

Medical SSMID Commission Meeting Minutes

January 8, 2025, 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m., Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust

Present: Eric Dalton (virtual), Gordon Epping, Casey Greene, Pauline Herb, Michelle Jensen, Alejandro Pino, Brian Steffen, Nathan Van Genderen (virtual), Amanda Zhorne

Absent: Eric Griggs, Suzy McGrane-Hop, Okpara Rice

Guests: Noah Zeker, Assistant City Liaison

Staff: Jennifar Bassett, Peggy Degnan, Caleb Knutson, Phil Wasta

Welcome & Call to Order

In absence of McGrane-Hop, Herb called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

Consent Agenda

Epping commented we are in good standing and have accumulated a good amount of cash for our future commitments. Wasta said spending will shift from completing large projects to becoming more maintenance and beautification. Greene asked if we might adjust contributions after large builds are done? Wasta stated we could reduce the levy rate and volunteer contributions, but because we now have a good grasp on how we're going to pay for the next two years of projects, we really don't want to pull back at this time because it is much harder to raise than to lower contributions. **Epping moved to approve the November minutes, financials and reports with Greene seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.**

Discuss Possible Revisions to Memorandum of Agreement with City of Cedar Rapids

Wasta explained Pratt and Zeker are revisiting this document since they are trying to get the MOAs with the three SSMID districts as aligned as possible. They are looking for commonality to drive efficiency. Also, the MOA states who is responsible and what is expected from each other. Wasta said there are instances in the language where it leaves out anyone being responsible. He gave examples and scenarios of decorative pavers, sidewalks, parkways, holiday lights, etc., that will be worked out across the districts. He noted the MedQuarter logo to be placed on the retaining wall by the roundabout will be maintained solely by this SSMID because it is a branding piece.

Pino asked who monitors the district to make sure things are in good shape. Wasta responded he does as he has "feet-on-the-street" as it's part of his job. Since Wasta has so many relationships within the district, if someone else sees something before he does, they will notify him so he can address it.

The finalized MOA will be ready for our next meeting in March, so a vote to accept it will take place then.

Discuss/Approve 2025 Action Strategies

Wasta stated many of the items are carry-overs from 2024 with some being pillars listed in the Master Plan Update such as: develop implementation of outdoor green space, assess childcare needs of healthcare workers, and pursue viable funding options. Establishing a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) will take approximately a year per the IRS, even though we do have an EIN number already.

Wasta asked if there is anything missing from the draft of 2025 Action Strategies? Jensen asked if there are large parkway improvement projects after 2026? Wasta said that we should revisit the nine priorities under the Master Parkway Improvement Plan. Several have already been finished, so it would be good to revisit the plan and decide if there's something else we want to move forward with. Greene feels the focus should be economic development and community connections. Pino said he'd like to see "vibrancy," so anything we can do from a recruitment and living

perspective, as to not lose site of the people that surround the MedQuarter. Wasta suggested looking at improvements along 8th Avenue because the City will be focusing on this area due to the new 8th Avenue bridge project.

Pino moved to approve the 2025 Strategies as submitted with Epping seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

Next Steps in Implementation of Pillar 3: Appearance & Identity; Initiative 3: Create and Program Interactive Community Green Spaces

Herb stated the need for a study to be done regarding the drainage challenges, or an initial assessment of what it would take to meet City requirements. Wasta shared that for the two existing pocket parks, a pre-set budget was sent out as an RFP, and then received responses with proposed designs. The City would like to see a park at 4th Avenue & 10th Street, but we do need to address run-off, so we need to figure out a budget and at least create an initial design that can be enhanced as funding becomes available. After we have a 501(c)(3) status, we can apply for grants to acquire benches and other enhancements. Herb said the Standards Committee will move forward with civil engineering and will plan to give an update at the next meeting.

Committee Updates

Branding & Marketing, Economic Development, Finance & Operations, and Standards reports were provided in the agenda packet.

Executive Director's Updates

The Executive Director's Report was included in the agenda packet.

Other Business

- Mt. Vernon Road will not be entirely open until late summer/early fall 2025.
- Coe Road conversion to 2-way traffic requires 45-degree weather for grinding, painting and signage; thus, it has been postponed until this spring.

Adjournment

Jensen moved to adjourn with Greene seconding. The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 a.m.

/pd