically legal.

Mr. Louis stated there has been an increase in traffic on Franklin Street, where he lives, since the True Leaf Medical Marijuana business has opened.

Donna Banks stated she is the CEO of the Midtown Community Development Corporation. Ms. Banks introduced LaQuetta McGill who is the CFO and Percy Williamson who is the Chairman of the Midtown Community Development Corporation. Ms. Banks stated Midtown Community Development Corporation is dedicated to finding housing but training is needed for individuals as well. Ms. Banks stated training for employment in the area of fiber optics could be completed in six weeks.

Mr. Collins stated there is a need to offer training for high school students since many do not plan to go to college.

Ms. Banks stated there is a program with the Housing Authority for certificates for individuals ranging in age from 16 to 24. Ms. Banks stated the Midtown Community Development Corporation would like to offer training for individuals over the age of 25 who need better wages to support a family.

Percy Williamson, Chair, Midtown Community Development Corporation, stated he is working with homebuilders regarding apprenticeship programs but wants to put programs in place in order to get applicants certification so they can get immediate employment.

Ms. Charles stated a concern is background issues for prospective applicants. Ms. Charles suggested some contacts for Ms. Banks to help her provide training for applicants. Ms. Banks stated she has been working with SIMS Consulting Group on various training programs.

Mr. Collins stated he has invited Mr. Sims to attend the December Midtown Redevelopment Board meeting.

Mr. Louis stated there are vocational programs in place at Daytona State College but often times there are not placement programs available.

Ronald Richardson stated he is a business owner on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. and his business partner is Ronald Smith. Mr. Richardson stated he is concerned about parking and how city money is being spent in Midtown. Mr. Richardson stated he contacted his City Commissioner but did not receive a reply. Mr. Richardson stated Code Enforcement has not addressed many of the issues along MLK. Mr. Richardson stated customers trying to access his business have nowhere to park. Mr. Richardson stated there was to be underground electric service along MLK but the poles and hanging wires are still in place. Mr. Richardson stated holiday decorations are being placed along Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Blvd. but none are placed along MLK.

Mr. Collins stated the street striping that was done in the area is terrible and he is concerned that the business owners were not contacted prior to the work being done.

Mr. Robinson stated he serves on the City's Beautification Board and is provided monthly reports when the Board meets regarding projects within the City.

7. Proposed Amendment to Bylaws

Mr. Berger stated a memorandum is included as part of the packet from Ben Gross, Deputy City Attorney. Mr. Berger stated Mr. Gross was unable to attend tonight's meeting and Ms. Kira Honse is attending for him. Ms. Honse stated Mr. Gross will address the Board's concerns at the next meeting.

Ms. Richardson stated there appears to be concerns about how information is provided to the Board. Ms. Richardson stated she did not attend the last meeting because she had been called and told there would not be a meeting in October; however, her packet for this meeting included minutes from the October meeting. Ms. Richardson stated she feels the Board should be better informed as to when meetings will occur. Ms. Richardson stated she had no comments on the proposed bylaws.

Mr. Cogdell stated he has no concerns with what is presented regarding the amendments to the bylaws.

Ms. Charles stated she has concerns about the terms for Board members. Ms. Charles stated she does not feel there should be term limits.

Mr. Berger stated the term limits are consistent with the Land Development Code.

Ms. Honse stated there would have to be a change to the Land Development Code regarding term limits; and the Board would have to make a recommendation to the Planning Board and would then have to be approved by the City Commission in order to make that change.

Mr. Cogdell left the meeting at 8:03 p.m. for an emergency phone call and returned at 8:58 p.m.

Mr. Collins stated he feels each Board member should make a list of items they would like changed and can be addressed by the Board in the future.

Ms. Stubbs stated she had some clerical suggestions and stated in Article 2, Membership, "principle" place of business should read "principal" place of business. Ms. Stubbs stated in Article 6, Order of Business, "presiding officer" should be changed to Chairperson for consistency. Ms. Stubbs stated Article 9, Parliamentary Authority and Procedures, should read "the Board may grant a continuance." Ms. Stubbs stated in Article 10, Correspondence and Communication, the Board approval sentence should be corrected.

Mr. Louis stated Article 2 should clarify what constitutes a majority for a quorum. Mr. Louis stated there is nothing in the bylaws regarding letters of resignation. Mr. Louis stated Article 5 should be removed regarding cancellation of the meeting if there are no applications.

Mr. Berger stated the Board would need direction from the City Commission regarding cancellation of the meeting.

Mr. Louis stated Article 5 should be amended since there is no longer a secretary on the Board.

Ms. Honse stated the Article reads that City staff shall provide notice of the meetings and act as the Board Secretary.

Mr. Louis stated Article 6 is different than the actual Board meeting agenda.

Mr. Louis stated the wording should be clarified regarding Chairperson or presiding officer.

Ms. Louis questioned who should sign the minutes if the Chair is not in attendance. Mr. Louis stated previously if the Chair was not in attendance, the minutes were held until the next meeting to be signed by the Chair.

Mr. Collins stated he wrote through Mr. Louis' name when minutes were approved and signed the minutes.

Mr. Louis stated Article 8 also refers to the Board secretary.

Ms. Honse stated there is a Board secretary but it is City staff, not a Board member.

Mr. Collins stated Article 2, Section 5, has an incomplete sentence in the fourth line.

Ms. Honse stated she will make a note of that comment.

Mr. Collins stated Article 4 should refer to a time when appointments of Chair and Vice Chair are made and the term of office. Mr. Collins stated he is concerned about the 24-hour notification to Board members for an upcoming meeting and feels one day notice is not sufficient.

Ms. Honse stated she believes that is for a special call meeting and that indicates the minimum amount of time to call a meeting. Ms. Honse stated for regular meetings, the Board knows the schedule a month in advance. Ms. Honse asked if 48 hours or 72 hours for a special call meeting would be sufficient.

Mr. Collins stated a separate section should be added for notification of special meetings.

Mr. Collins stated "Old Business" should remain on the agenda to track what staff has been directed to do and wants "New Business" listed on the agenda as well.

Ms. Richardson stated she feels Old Business should be listed so people know what has been discussed and New Business should be listed so people know what is proposed to be discussed.

Mr. Collins stated he would like to delay action on the Bylaws until next month when Mr. Gross can be in attendance.

Mr. Robinson stated the emergency procedures of the meeting regarding COVID were not listed on the agenda for this evening's meeting and should be on the agenda until the pandemic has passed.

Ms. Stubbs left the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

8. Discussion Items

a. City Commission Presentation Strategies

This item was not discussed by the Board.

9. Project Updates

Mr. Berger stated the Planning Board approved the Daytona Center Planned Development including the Midtown Redevelopment Board's recommendations. Mr. Berger stated the item will be heard at the December 16, 2020 City Commission meeting for first reading.

Mr. Berger stated there is a meeting scheduled regarding the MMB streetscape project on November 12, 2020 at 4:30 p.m. at Joe Harris Park.

Mr. Collins stated he would like David Waller, Public Works Director, to attend the Midtown Redevelopment Board meetings. Mr. Collins stated there is an issue with communication regarding projects Mr. Waller oversees. Mr. Collins stated there should be coordination meetings held so everyone knows about planned projects.

Mr. Berger stated he will pass the request along but Mr. Waller does take his direction from the City Manager.

Mr. Berger stated action was taken regarding the painting of the curbs along Martin Luther King Blvd. in an attempt to provide more parking. Mr. Berger stated the concern of the quality of the work has been relayed to the Public Works Department.

Mr. Robinson asked what will be done about the light poles along MLK.

Mr. Berger stated many businesses have cables on the poles and that is an issue to be addressed by the Utilities Department. Mr. Berger stated many wires have been disconnected and are hanging from the poles and it is a problem throughout the city.

10. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

11. Board Comments

Ms. Richardson stated she would like to be better informed as to when a meeting will be held or cancelled.

Mr. Cogdell stated he is committed to the Midtown Board and states he looks forward to working the Midtown Community Development Corporation and business owners in Midtown.

Ms. Charles stated she is happy to be back serving on the Board but noted she was frustrated in the past by the in-action of the Board. Ms. Charles stated she is pleased to see the new approach taken by the Board.

Mr. Robinson stated the Planning Board discussed a moratorium on box stores which may have an effect on Midtown. Mr. Robinson stated the Planning Board has also been discussing affordable housing and requirements for developers to include affordable housing as part of a proposed development; however, the discussion of affordable housing has been placed on hold by the City Commission.

Mr. Collins stated he would like Mr. Robinson to provide an update of major projects that are being approved at the Planning Board meeting.

Mr. Louis stated he felt the meeting this evening was a good one. Mr. Louis stated he is concerned about Board responsibilities and what the Board has previously been told their responsibilities may be.

Ms. Charles stated she is concerned about term limits and if the time of service will be adjusted based on the COVID pandemic.

Mr. Berger stated each Board member may serve two 2-year terms.

Mr. Collins stated the Board should ask the City Commission to extend Board members' terms based on the COVID pandemic.

Mr. Collins spoke about the history of the City and stated that in 150 years since founded, 144 years incorporated, for whatever reason, this city has never found a qualified black to lead this city. It is long overdue.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

A blue ink handwritten signature, appearing to be 'Shawn Collins', written over a horizontal line.

Shawn Collins, Chair

A blue ink handwritten signature, appearing to be 'Becky Groom', written over a horizontal line.

Becky Groom, Board Secretary