

Medical SSMID Commission Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2021, 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m., Zoom Meeting

The Medical 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: Tim Charles, Gordon Epping, Michelle Jensen, Suzy McGrane-Hop, Mary Meisterling, Okpara Rice, Karen Smith, Julie Sterling, Sarah Wickenkamp

Absent: John Albert, Michelle Niermann, Mike Sundall

Guests: Dale Todd – City of Cedar Rapids

Staff: Jessica Komisar, Jesse Thoeming, Phil Wasta

Welcome & Call to Order

Rice welcomed everybody and called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Consent Agenda

Meisterling moved approval of the January minutes and January and February financials with Epping seconding. The minutes, financials and reports were unanimously approved.

New COVID and Vaccination Updates from Commissioners

Epping – PPP updates and information continue to be complex and overwhelming for many. Wasta asked Epping to send him relevant articles or resource links to share in stakeholder updates.

Jensen – new CDC requirements with vaccinations will continue to bring more maneuvering to the workplace.

District Stakeholder Survey Feedback

After the ten questions were approved by the Commission, Wasta began sending surveys via e-mail on February 3. Wasta sent it to a total of 69 recipients which is a combination of business and property owners and received 35 responses – 17 via e-mail and 18 over the phone. Wasta said nearly all were interested and engaged with the questions to assist with the 2021 action strategies. Wasta reviewed survey feedback with the Commission:

- Open Space Maintenance & Improvements
 - 1st Ave E from 10th-12th St Improvement Support – 31 Yes, 2 Other, 0 No
 - District Maintenance/Beautification Support – 33 Yes, 0 No
 - Tree Stump Removal Support – 29 Yes, 2 Other, 2 No
 - Most of the No or Other responses stated the City should be responsible for this effort, not the SSMID. Todd said the City is still focused on removing trees and suggested having a cost share conversation with the City for the stumps. Wasta said he has had conversations about using unused façade improvement funds in conjunction with the City and is comfortable moving forward on this effort if the City participates.
- Economic Development
 - Any ways your business is not being supported? – 24 No, 6 Yes, 3 Other
 - Noticed improvements in areas of economic development? – 28 Yes, 5 Other
 - Child care an issue? – 26 No, 7 Yes
 - Wasta found this interesting and said the ones that said it is not an issue were either a very small organization or it's impacting their employees personally, but not impacting their business.
 - Ways the SSMID can help with commercial real estate? – 20 No, 10 Yes, 3 Other
- Marketing
 - Banner Replacement Support – 29 Yes, 2 Other, 2 No
 - Digital Marketing Support – 30 Yes, 3 Other
- How else can the Medical SSMID help?
 - These answers were very broad and vary, comments provided in packet for Commissioners to review.

2021 Action Strategies & Executive Director Goals

In November 2020 Wasta brought forward a set of proposed 2021 action strategies for review. At the January 2021 meeting where the question of how do we verify that the SSMID is acting in the best interest of the stakeholders was posed which was the moment that launched the survey process. Wasta reviewed the updated, post-survey 2021 action strategies. Epping moved to approve 2021 action strategies with Wickenkamp seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

Czech Village NewBo SSMID Agreement Cancellation Approval

In June 2020 Medical SSMID Commissioners voted to shift 10% of Wasta's time to the Czech Village NewBo SSMID and because the CVNB SSMID put support services out to bid and was awarded to Main Street, the agreement needs to be formally reversed effective January 31, 2021. Jensen approved with Wickenkamp seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

District Marketing Updates

'20/'21 Digital Marketing Campaign

Wasta provided an update on the '20/'21 digital marketing campaign that began November 8, 2020. This campaign highlights small businesses and healthcare. Total ad impressions since the campaign started is 2.16M and total website sessions is 5,535. The February feature business was Firestone and mid-March through mid-April will feature Kathy's Pies.

Potential Medical District Marketing Initiative

At the January Commission meeting, Sundall made a suggestion that we need to focus marketing on the MedQuarter as not only a district but a regional medical district. Wasta said he took that idea to the branding and marketing committee and then to Amperage and discussed if there is a heightened need or opportunity for the MedQuarter with deferred care over the last year due to COVID and increased interest in the coming months due to the vaccine. At Wasta and Jensen's request, Amperage developed a proposal which they are calling an "Awareness Campaign" which would run in addition to the current digital marketing campaign and broaden the marketing reach from a 30-mile radius to a 45-mile radius to attract those 35-64 years of age and in smaller outlying communities who have a choice of what larger city to go to for their health care. Amperage's two-part proposal includes using responsive video ads, Google display responsive ads and an OTT (Over The Top) boost mechanism. The OTT would take streaming video messages and once someone shows interest in the video, it would direct an amplified message to them. Jensen said she thinks this proposal meets the goal based on Commission feedback but have not shared it with the marketing committee yet. Wasta said for the first part of the proposal, responsive video ads and digital marketing, would cost \$10k and the second part, OTT, would be another \$10k for a total of \$20k. Wasta said there's enough underspend in the SSMID and MedQ Inc budgets to easily afford the first part of the proposal and enough in undesignated reserves for the second part of the proposal. Epping agreed there is plenty of room in the budget for either the \$10k or \$20k requests. Epping moved to approve spending up to \$20k for the Awareness Campaign with Charles seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

Executive Director Updates

Make it OK!

Wasta said as of yesterday, 483 people have registered for the event on March 11 at 11 a.m.

Upcoming Commission Member Anniversaries/Re-Elections

Wasta said Epping, Niermann, Smith, Sterling, Sundall and Wickenkamp are up for Commission renewal this year and we will be voting in May for the roster.

MedQuarter Restaurant Promotional Event

Wasta is working on a MedQuarter restaurant promotion focused on the 6 locally owned restaurants in the district from March 22-26 with a heavy emphasis on take-out.

Other Business

With the next Commission meeting being in May, Wasta asked what comfort levels are to return to in-person, socially distanced meetings. Based on mixed Commissioner feedback and vaccine roll-outs, Wasta was asked to check-in a couple of weeks prior to the May meeting to assess.

Adjourn

Epping moved to adjourn the meeting with Meisterling seconding. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 a.m.