

**Medical SSMID Commission Meeting Minutes**

**September 9, 2015**

**8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.**

**Tallgrass Business Resources**

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

**Absent:** Mary Meisterling

**Guests:** Jason Wright

**Economic Alliance Staff:** Phil Wasta, Sarika Bhakta, Doug Neumann

**Welcome & Call to Order**

Charles called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. Charles thanked Townsend for his hard work as past Chair and the Commission presented a framed rendering of the district as a token of their appreciation. Additionally, Charles requested an executive session at the end of the meeting for Wasta's 90 day review.

**Consent Agenda**

Wasta shared with the Commission that the City's fiscal year wrapped up at the end of June, thus next month the SSMID will have more accurate financial numbers to review. In progress of transitioning from City's accounting process to SSMID's own banking, hence currently utilizing the Economic Alliance to make payables and then will reimburse them. Wasta briefly reviewed September's payables with the Commission which were included in the agenda packet. Thomas moved approval of the Consent Agenda, Cooley seconded. The Commission unanimously approved.

**Professional Services Contract with Economic Alliance Discussion in Preparation for 10/14/15**

Wasta reported to the Commission that a final proposal of the professional services contract with the EA will be shared at the October meeting as that is when the 120 days are up. He indicated he is tracking what services he is reaching out to for assistance and the fact of the matter is that the value of being at the EA as it relates to connections and networking opportunities is very beneficial. Wasta hopes to tend to lessen the work needed, but realizes areas such as communications and marketing, public policy, etc. will be necessary. Townsend asked what was budgeted for the professional services line item, granted it was a placeholder until further assessment was made. Townsend also noted in full disclosure that he is the incoming Policy Board Chair for the EA, hence will abstain from voting on this matter when it comes up on next month's agenda. Neumann also informed Townsend that at the last several commission meetings that Townsend might have missed, the Commission had discussed bringing an amended budget back to the Commission due to other budget items that were also being reviewed in addition to the professional services item.

**Committee Updates, Next Steps and Timeline**  
**Branding/Marketing**

Thomas indicated the MedQuarter brochure/map progress has been slow but final version was submitted to de Novo yesterday thus anticipate the printed version to be out in a month's time. The visitor video script has been approved, doing B-roll footage, filming in studio with the red "Q" and footage of biking in MedQuarter. The second generation of banners will look like the pop-up banner on one side with images on the flip side. The Especially For You Race will co-brand MedQuarter on the street banners indicating "Starting in the MedQuarter". Thomas informed the Commission that at the

Global Festival, participants have the opportunity to write in the middle of a big “O” as to what they think about the festival and she felt this might be a good concept for the EFY Race in order to get a sense as to what participants think the MedQuarter represents. Thomas also indicated Informatics has provided cost estimate for an annual retainer plan for website services which also includes enhanced services such as a blog but it still needs to go through committee for further discussion.

### **Operations**

Wasta reported on behalf of Meisterling indicating all 108 brackets will be replaced under warranty even though outside of warranty period. Street sign topper design and locations were shown to the Commission reflecting a cost-sharing estimate of approximately \$3500/City (replacement of bad signs/poles as part of maintenance) and \$5200/SSMID (all toppers, fabrication and portion of labor). Thomas moved approval of the street sign project, Gordon seconded. The Commission unanimously approved.

Wasta reported that signage/wayfinding is still on pause for the time being and not pursuing RFP for design services until the CR Convention & Visitors Bureau (CRCVB) completes their rebranding. In the meantime, the task force is working with Iowa DOT for signage on I-380 N/S. Thomas expressed concern that the signage/wayfinding timeline keeps on getting delayed and suggested to the Commission to consider temporary signage that Sundall proposed a year ago as an interim solution. Wasta did indicate that the City's funding of this project is via CRCVB and they won't support this initiative if the SSMID does not go through this process even if it is a delay in the timeline. Neumann suggested inviting the CRCVB's new Executive Director Aaron McCreight to the next Commission meeting as the City is entrusting him/CRCVB to lead the process, thus it would be valuable to visit with him and get the opportunity to also meet him. The Commission liked this idea and will invite McCreight to the next meeting. The Commission was also in consensus for Wasta to find a path to proceed forward with the interim signage/wayfinding as soon as possible that will ultimately fit into the larger plan envisioned by all.

### **Standards**

Albert updated the Commission on the composition of the Standards Committee who met a few weeks ago. City staff was also present (Seth Gunnerson & Jasmine Almoayed). Now that the MedQuarter 's Overlay District has been created, the committee worked on establishing a Design Review Technical Advisory Committee (DRTAC) who would be responsible for reviewing and providing comments on proposed developments submitted by developers to ensure they are within the design guidelines. Albert indicated they might not need an official DRTAC via the City as the Medical SSMID Commission is also an extension of the City, but city staff is assessing this matter further.

Albert also reported on the five-member Façade Improvement Program Committee, consisting of two non-voting members (Wasta and Jasmine Almoayed/City). Albert informed the Commission that the City's matching funds they originally thought they would have upfront, might not be available until July 2016 at the earliest. City staff is exploring several options; including reimbursing the Medical SSMID should they pay upfront. Townsend indicated the Commission chose to do an Overlay District in order to have enhanced standards, thus recommended to keep moving forward as funds are available on the SSMID's end. Wasta informed the Commission there already is interest by property owners such as the History Museum to utilize this grant. Albert said he will also reach out to Councilmember Pat Shey who is the liaison to the SSMID to get additional information.

Albert indicated the committee ran out of time so landscaping was not discussed, but there was consensus to establish standards and aesthetics around this matter so it will be discussed at a future date.

### **Lakota One-Year Update/Five-Year Action Strategy Final Drafts**

Albert reported the final five-year action strategy was included in the agenda packet. He indicated the plan enables the Commission to internally assess whether or not progressing on track and the good news is that they are.

### **Banking Relationship for MedQuarter**

Wasta reported that he is seeking to establish a checking account in the Medical SSMID's name, but since it is not an entity or a company under the state of Iowa the Commission might have to re-activate the MedQuarter, Inc. and then DBA MedQuarter. The MedQuarter, Inc. also has some seed money left over. Dual signatory on checks is an internal requirement/policy and not one policed by Bank of the West. Wasta is also working with the City to transition the remaining funds into the bank account.

Sundall brought up the suggestion that perhaps some of these in-house administrative items could be vetted by the quasi-executive committee so more time is allocated to focus on strategic initiatives during Commission meetings. Charles thought that was a good suggestion, but also felt that these issues the executive director is facing enables the Commission to gain a better understanding of the structural policies that need to be in place.

### **Policy Statement Spending Authority & Project Bids**

Wasta presented the Commission with a Policy Statement on Spending Authority and Project Bids. The consensus was to table the policy on Project Bids and revisit the information with the smaller executive session with leadership and committee chairs and then bring forth recommendation for review and vote by the full Commission.

The policy statement reflected the executive director's spending authority to enter into contracts/agreements, approve invoices and sign checks for payments of any budgeted expense up to \$10,000. Additionally, for any unbudgeted items of up to \$5,000 can be approved by a Committee Chair, Commission Chair or Commission Vice-Chair but would also require a dual signature of the executive director and the Commission Chair (or Vice-chair in the absence of Commission Chair). There was discussion pertaining to the executive director having latitude to execute on budgeted items. There was also suggestion to decrease the unbudgeted items to \$2,500 vs. \$5,000 which lead to some feedback that the policy can always be revisited. Epping moved approval of the Policy Statement for executive director's authority for budgeted items of up to \$10,000 and unbudgeted items of up to \$5,000, seconded by Thomas. Motion passed 10-1 with Ted Townsend voting no.

### **Creative Corridor Regional Vision Strategy**

Wasta shared with the Commission a draft scope of work outline for the Creative Corridor Regional Vision Strategy provided by Market Street which was attached to the agenda packet. He stressed there are many strategic plans in existence, but this is not another one of those strategies as this would be the first one ever conducted for the 7-counties in Iowa's Creative Corridor. Successful communities approach visioning on a regional level as in the case of Central Iowa with their Capital Crossroads Strategy which encompasses Des Moines, Ames, etc. Wasta emphasized that as a regional medical district it is appropriate to have a seat at the table and be a participant in the process and be recognized. The consultant cost to conduct a regional vision strategy is approximately \$300,000. Current investors of the regional vision strategy plan are Kirkwood, Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation, Economic Alliance, UWEI, ECICOG, UofI, and ICAD. The range of funding support from these investors is \$20,000-\$60,000. The investment for the MedQuarter would be \$10,000/year for two years, thus a total investment of \$20,000.

Charles agreed that this would be a great investment, but had some concerns of the MedQuarter overextending itself. Gordon indicated he was part of the Iowa's Creative Corridor branding process and that it helps to market the region. Townsend indicated that the regional vision strategy reflects how collectively as a region does the creative corridor promote and grow the region, hence more

than just marketing. He stressed healthcare is a very important portion to the regional landscape so it will be addressed regardless if the MedQuarter has a seat at the table. The Central Iowa's Capital Crossroads did a great job of bringing adversarial groups together. Townsend indicated he will recuse himself for voting on this matter as he is the incoming Policy Board Chair for the Economic Alliance.

Questions were posed as to what is the MedQuarter's vested interest based on the 7-county and who gains. Wasta shared with the Commission that he inquired with the three large medical entities in the district as to how many of their patients are being pulled from the 7-county that come to the MedQuarter as visitors as well. It turned out to be a significant percentage. As to the question of who gains, it was noted that there might be three large entities in Cedar Rapids, but there is a larger one down south at University of Iowa hence who will benefit.

Townsend shared how the process in Des Moines gave the Ames representatives a sense of being a valued partner in the process as Iowa State University was very assertive participant in the process thus didn't get steam-rolled. It was a collective process; collective plan identifying what can be done to bring more interstate commerce into the region as it is a trickle-down effect for everyone else in the region. The process will allow leveraging collective assets for Eastern Iowa due to regionalization via regional vision strategy.

Epping moved approval of MedQuarter's \$10,000/year for two years investment into the regional vision strategy, McCauley seconded. The Commission unanimously approved; Townsend and Thomas abstained from voting.

#### **Informatics Update**

This agenda topic was addressed earlier in the meeting.

#### **Executive Director's Report**

Due to the lack of time, Wasta handed out the report for Commission to read/review.

#### **Other Business**

There was no other business stated.

#### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m.