

DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE OF SYRACUSE, INC.

July 21, 2015

**CenterState CEO Conference Room
115 West Fayette Street**

3:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Members: Chairman Breuer, Messrs., Howard, Carroll, Dunn, Fiorito, Fisher, Lemp, Maxwell, Nutting, Simpson, Tripoli, Mss. Gagliano, Littlejohn

Staff: Mss. Holbrook, Maggiore, Reed, Sherlock and Treier; Msrs. Campanie

Guests: Hon. Nader Maroun, Syracuse Common Council

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Breuer welcomed guests and members present.

II. Administration

A. Approval of May 19, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Chairman Breuer asked the Board if there were any questions on the May 19, 2015 Meeting Minutes, and there were none. Chairman Breuer asked for a motion to approve the May 19 Meeting Minutes. Mr. Fiorito moved and Mr. Tripoli seconded; the motion was unanimously carried.

III. Financial Report as of June 30, 2015

Ms. Treier reviewed the Financial Report as of June 30, 2015, which is a draft report of the Downtown Committee's fiscal year-end. Ms. Treier reported under Income, that Year-To-Date Income over expenses was \$2,460. She noted that the Herald Place and Franklin Street parking lots did well and came in slightly over budget. Ms. Treier reported that the Downtown Syracuse

Foundation contributed \$5,500 to the Downtown Living Tour income line as the event produced less revenue than anticipated this year. Ms. Treier reported the Downtown Committee annual meeting's income was \$12,160. Under Miscellaneous, the Year-to-date numbers include rental income from the CMBID and \$10,000 from the 50/50 City Program. When the Downtown Committee spends \$10,000 on streetscape items, the city will match with \$10,000. Ms. Treier reported under Expenses that YTD, Administration is under budget at 89%. Salaries and Fringes is at 92% of budget. Office rent came under budget at 77% due to a re-allocation of space. Expenses came in a little higher than budgeted for the annual meeting due to the selection of the speaker and the technology needs.

Ms. Treier reported under Environmental Maintenance, Expenses that Salaries/Fringes are at 112% of budget due to winter overtime expenses. Operations and Maintenance expense also came in over budget and are associated with wintertime activities like increased fuel consumption. Special projects came in over budget as expected as the legal fees expense line was re-deployed to support additional streetscapes projects. Ms. Treier reported that under Marketing, Salaries and Fringes are under budget at 92%. Printing is over at 166% reflects the cost of the annual report. Advertising is over at 137% which includes Time Warner Cable airtime and the production of two new commercials. Ms. Treier reported under Security, Salaries and Fringes is over budget at 112% due to funding additional downtown patrols, and it does include the estimate for the workers compensation reimbursement. Insurance is over budget as expected due to a new policy issued January 1, 2015. The Operational/Educational line is at 187% due to the equipment and a uniform needed for the additional officer which will be a one-time expense. The funds that had been set aside for camera maintenance were re-allocated for other security expenditures. Ms. Treier reported that there is no change under Economic Development Expenses, and the Transportation Expense lines for Franklin Street and Herald Place are as expected.

Ms. Treier asked if there were any questions on the Financial Report, and there were none. Mr. Breuer asked for a motion to accept the financial report subject to audit. Mr. Fiorito moved and Mr. Fisher seconded. The motion was unanimously carried.

Ms. Treier announced to the Board that the Downtown Committee has hired a new Economic Development Program Manager – Heather Schroeder who will be starting on August 24.

IV. Staff Reports

A. Arts and Crafts Festival

Ms. Reed announced that the 45th Annual Arts and Crafts Festival (an anchor event of ArtsWeek) is scheduled to run this weekend, July 24-26 in Columbus Circle. Attendance is expected to be around 50,000 people. The festival features 162 exhibitors from 22 states and Canada, (60% are repeat and 40% are new vendors.) There will be craft demonstrations, strolling entertainment and a variety of food vendor stations. Ms. Reed noted that AmeriCu has been the festival's title sponsor since 2009. Dunkin' Donuts, a new sponsor this year, will be providing complimentary coffee and doughnuts to the artists. Ms. Reed noted that the Downtown Committee received a NYS grant through Senator DeFrancisco for the festival, as well as grant support from CNYArts for Artsweek. The festival also received operational support from the City and the County for which the Downtown Committee is grateful. Ms. Reed also noted that the Downtown Committee hired a service to take aerial pictures of the event.

B. Artsweek

Ms. Holbrook announced that the "Artsweek" celebration started yesterday, July 20 and runs through July 26. Artsweek is a collaboration of more than 20 arts and cultural organizations who present a week-long program of visual and performing arts events linked to a pedestrian corridor encompassing Columbus Circle, Hanover Square, Clinton Square and Armory Square. She distributed a promotional handout to the board which shows a schedule of the events taking place throughout the week. These brochures will also be distributed to participants and hotels in the area. Ms. Holbrook thanked CNYArts which has been a key supporter of organizational and publicity efforts.

C. Quality of Life

Mr. Campanie reported that all but one of the security cameras are up and operational. The last camera is located on Fayette Street and is reliant on completion of Connective Corridor work. He shared with the Board examples of the cameras' picture quality from different pole positions throughout downtown. He stated that there has already been a reduction in suspicious activity due to the camera monitoring in some areas. He noted that the

Downtown Security team now has a visual of the street area behind the MOST which they did not have before.

Mr. Campanie introduced a pilot social service program partnership which is referred to as “The Trio.” The Trio consists of three social service providers with various backgrounds and service areas who look for people in crisis (homeless, substance abusers or mentally ill.) By undertaking a more proactive approach of service delivery, they are able to focus on getting individuals into services and curb the harmful activity. Mr. Campanie also noted that after a meeting both he and Ms. Treier had with Deputy Chief Joe Cecile, the Trio will work with an officer to help identify individuals in need of assistance. Ms. Treier added that the SPD will add two extra downtown patrols (bike or foot) from 4:00 – 8:00 p.m. as well as 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., which are busier times for outdoor dining and cafés. Mr. Breuer asked if the homeless or panhandling activity has gone into other locations. Mr. Campanie responded that he has not seen it move into other locations, and that some activity has been curbed, but not completely. He also noted that it is a 45-day waiting period to find a residence for a homeless person. Mr. Breuer asked with the move of the Samaritan Center to the north side, if there has been a change on Montgomery Street. Mr. Campanie responded he did see a change in activity.

V. Consensus

Ms. Littlejohn gave a presentation to the Board on the Consensus progress report by the Commission on Local Government Modernization. Consensus is a group of 19 individuals co-chaired by Jim Walsh, Kim Richardson and Neil Murphy looking at government modernization. The commission has received funding support from NYS Senators John A. DeFrancisco and David J. Valesky. The commission is looking for ways our region can be competitive in our local and global economy, retain jobs and help Onondaga County’s government.

Ms. Littlejohn presented population data from 1940 to 2010. In 1990, the City of Syracuse dropped out of the top 100 population ranking. Onondaga County’s population growth has remained stagnant. The commission is looking at every level of service in the government and asking the taxpayers what they are looking for, and the responses have focused on more cost-effective and efficient services. They are exploring a wide range of solutions to modernize and

re-organize the government. The commission has rolled out a baseline review which is a shared understanding of “who does what and at what cost” within the county government and service profiles. The baseline report also revealed that we are a very inter-connected community that consists of 1 city, 19 towns and 18 villages. The local government collectively spent \$1.7 billion in 2013 (which has grown 33% over the past decade and is still growing.) Property taxes account for approximately 18% of total local government revenue. Ms. Littlejohn pointed out that the largest functional category - Social Services takes the biggest portion at \$267 million. She also shared delivery data on the functional baseline categories of Police, Public Works, Fire and Tax Assessment services which showed varying differences in coverage scale. Ms. Littlejohn reported that the commission is currently engaged in public discussions on baseline findings and options. The commission is also benchmarking other municipalities and evaluating best practices throughout the state and country to form options for the region’s consideration, which they plan to present to the community this fall. Their goal is to issue a final report by the end of this year. Ms. Littlejohn noted that the public is asking why schools are not included in the process, and she responded that the schools are a very important component and should be examined. Other comments received include desiring relief from unfunded mandates from Albany and Washington, needing a more responsive local government, and creating new businesses and jobs. The themes of the discussions are indicating that a hybrid balance of the size of governance services, and finding a better way to drive service efficiency with technology may be an option. Ms. Littlejohn provided the website of www.consensuscny.com where board members and others can find the full report and weigh in.

Mr. Tripoli asked if any recommendations will be part of the baseline report. Ms. Littlejohn noted that the report will be an analysis based on interviews with the county and the city, as well as feedback from public engagement.

Mr. Nutting inquired if this report includes State Police and Ms. Littlejohn responded that it includes Sheriffs.

Mr. Fisher noted that it will be important that everyone have an equal say on spending if towns and villages start consolidating services.

Ms. Littlejohn noted that by September, the committee is planning to issue options for the community to comment on. Mr. Fisher asked if they will be listing any service delivery successes other than the county. Ms. Littlejohn noted the committee would like to highlight the model of shared services and hope to add more success stories.

Ms. Treier asked Ms. Littlejohn what cities were used as benchmark cities. Ms. Littlejohn responded: Louisville KY, Princeton NJ, Nashville TN, Indianapolis, IN and Detroit, MI.

Ms. Littlejohn concluded that the commission is looking at all options and stressed that change does not happen overnight. She added that the commission will be seeking continual feedback and advice through this process. Their objective is to test how we did in 10 years and hold ourselves accountable as a community.

Chairman Breuer asked if there were any more questions on Ms. Littlejohn's Consensus report, and there were none.

VI. Public Comments

Chairman Breuer asked the board if they had any comments on the format of the annual meeting to please let Ms. Treier know. Mr. Breuer added that he had heard a lot of good comments on the meeting, including feedback on the annual report.

Chairman Breuer asked if anyone has heard anything on the I-81 viaduct study. Ms. Gagliano noted that she hasn't heard anything and that things are quiet, though transportation engineering is still busy.

Mr. Fisher reported that Marriott expects to be booking rooms at the renovated Marriott Downtown Syracuse hotel beginning May 1, 2016. He also reported that the downtown library construction is underway at the Galleries and is expected to be completed in June, 2016. The SUNY Upstate IT Department will occupy the 5th floor by April 2016; the Upstate Financing Department will be located on the 4th Floor by October 2016. These floors were formerly

occupied by the Library. Mr. Fisher noted that this relocation will bring an additional 400 employees to downtown.

VII. Other Business and Adjourn

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Next Board meeting:

**September 22, 2015, 3:00 p.m.
CenterState CEO, 115 West Fayette Street**