

(Email dated July 8, 2022)

Wendy,

Please see attachment and answers to your questions below.

Who was/is on the MSD Committee?

For historical context, an Executive/Advisory Committee of 9 individuals (2 in an advisory capacity) was initially appointed on June 11, 1985, to study issues and projects within the MSD and to make recommendations to the Board of Aldermen. A motion was made for the committee to come back and present an outline of those projects and plans. In 1986, the committee presented its recommendations to the Board of Aldermen. Subsequent to 1985, the Board of Aldermen never reconstituted the Executive/Advisory Committee. Nonetheless, the group continued to organize themselves and to make recommendations to the Board of Aldermen from time to time.

Therefore, there is no Board of Aldermen-appointed advisory committee. The informal group continues to meet from time to time. When meetings occur, the Ward 1 Alderman invites an informal group of downtown property owners and business representatives to get together. When citizens inquire about such meetings, they are invited to attend upcoming meetings.

How are members selected/and by whom?

The MSD does not have an official committee of members, as it is not a public body.

Are all MSD taxpayers invited to the committee meetings to have a voice in the decision making?

Since the MSD does not have an official committee, invitations to meetings are not issued. However, any citizen who inquires about MSD meetings is invited to attend.

How is the meeting noticed?

Historically, Swiss Bear called the meetings. Beginning in 2016, the Ward 1 Alderman began calling the meetings on an as-needed basis or at the request of an MSD taxpayer.

Are minutes taken and recorded for the public since the public tax dollars are assessed and spent? If not, why not?

Since MSD is not an official committee or public body, minutes are not required.

Is there any accountability for these tax dollars to the taxpayers who contribute to the MSD?

Yes. The Governing Board accounts for these and all city tax dollars through approval of the annual budget and through budget amendments. Per your request, see document attached that shows annual spending from 2018-2021.

Perhaps MDS funds may not cover the full cost of the projects, and that in-kind City Resources — both hard and soft costs ---, are payed by other tax payers, to fund the downtown. (Example: Sidewalk maintenance? Who pays for street closures - putting up and taking down blockades?, How much is paid and by whom for vehicular removal during street closures? Landscape maintenance? Tree care? Etc.

The attachment provided in response to question #6 shows what MSD funds have been used for. City departments perform a variety of work throughout the city. That work is not necessarily tracked by specific locations, neighborhoods, or according to the boundaries of the MSD.

Why did Alderman Sabrina Bengel not recuse herself from voting for the sale of land at the corner of Hancock and S. Front for a Pepsi Museum and participating in the MSD decision to fund the purchase? Both transactions clearly benefit her Pepsi Store, one of the Bengel businesses?

To date, the Board of Aldermen has not designated a use for the property in question. The site of a future museum is one of several potential uses for the property, as well as additional city parking.

Here are a few more questions:

What is the mission of the MSD moving forward? Is there a rotation of Advisory Board Members?

See [NC General Statute governing the establishment and purposes of Municipal Service Districts](#). For clarification, there is no committee and therefore, no board members.

How long have the current members of the MSD Advisory Committee been in their positions?

See answer to question #1.

What are the rolls of the current MSD Advisory Committee members?

See answer to question #1.

When does the Advisory Committee meet? Where do they meet?

See answer to question #1. Prior to hurricane Florence, meetings were traditionally held at Swiss Bear. After Florence (because the Chamber/Swiss Bear building was so badly damaged), meetings have been held at City Hall.

Is the purchase of land on South Front Street with MSD funds for the specific purpose of promoting a Pepsi Museum in keeping with the charter of the MSD? Is the MSD money being used to improve the downtown for the residents of downtown with this expenditure?

The Governing Board has not designated a use for the property in question.

Were the residents of downtown, specifically those residents that pay into the MSD, notified in any way, either through a public discussion, public notice, or public posting, of the impending expenditure and subsequent purchase of land for the purpose of a Pepsi Museum. Was there a discussion of alternative uses for the MSD funds? Is there a record of this discussion?

To date, the Governing Board has made no determination on what the property will be used for. The Board has discussed acquiring this parcel from the NC Railroad on and off for approximately 20 years.

The acquisition of the parcel was on the Board of Aldermen agenda and was approved at a public meeting on July 13, 2021.

Please let me know if I can assist further. Thanks and have a great weekend.

R/ Colleen

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