

CIVIC CENTER COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

December 17, 2020

Attendees:

CCC Members: Chairman John Harrity, Commissioner Jim Knowlton, Commissioner Lowell Alexander,

City: John Odell, Candee Raphaelson

SMG: Sandy Dunn, Jim Moughan, Melissa Bishop

Call to Order: Chairman Harrity brought the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. John Odell took the roll call. Commissioner Brissette absent. Commissioners Knowlton and Alexander present.

Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: Chairman Harrity asked for a Motion to Accept the Minutes of October 8th and November 17, 2020. Commissioner Alexander made a Motion to Accept, Commissioner Knowlton seconded. All in favor.

UMass Use of DCU Center Space: Sandy Dunn explained that UMass had requested to utilize the ball room space in the Convention Center specifically for training for nurses and staff for the field hospital. It will be on a rent basis and SMG will provide all the security, etc. Chairman Harrity asked when and Sandy Dunn said tomorrow. Chairman Harrity asked for a Motion to Allow and Commissioner Alexander seconded. All in favor.

Project Status Updates: John Odell reminded that no movement on Phase II until the field hospital is no longer in the building. With respect to the vault, National Grid has asked for space to be reserved permanently 24/7 for access in case of an emergency. In order to accommodate this a corridor and additional meeting room for vendors will be constructed. This will require additional engineering so an amendment to add \$58,000 for the necessary design work is being requested. In addition, testing to assure that the new corridor will not impact truck access is also part of the design. Sandy arranged a real time demonstration with a mock layout of the proposed and it works. Chairman Harrity asked exactly where in the convention hall the corridor would be located and John Odell explained exactly where it will be created from the Commercial Street side entrance, including the access for the manhole and the small conference room to be built. Chairman Harrity was concerned about the timeline and John said the schematic can be done now and be ready to go when feasible. Chairman Harrity expressed concern about cost and John explained won't know final amount until the design is in. Commissioner Alexander asked about a limit for the size of vehicles and Sandy responded that the maximum vehicle on the road being 73 feet they used that size vehicle from Local 170 to make sure it fit. There were changes made in design to make sure this would be possible. Chairman Harrity asked about the flooding issues and Sandy confirmed no problems and plan for permanent covers so matting not needed. John asked for

a vote on amendment. Commissioner Alexander made a Motion to Accept, Commissioner Knowlton seconded, all in favor.

John Odell moved on to the cameras and phones explaining that, with the help of Sandy and her team, we have managed to change the amount of cameras needed and are ready to go out to bid. With the hospital there now may change the timeline. The total cost will exceed the original estimate due to the fiber change-looking at \$800,000.00 and confirmed with CFO and City Manager to be sure funding available and it is. Chairman Harrity asked if cameras that may have been duplicated have been removed and John reiterated that due to the help of Sandy's team they were able to save quite a bit of money and that is included. Chairman Harrity then asked about the EDM letter in the packet and if something had to be signed and John said it would after it went through the Budget process.

Bob Cousy Statue Status Update: Chairman Harrity referred to John Odell about this update. John said text is finalized for the statue and Mr. Cousy has approved. John thanked Chairman Harrity for all his help coordinating all the visits with Mr. Cousy. Chairman Harrity relayed that they met with Mr. Cousy and named the trophy and listed some of his many accomplishments and quotes over the years on the statue. Mr. Cousy and his two daughters were pleased and John said the text has been forwarded to the sculptor.

SMG Reporting: Sandy Dunn reported the Covid-19 field hospital is up and running smoothly. Snow was a bit of a challenge on the overnight, but not a major concern. As of the meeting date, there were 27 patients currently in the hospital with 77 seen in the first two weeks of operation. Last time the field hospital was opened, in the spring of 2020, in two months' time the total was 139. The expectation is for the numbers to increase due to the expected holiday surges. In addition, the philosophy of care has changed so community rooms have been set up so patients are not so isolated. UMass believes this will aid in recovery. Bed count is now 240 beds available. Staffing has increased with security and HVAC, electricians etc. However, many laid off DCU/ASM employees have taken other jobs so more staff is still needed.

Melissa Bishop updated the Commission regarding the financials. Window service has been curtailed to one day a week. The yearly Audit was completed and no adjustments were recommended. A representative from the Auditing firm will attend the next meeting with further details. The financial statements show that at this point, due to the pandemic shutdown, ASM is projecting an approximately 2,000,000 dollar loss for fiscal year 2021. Sandy added there have been cash flow issues and that John and other city staff including the City Manager and CFO are helping deal with that.

The Railers have canceled their season and their staff is down from 25 to 4 and they have moved their offices to Main Street. Worcester Wares has also moved there with the Railers provided the Worcester Wares the space rent free. The windows on the hospital side have been wrapped with positive messages and Sandy is hoping other advertisers will come in and wrap more windows for marketing purposes. NCAA hockey has committed for 2022-2026 but did not get basketball. Reign Café expanded hours and lines are down Foster Street for the Glazy Susan donuts. The Arena was used to film a movie before the field hospital opened. Landscaping was done in house to save money. The transformer upgrade project has also been completed. John Odell explained that the new transformers are more efficient and will be more reliable over time. The ionization project to improve indoor air quality at the DCU and other city and school facilities was first was also completed so that the air quality would be filtered prior to the hospital reopening. It essentially cleans the air by neutralizing pathogens and clumping together small

dust particles so that the HVAC filtering systems can work more effectively. Sandy noted that the staff and city were pleased to get the work done before the hospital opened.

Sales: Jim Moughan explained he is in daily contact with Discover Central Mass as well as other marketing vendors. Hotels are open, though at reduced capacity, and a video was made to let the community know. Hotel occupancy in Worcester has been doing better than the region as a whole. This is in part due to the field hospital which has and will continue to bring in nurses and other hospital support staff. Jim is also keeping in touch with clients. All events have been canceled through March, but a few things are still on hold pending what happens for April, May and June. Some colleges are still hoping to have in person ceremonies. Sandy said she was on a worldwide Zoom call and there is a lot of optimism. Australia is slated to be first to hold events.

Chairman Harrity asked if anything else and John Odell once again commended Sandy, Jim and Melissa and their skeletal staff for all their hard work. The next meeting was scheduled for January 18th at 9 a.m. via Webex.

Chairman Harrity made a Motion to Adjourn at 9:45 a.m. All in favor.