



Medical SSMID Commission Meeting Minutes

May 10, 2017

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Tallgrass Business Resources

Present: John Albert, Tim Charles, Gordon Epping, Michelle Jensen, Julianne Thomas, Kathy McCauley, Karen Smith, Julie Sterling, Ted Townsend

Absent: Richard Cooley, Mary Meisterling, Mike Sundall,

Staff: Sherokee Eder, Doug Neumann, Phil Wasta

Guests: Kris Gulick, Casey Drew

Welcome & Call to Order

Charles welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

Consent Agenda

Thomas moved approval of the consent agenda with Albert seconding. The consent agenda was unanimously approved. Epping made note of the two sets of financials, one for Medical SSMID, and one for MedQuarter, Inc.

Discussion- Parkway Improvement Financing Options

Charles reminded Commission Members that the previous discussion was to gain deeper insight, to leverage resources currently available and to leverage anticipated ongoing revenues to scale up projects. Casey Drew, City Finance Director, was brought in to explore some financing options.

Drew informed Commission Members that one option they could consider would be City issued debt. Bonds can be issued for the length of time left on the SSMID, which would collect about \$4.2M. Since the debts have already been issued this year, this would have to start next year. Drew described two different types of bonds, general obligation bonds and urban renewal bonds. Commission Members were told to keep in mind the City can only fund public property. One form of payment suggested would be for the City to retain SSMID revenues. This would come with some sort of commitment or guarantee that the interest would be paid. Drew expressed that the Downtown SSMID did something similar 25 years ago. If the 14 years left until expiration on the SSMID isn't perceived as long enough, the Commission could consider applying to have the SSMID extended to 20 years. Gulick said the interest rates would be around 2.5-3%.

Albert asked if Drew was familiar with the Downtown SSMID, and how this solution worked for them. Wasta passed out the development strategy from 1990 and noted that the Downtown SSMID at the time had less income than what the Medical SSMID has now. Neumann said the SSMID also had a master plan, but that it didn't mean the whole thing had to be done. Some parts of the plan were ultimately decided to be less of a priority. Gulick added that the Downtown SSMID was able to share some costs with underground pipes. Charles asked how to deal with the fact that Medical SSMID and

MedQuarter, Inc. are side by side. Drew said they could be part of the agreement if the Medical SSMID wanted to factor that into it. Charles noted that as of today there were voluntary funds/commitments, and asked if that would have to become an obligation. Drew said that it would need to become an obligation.

Charles said that Epping would be joining the Economic Development Committee to help guide the financial details for the improvement plan. The conversation about Parkway Improvement will continue, but the planning will be up to the Standards Committee.

Wasta asked if there were any other concerns with this approach. Drew said it has to be public domain, which has a bid processes. Albert asked if it could be done at any time or if there were cycles. Drew clarified they usually issue the debts in May.

Thomas expressed she did not recommend extending the SSMID, adding she felt it would be too precarious and would raise too many negatives. Rather than the extension, if the SSMID finished out, Thomas said they would have something to show for what's been done. Thomas also expressed she wanted to make sure the Medical SSMID wasn't taking on responsibilities that the City should be doing.

Review New website

Thomas went through the new MedQuarter website, detailing new features. The front page includes two new features – the “What is the MedQuarter?” video and “Business Spotlight” rotating ads. Also included on the front page is a set of statistics about Iowa's only Medical District. Thomas expressed a few concerns about the functionality of the search features.

Each business in the MedQuarter has a page on the website, and the opportunity to customize the page with photos or videos. Charles asked about smaller businesses that didn't have the resources to customize the page. Wasta clarified that those businesses would be provided with assistance. Epping suggested setting money aside for those who couldn't. Wasta said some of that was done. Thomas showed Kathy's pies as an example of a smaller business. The new website includes maps and directions to the businesses, with the option of a virtual tour.

Thomas expressed, overall the new website was dynamic, just with a few adjustments needed. Traffic on the website will soon start to increase. Townsend asked who would be maintaining the website. Thomas said some of the maintenance was through Amperage, but that events/news would be done through the Economic Alliance. The SSMID's contract with the Economic Alliance allows for a total of 21 hours per month for all services, including website assistance. Thomas recommended looking into the contract, and asking for more hours.

Commission Members discussed principles of advertising events/businesses on the webpage. Wasta said he was excited about the spirit of how it would be used, adding that committee members weren't using it to be self-promotional.

Wasta highlighted a conversation had with site selectors on work that could be done. They don't want to be added to e-mail lists. The website is one of the first things that will turn off potential site selectors. Thomas said the ED part of the website needs improvement. DeNovo and Amperage will be contacted about the producing an End of Life Planning video. Charles thanked Thomas for all of her dedication to the website. McCauley said she thought they needed to give people a reason to continue looking through the website, and they should ask Amperage how to do that. Townsend congratulated Kathy's Pies for making the A List. Commission Members established that the City's website is cross linked with the District's.

Committee Updates

Thomas encouraged Commission Members to read the flier in the packet that Wasta prepared after attending the Heartland Economic Development Training Course in Blue Springs, MO. Charles asked Wasta to go over the training. Wasta said it was important for the MedQuarter to be able to say to a start-up company “We can help you in this way.” Knowing what motivates businesses will help bring them to the MedQuarter. Townsend asked Wasta what tools were needed for Economic Development, “What don’t we have, and what do we need to get?” Wasta presented findings from the training. Workforce Development has become important in Economic Development. There needs to be an ongoing focus on business retention and expansion. The MedQuarter needs to be prepared to respond to requests for information from the Site Selectors. The website should be mobile responsive, and tailored to ‘C Suite’ executives. Commission Members agreed that there needs to be a shared definition of success that everyone agrees is mutually beneficial. Thomas said the MedQuarter brochures were very helpful to the Site Selectors, but thinks more one page handouts targeting specific audiences should be created. Commission Members discussed how to market the area, and what makes it stand out from others. Jensen asked Townsend if he felt his question was answered. Townsend said it was a start.

The Operations Committee is working on moving forward as a process, but will not be in charge of Parkway Improvement. Commission Members discussed what types of people they would add to the committee.

Albert said the Standards Committee was still working with the Lakota Group to develop different models. Charles would like to see ideas brought in. Thomas would like to see a phasing and priorities piece.

Executive Director’s Report

Wasta highlighted the Executive Director’s Report as presented in the agenda packet.

Other Business

Wasta informed the Commission that the construction on 10th Street SE from 4th to 5th Avenues will start in May and last through the summer. The intersection on 4th Avenue will not be affected. Jensen announced that Smith has accepted the position as Vice Chair. Next month will be roll over, Charles will roll off, with Jensen and Smith rolling on as Chair and Vice Chair.

Charles went over key points from the meeting:

- Commission Members congratulated Neumann on his new position as Executive Director of the Economic Alliance.
- More information to come with Economic Development financing options, another opportunity may be explored.
- There was a request for principles to be established for posting events, etc. on the website and social media.
- There was a request to understand the Economic Development tool box more clearly, and to have an effective representation of what the Medical District has.
- There was a request for the Standards Committee to provide updates for the various concepts in Parkway Improvement.
- Elections for Fiscal Year 2017/2018 will be in June.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:24 a.m.