

Medical SSMID Commission Meeting Minutes

November 9, 2022, 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m., PCI Medical Pavilion 1

Present: Eric Dalton, Eric Griggs, Gordon Epping, Pauline Herb, Suzy McGrane-Hop, Russ Nieland, Okpara Rice, Julie Sterling, Michelle Stramel

Absent: Michelle Jensen, Michelle Niermann, Nathan Van Genderen

Guests: Dale Todd – City of Cedar Rapids City Council

Staff: Jessica Komisar, Julie Kraft, Phil Wasta, Caleb Woods

Welcome & Call to Order

Rice called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.

Consent Agenda

Epping moved to approve the consent agenda with Nieland seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

Review SWOT and Results from October Meeting

1. Overwhelmingly, Commissioners want to create a new five-ten year plan. While the city has endured some significant challenges the past three years, it is believed that it's time to take a deep dive into a strategic and long-term plan. Funding stream ends in 2032 so it's important to create and get behind a new plan when renewing. Lakota Group, out of Chicago, did the last plan and was easy to work with. Wasta said he could reengage with them in the Spring and from there, gather a scope of work. Wasta will do an initial feedback outreach to Lakota Group in the meantime.
2. It was also clear there is appetite to raise the profile of the MedQuarter and determine the "why" behind that task before moving forward. Before the launch of MedQ Perks, the focus was on the region to attract patients to the MedQuarter. There were no metrics to determine the success and when Mercy, St. Luke's and PCI are already funding those efforts for their own organizations, was it duplicative? The Commission took a 180 turn and focused our efforts inward in engaging employees, visitors and residents.
3. Create an event for the MedQuarter was discussed, perhaps overshadowed, but it does check many boxes for what the group has interest in. This event would be focused on health AND wellness which encompasses more than traditional health care. Nieland suggested his group be involved from a financial wellness perspective. Reasons to develop an event:
 - Exposes more people to the district
 - Educate people about the district and how they can benefit from it
 - Make the MedQ mean something to the community
 - Engage surrounding neighborhoods
 - Show attractiveness of the MedQ to others who don't visit often
 - Give opportunity to own an event and have something tangible that activates the district

Review 2022 Action Strategies

Wasta reviewed 2022 Action Strategies, full document was provided to Commissioners. Highlights include:

- Ongoing open space maintenance and improvements
- Completion of collaboration with City on stump removal throughout the district
- Ongoing brand expansion
- Completion of develop additional COVID conscious methods to promote District businesses
- Completion of funding for expansion of district beautification and maintenance initiatives
- Interest from Commissioners to continue stakeholder outreach/surveys

Discuss and Approve 2023 Action Strategies

Wasta reviewed draft 2023 Action Strategies. New/edited items include:

- Planning
 - Expansion of planter program
 - Implement Big Belly receptacles in collaboration with Downtown
 - Continued communication with City to assure district is well maintained under MOA
 - Work with involved parties to guide child care initiative to implementation

- Assemble resources and schedule necessary meetings to generate new 5-year plan
- Marketing & Management
 - Implement second phase of MedQ Perks to further engage employees, visitors, stakeholders
 - Develop district event with focus on health & wellness
- Financing
 - Continue to track funding for parkway improvement projects identified in FY'23 budget and preliminary FY'24-'26 budgets
 - Assess funding options for district tree replacement under ReLeaf program
- Construction
 - Develop final designs, budgets, RFPs and contracts for 10th Street from 1st-A Ave NE for 2023 construction
 - Develop final designs, budgets, RFPs and contracts for 8th Ave/10th St/Mt. Vernon Rd roundabout project for 2023-2024 construction
 - Develop final designs, budgets, RFPs and contracts for A Ave NE from 7th-10th St for 2024 construction

Herb moved to approve the 2023 Action Strategies with McGrane-Hop seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

2023 Commission Meeting Schedule

Wasta asked Commissioners if there is interest in changing the timing of meetings. Currently the Commission meets every other month starting in January on the second Wednesday from 8:00-9:30 a.m. There has been significant changes on the Commission since this schedule was established. Epping suggested sending a survey to all Commissioners to gather feedback. Sterling asked if there is a Zoom option, Wasta said that gets more difficult with state guidelines for how a meeting is to be conducted post-pandemic but can look into that. Wasta will send out a survey by email.

District Marketing

MedQ Perks

Wasta and Woods presented a new logo for the MedQ Perks holiday edition which will be launched next week. 2022 will close out with the same pass but with new Bandwango updates and features, looking at entering a point system program in 2023. Another change in the system is businesses will now be able to update their own information instead of sending it into our team and then sending it onto Bandwango. This change should cut down on the timing of changing information and specials. To date, there have been approximately 1,000 sign-ups with 336 redemptions. Woods said individuals will have to re-sign-up but it will allow us to change the theme and move to the new point system. Wasta said he is excited about the changes to Bandwango and looking forward to taking this program to the next level in 2023.

Woods said with the new Downtown website, which should be live in the next couple of months, will have a map with businesses and will link to MedQuarter to ensure cross-district collaboration.

2022 Holiday Lights, Display, Banners

Wasta presented new holiday banners that are in collaboration with Downtown. Banners will be going up yet this month and was an initiative of the branding and marketing committee. Wasta said holiday lights will also be expanding in 2022 based on positive 2021 feedback.

Executive Director's Updates

Child Care Center Update

Wasta provided an update on the child care center initiative. The group is currently working on a rendering.

2023 Planter Plan

There will be 12 additional planters in 2023. This expansion is already budgeted. The self-watering planters worked extremely well in 2022 and for the most part have been flawless and maintenance is a fraction compared to Downtown planters and watering.

2024 8th Ave/10th St/Mt. Vernon Rd Roundabout & A Ave 7th/10th St

Standards committee will review 60% plans in early December. We will see plans during the winter months for the A Ave from 7th to 10th St NE project.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 a.m.