



**Cedar Rapid Downtown SSMID Commission Minutes**  
**January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020 | 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.**  
**Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance**

**Present:** Dave Drown, Emily Ellingson, Darryl High, Dawn Jaffray, James Klein, Linda Mattes, Matt Miller, Randy Rings, Craig Stephan, David Sorg, Joe Terfler

**Absent:** Andrew Morf, Fred Timko

**Staff:** Jessica Komisar, Jesse Thoeming, Phil Wasta

**Welcome, Introductions & Call to Order**

Mattes welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

Mattes introduced Klein as the commission's newest member. Mattes announced High as the new Vice Chair. Sorg motioned approval with Jaffray seconding. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Approval of November Minutes**

Ellingson moved approval of the November minutes with Stephan seconding. The November minutes were unanimously approved.

**City Hall Meeting Report Back**

Mattes said there was a City Finance Committee meeting this afternoon that Thoeming, High and herself attended. At that meeting, City councilmembers expressed their concerns in regard to the cleanliness of Downtown including overflowing trashcans and cigarette butts. They have asked the SSMID to create and present a plan on how the SSMID will improve Downtown district cleanliness. After much discussion, Commissioners agreed to have Thoeming and High draft the following plan and information and send to Commissioners for review before presenting to the City next month:

- Details of SSMID responsibilities and how the SSMID operates
- Review of response time indicated in the MOA
- Big Belly trash receptacles – includes trash and recycling elements, how many we would purchase and map of where they are needed the most, hours of "operation" of when they would be emptied once alerted that they are full
- If the City wants more trash and garbage surveillance, how much it would cost to add an additional person

**2019 Budget Overview**

Thoeming said there was a \$159k underspend from the 2019 budget. The three line items that resulted in the underspending was WOW project, special projects and façade improvements. The one line item that went over projected was holiday lights/décor. Thoeming said that was somewhat of a result of the supplies being stuck in customs for three weeks, crews working overtime to make sure it was installed by Thanksgiving, prepping the lights, but mostly due to the significant amount of hours spent troubleshooting the lingering power issues throughout Downtown.

**WOW Project**

The WOW project committee first met in December of 2018 and since then, they have landed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street/Ave projector to show art, images, films and possibly events on the side of the Armstrong building. They have completed a demo of the projector which went well. Thoeming has obtained a quote for \$57k from Sound Concepts who would be responsible for the projector, enclosure, computer with software, pole, labor, electrical circuit and engineering fees. Thoeming also received a quote for \$15k from Nesper Signs for window covers. After conversations with the City, Thoeming said it might be best to install this on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave side and not the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street side. Commissioners discussed content for the projector and if there would be possibilities for us to create it in-house and what type of licensing issues we might run into if we want to show films or a football game. Thoeming showed abstract light art concepts from an artist that could be played when nothing else is planned. Costs for 1 video is \$8,500 and increases to \$40k for 8 videos. The costs include files, software, an Intel Mini PC, wireless keyboard and mouse. Commissioners felt those prices might be too high for the type of content it included and suggested to continue researching other opportunities. Komisar suggested including Iowa BIG students. Follow-ups for this project include:

- Determining content and who controls it
- Review ordinances that Thoeming obtained from the City to ensure we are compliant
- Review licensing for games, shows and film
- Letter of agreement from Jon Dusek to project onto the Armstrong building
- Meet with a TV station to see if there's any potential interaction with them and their content

Mattes said she would like to see this project wrapped up before summertime. Thoeming said he will get the WOW Project committee back together to discuss the next steps and will send an e-mail update to Commissioners.

### **Proposal for 2020 Public Art**

Thoeming presented on existing public art projects that will be taking shape this year.

- American Discovery Trail Mural – completed in September 2019 with a \$35k budget, has received positive local feedback and from the American Discovery Trail national group.
- Dash Coffee Roasters Mural – will be complete by March 2020 with a \$12k budget primarily funded by the SSMID
- UFG Pocket Park – City and Visual Arts Commission led project, removable panels so the art can be easily relocated if/when UFG expands, completion expected by April
- DoubleTree Lantern - \$100k budget, City and Visual Arts Commission led project, completion expected by end of 2020, 300 pictures of Cedar Rapids hanging in a lantern/chandelier fashion in the lobby
- Popoli Mural – Popoli is an English word for “People” which is what the mural is centered around, led by Timko, not SSMID driven

Thoeming presented an original concept for a new Downtown SSMID led mural for 2020 surrounding the celebration of flood recovery and salutation of flood control/mitigation. This mural would be on the side of the U.S. Cellular Center parking ramp facing 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave along the trail. It would be seen from not only 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave but also 1<sup>st</sup> Ave and the interstate. This mural would be approximately 2x the square footage of the American Discovery Trail mural and is estimated to cost \$60k. Mattes said she would like to see more vibrant and action-oriented murals moving forward from the flood. Jaffray suggested incorporating a biking element as it will be along the trail and the biking community has grown immensely and Rings suggested a ConnectCR theme. Thoeming said ParkCR is on board to provide downlighting, just as they did for the A.D.T mural and it will be presented to the Visual Arts Commission in February. Thoeming will work with Murals & More to obtain other mural design options including the biking and ConnectCR themes and to release the RFP. If the timeline stays on schedule, work would begin in spring with a completion goal in time for the Memorial Day weekend Farmers Market. Sorg asked if there are other location possibilities. Thoeming said he has asked others in the community and have received positive feedback on this current location.

### **Project Updates**

#### Race for the Space

Thoeming recapped Race for the Space as being a business competition to attract destination style business, new age retailers or some sort of start up to come Downtown. The winning business would be awarded with free rent for a year and marketing/promotional support from the Economic Alliance. The Downtown property owner RFP has been released

and Thoeming is hoping to create a bullpen of a handful of location options after a month. After that, the program itself will be heavily marketed to gain awareness and understanding and business applications will be launched for about 6 weeks. The Community Development Innovation Council selection committee will be reviewing applicants based on an internal rubric/scoring system.

#### Alleyway Visioning Event

Thoeming said 3-4 commissioners have agreed to be a part of this event which will take place on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> for 2.5 hours and will be facilitated by Confluence at their NewBo office.

#### Branding

Thoeming reminded commissioners to complete their commissioner survey for our re-branding efforts. After those are complete, de Novo will create and launch a public quiz and then a creative escape room style meeting with 12-15 stakeholders. They will then collect data from all three of those channels.

#### **Other Business**

Stephen said he is happy to have the lights installed on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street as the section in front of Iowa Brewing had been quite dark.

#### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 5:27 p.m.