

**Medical SSMID Commission Meeting Minutes**

**August 6, 2014**

**8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.**

**Tallgrass Business Resources**

**Present:** John Albert, Richard Cooley, Michelle Jensen, Kathy McCauley, Mary Meisterling, Kris Gulick, Julie Sterling, Mike Sundall, Julianne Thomas, Ted Townsend (via conference call), Phil Wasta

**Absent:** Tim Charles, Marcie Watson

**Steering Committee/Guests:** Michelle Cole, Gordon Epping, Annie Obrecht, Richard Pankey, Zach Weiderspon and Cindy Young

**Economic Alliance Staff:** Sarika Bhakta, Doug Neumann, Wendy O'Brien

**Welcome & Introductions**

Townsend called the meeting to order at 7:59 a.m.

**Consent Agenda**

Thomas moved approval of the Consent Agenda, seconded by Wasta. The Commission unanimously approved.

**Especially for You Race**

Special guests Michelle Cole and Cindy Young came to showcase the Especially for You (EFY) Race, which will be held Sunday, October 5, 2014. They shared the organization's history and mission. 2013 event highlights were shared: 15,105 attendees, raising \$370,000 to pay for mammograms and other breast cancer services. The 2014 event will have a new route through Oak Hill, Czech Village/NewBo, Downtown, and end with a party in Greene Square Park. It was noted that some of the MedQuarter businesses will be affected by the route and EFY would appreciate help getting the word out to them.

Young, Sandy Knight's sister whom EFY is in memory of, shared how groups and organizations have raised money for the EFY cause in a variety of ways beyond the race event, benefitting even more people. It was noted in 2012, 773 individuals received 1,059 services. Cole thanked the medical community, which has been supportive to discount their services, allowing funds to be stretched even further.

The Commission asked how MedQuarter might participate in the event. Cole mentioned one specific option for 2014 is to participate as a vendor at the "Party in the Park" post-race. 2015 will be their 25<sup>th</sup> annual event. There is a team of volunteers that meet year-round to plan the event as well as a variety of other volunteer and sponsorship opportunities.

The Commission thanked Cole and Young for their time and engaging presentation.

**Committee Updates, Next Steps, and Timeline**

**Branding/Marketing**

Dr. Thomas highlighted recent media coverage. Also mentioned was Professor Bruce Nesmith's guest column in The Gazette on the master plan. He doubts some parts of the plan, particularly as it relates to historical preservation and concern about neighborhoods. The Commission recommended not responding with any rebuttal.

Dr. Thomas gave an overview of the FY15 Strategic Marketing Plan included in the printed agenda packet, which incorporated insights from last month's meeting.

The Commission responded favorably, especially to the idea of co-branding on the electronic billboards by utilizing the MedQuarter logo with member organizations willing to co-brand with the MedQ logo. It was asked if LinkedIn will be used. Thomas replied that they are keeping it simple with Facebook and Twitter for now, and will consider expanding to other social media at a later date. Regarding having a Med Quarter event, it was recommended to explore timing the event when there are other events drawing people to the area, i.e. Freedom Festival, Farmers' Market, etc.

An update on MedQuarter banners was also shared by Thomas. Notably, 6 of the 11 responses to the RFP were local companies. It was recommended by the Committee to award the job to Sign Pro, whose combined sign/bracket and installation proposal was the lowest price.

The Commission decided that banner maintenance issues will be handled by the Operations Committee. Any new banners will be handled by the Branding/Marketing Committee.

### **Operations**

Meisterling mentioned she is starting to look into wayfinding/signage. She has reached out to Nesper Sign regarding an estimate for way-finding signage for informational/research purposes only.

Townsend requested that Committee chairs create a plan, similar to the Branding/Marketing's Strategic Marketing Plan, which lists the Committee's goals, action items, timeline and budget.

### **Standards**

Wasta began by sharing that two district overlay plans already exist: NewBo and Oakhill/Jackson. The Standards Committee will review these plans to glean what information is needed for MedQuarter's overlay and to utilize them to decide the information format. They plan to decide non-negotiable standards at their next meeting.

Albert said that the City offered to have a member from the development department sit in on any meeting (contact Jennifer Pratt, City Development Department). Townsend mentioned that Mike Easley should be by UnityPoint Health - St. Luke's representative on the Standards and Operations committees.

### **Master Development Plan**

Albert shared that the Executive Summary of the MDP was included in the printed Agenda packet. Please review, and send him or Bhakta any feedback you have by August 20<sup>th</sup>.

Rather than the master plan "endorsement" or "approval" the MedQuarter was seeking from City Council, the City instead plans to incorporate the master plan by reference into the City's updated comprehensive plan known as "Envision CR." The City plan will specifically mention some components of the MedQ master plan, as well. Two public open houses are upcoming on "Envision CR" and commission members were encouraged to attend.

### **Update on Burying Utilities Underground**

Progress has been made regarding burying service lines on 10<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Street. The City was able to meet with Mediacom, which has finally agreed to bury its lines as Alliant buries its utilities. Meisterling will continue to meet with the Mediacom representative to share upcoming opportunities to bury service lines so Mediacom is able to incorporate it in their budget.

### **Firestone Streetscape**

Bhakta shared that the Firestone manager has just returned from medical leave. Employees were reluctant to respond to MedQuarter request while the manager was out. It is hopeful that the issue of drop seed grass removal will get resolved, along with Thomas' marketing inquiries, now that the manager is back. The stop-gap measure for the grass issue is that it has been mowed.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Update**

As mentioned at the last meeting, the Paving for Progress on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue has been postponed until next season. The Commission was asked if they want to consider more modifications on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, now that there is more time to develop a design. Neumann clarified that funding for the street portion (curb to curb) is through sales tax dollars. Outside of the curbs, the SSMID can choose to fund enhancements, or solicit other funding sources: i.e. the City, donations, etc.

Thomas agreed to pull together a list of businesses to invite to a gathering to inform them of the opportunity available to 'green' 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue next year, solicit their feedback and capture by-in. Neumann explained that the City's paving plan is from 19<sup>th</sup> Street to 5<sup>th</sup> Street, and the long-term plan of the City is that all the one ways will be changed to two-ways.

The Commission directed Neumann to request a concept/design cost estimate from HR Green for 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue ideas (in addition to the request for a quote on crosswalk improvements at 10<sup>th</sup> Street and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue) that could be incorporated into Paving for Progress.

#### **Management & Professional Services**

Neumann shared an overview of Management and Professional Service options available to the SSMID Commission. He detailed how the current professional services contract incorporates several individuals at the Economic Alliance and the approximate average time per month for each.

- **Sarika Bhakta:** Estimated 64 hours per month (about 40% of her time) staffing all committees, coordinating professional services, communications with City, drafting RFPs and being the primary point person for commission-directed initiatives
- **Wendy O'Brien:** 5 hours per month administrative duties, mostly related to commission meetings
- **Doug Neumann:** 12 to 16 hours per month communication and project coordination with City Hall, communication with commission leadership, contracts and financial review, coordinating district services
- **Pam Hinman (and communications team):** 2 hours a month, news releases, web page updates, branding/marketing assistance
- **Audrey Wheeler:** 1 hour a month, district services coordination
- **Accounting team:** 1 hour a month on invoices, City Hall coordination and report prep

Services provided through the Economic Alliance outside of the professional services: event coordination on large community events such as Especially For You, Building Swagger and Workforce campaign designed to recruit and retain employees, some Economic Development services – recruiting new businesses, existing business retention and expansion, and some district promotion/event communication. These services would be provided to MedQ-located members of the Economic Alliance regardless of any professional services contract.

Options for the Commission to consider for Management & Professional Services going forward include:

- 1) Expand the scope/hours of the existing agreement with the Economic Alliance to cover additional needs on master plan implementation, etc. with its integrated staff approach.
- 2) Have an executive director/point person within the Economic Alliance provide full-time, dedicated support to the MedQuarter, with additional Economic Alliance staff support as needed to fulfill a contract.
- 3) Hire an Executive Director to serve the SSMID directly. That person would be a City government, public sector employee.
- 4) Continue to contract for services with a private non-profit, but do so through a non-profit other than the Economic Alliance. MedQuarter Inc., for example, could hire one or more staff and fulfill a professional services contract with the Medical SSMID.
- 5) Hire a for-profit consultant or executive, via a competitive RFP process.

Neumann noted that the current monthly investment with the Economic Alliance is \$6,500.

Sundall, expressed his interest in hearing the Economic Alliance's constructive criticism/feedback regarding how the MedQuarter operates.

The Commission plans to continue the discussion at the next meeting in September.

**Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:28 a.m.