

WSMMC Regular Meeting of Trustees Minutes

Monday September 8, 2025 Virtual via Zoom

Call to order: 7:10pm

Roll Call: Kim, Richard, Steve, Cally, Chris, Meghan, Carl, Thomas, Mary, George, Justin Riggs, Kacie Rattigan
Not present: Hilary

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Motion to approve minutes - Cally, 2nd Richard

TREASURERS REPORT

Checks were slightly delayed from July, so payments for July and August will be picked up tomorrow. This includes George's two months of payment as well as the invoice for the Brick Markers. Due to the delay, we are currently running a bit behind schedule.

We have transitioned to the cloud version of QuickBooks and now pay a monthly subscription fee for that service. Amanda noted that the switch took her a little longer to adjust to this month, but everything has been resolved and is now running smoothly.

As of the July Treasurer's Report, all assessments had been received except for one business, which has been notified by Code Enforcement. As of August, that business had still not paid, but otherwise all assessments are in.

There is a \$400 discrepancy between the amount received and the amount reflected on the City's spreadsheet. At this time, the Treasurer is not concerned about the difference but welcomes input from anyone who is.

In August, the credit card bill was paid in the amount of \$333.01. Cash withdrawals were made for Tunes on Tuesday expenses — \$18.75 on August 12th and \$5.75 on August 26th.

We still need to issue a check to the City for the special assessment funds collected for the security camera program, totaling approximately \$50,000. The Treasurer is reviewing the best method to process that transfer.

Other than this upcoming payment, there are no major financial items pending at this time.
Motion to approve - Richard, 2nd Chris

CHAIR REPORT/ADVERTISING

The advertisement for the Sidewalk sale will be in the Herald this week.

SOCIAL MEDIA / WEBSITE, and BRICKS UPDATE

Regular activities have continued through August. Promotion for the Sidewalk Sale has been ongoing, with information shared with both the City and the Chamber of Commerce, who are helping distribute the event details. Additional social media posts promoting the sale will continue throughout the week.

Early fall-themed social media content has begun, though the focus will remain on an “endless summer” theme until after the Sidewalk Sale. Following that, fall promotions will highlight visiting the Mall in the off-season, incorporating both photos from last year and new images once the seasonal décor is in place.

The website has been updated to reflect that Casales has closed. The new business opening in that space will be added when it becomes active. Upcoming City events, including the Halloween Parade and the Jazz Festival Second Line Parade, are posted on the site.

There have been a few public inquiries through social media regarding Trick-or-Treat on the Mall. Last year’s event was more subdued, and further discussion will take place under the Events section to determine plans for this year.

Regarding Brick Markers, the check payment will be sent within the next week. Once received, production takes approximately 8–12 weeks, so bricks are expected to arrive around December. Installation will likely occur in January to avoid the busy holiday season. At that time, placement and coordination with installers will be finalized. There are currently 110–120 orders queued for the next batch, with sales continuing through the end of the year.

Richard asked whether George was able to contact Chief Fashaw about possibly featuring a live camera feed from the Mall’s security cameras on the website to provide a public “Mall webcam” view.

EVENTS

The Tunes on Tuesday concert series concluded successfully. Although there were fewer sponsors this year compared to previous years, the event maintained a solid budget and positive attendance.

The next event discussion will focus on October 19th, specifically whether to host Trick-or-Treat on the Mall again this year.

Pam reported that she reached out to the Old Town Christmas Carolers following the board’s inquiry about their availability and fee for Hospitality Night. She has not yet received a response but will follow up.

Board members discussed whether to bring back the carolers this year. Last year's performance was well received and added to the festive atmosphere. The cost was recalled to be between \$800 and \$900 for both groups combined. The board agreed to revisit this decision once the budget has been reviewed. Pam and Chris will coordinate a meeting to discuss further and determine if funds are available.

DECOR, MAINTENANCE & LANDSCAPE

Pam reported that Hillary remains out as Chair of the Landscape and Décor Committee.

Cally has received the invoice from Ken and has issued the deposit for the fall landscaping. Ken will begin work by September 15th and complete the project by October 4th, in accordance with his contract.

The fall décor will include cornstalks, fall flowers, and pumpkins, with installation scheduled so that most decorations are in place by the last weekend of September, coinciding with Oktoberfest on Jackson Street. Pam noted that pumpkins and similar items will be added later in October, as putting them out too early during warm weather can cause them to deteriorate.

Pam also stated she will obtain upcoming holiday décor details from Ken prior to the October meeting.

Banners and Public Works Update

Pam reported that she received an email from Eric, Supervisor at Public Works, noting that some lamp post banners on the Mall were obstructing the view of security cameras used by the Police Department. This concern was brought to the City's attention by the police. Pam stated that maintaining clear camera visibility is a priority.

Pam requested clarification from Eric on which banners were moved and where they were relocated, but had not yet received that information. Paul confirmed that the issue has likely been addressed and that he will ask Eric to follow up with Pam by email to provide a list of the changes. Pam requested that George be copied on that correspondence so both can stay informed.

Pam then turned the discussion over to Steve regarding a proposal from George about the Mall banners. All board members confirmed they had received George's proposal.

George has proposed that he take full responsibility for the storage, maintenance, and installation of the Mall banners. Currently, the banners are stored at the Department of Public Works, and the City staff handles their installation. However, this has led to delays in seasonal changes, with instances such as Christmas banners remaining up into the next season.

George's proposal would move the storage of banners to his own location and have him personally oversee the installation and changeout of banners using his own resources, rather than relying on City workers.

He explained that banner changes now occur approximately five times per year, compared to only twice annually in earlier years. His intent is to lighten the workload for Public Works, ensure banners are changed promptly and seasonally, and improve coordination with the board.

George added that the process of changing banners is straightforward, requiring only basic tools, and that managing it directly would streamline communication between the board and the City while maintaining a consistent schedule.

Paul stated that he does not have an issue with Public Works continuing to handle banner installation and removal, provided that a set seasonal schedule is shared in advance. He confirmed that if the schedule is provided, Public Works will ensure banners are changed in a timely manner moving forward.

Pam will email Paul the seasonal banner schedule following the meeting.

Pam also mentioned she sent photos of George's proposed signage for the photo opportunity areas at the end of Perry Street and the 300 block. She suggested that if the project moves forward, spring would be an ideal time for installation, though coordination with the contractor's schedule and City approval would be needed.

Paul confirmed that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) has approved the sign design and location. The only recommendation from HPC was that the lettering be made slightly larger, which can be easily adjusted with George.

Public Works will also construct a new planter box at the end of Perry Street to match the existing boxes along the Mall, and the new sign will be installed within that planter. Pam requested Paul to email her confirmation and details for record-keeping.

Pam concluded her report on Landscape and Décor with no further updates.

Public Works Acknowledgement

Paul thanked all Washington Street Mall merchants for their cooperation with the City's new recycling program, noting that the first season was successful. He expressed appreciation for their teamwork and wished everyone a strong "second season" leading into the holidays.

Steve thanked the City for providing the grass lot parking by the school, noting it was a significant help during the busy summer months.

Steve also commented that the cardboard recycling process has worked out well, and the merchants appreciate the City's efforts.

Lighting and Maintenance

Mary reported that the tree lights along Draper Walk (between Beef Jerky, Quirk, and her shop) are currently turning on at 6:00 AM instead of 6:00 PM. She believes the timer may need to be reset, noting that while it wasn't an issue during summer, it will become more noticeable as evenings grow darker earlier.

Paul agreed to speak with the electrician to correct the lighting schedule.

Old Business: Fountain on the 400 Block

Pam asked for an update on the 400 block fountain, which remains out of service.

Richard reminded the group that at the July meeting, it was noted that a replacement part was on order.

Justin Riggs confirmed he had checked with Eric at Public Works, and the part was being shipped from Colorado. He will follow up to confirm the delivery status and provide an updated ETA, as the delay has now exceeded three months.

New Business: 2026 Anniversary Banners and City Celebration

Kacie Rattigan introduced new business related to upcoming citywide anniversaries in 2026, which include:

- The Nation's 250th anniversary
- The City of Cape May's 175th anniversary of incorporation
- The 50th anniversary of Cape May's National Historic Preservation designation

Kacie shared that the City is planning a unified marketing campaign to celebrate these milestones. The City will design a master banner and branding theme, which can be co-branded by participating organizations such as the Washington Street Mall, MAC, the Chamber of Commerce, and Cape Resorts.

Each group will have the opportunity to incorporate their logo into the shared design, promoting a citywide celebration of Cape May's heritage.

Kacie mentioned she had already spoken with George about the idea. The goal is to display the banners throughout 2026 on streets including Lafayette, Washington, and Beach Avenues. The City may also consider business sponsorships for banners, but details are still being finalized.

The Mall Board expressed interest in participating. Steve suggested coordinating the Mall banners with the citywide design for visual consistency.

Kacie noted that the celebration events will begin in March 2026 (to mark the Historic Preservation anniversary), continue through May 11 (City incorporation anniversary), and culminate with the Fourth of July parade, which will fall on a Saturday that year. She expects the anniversary banners to remain up year-round.

George added that his idea would be to feature the anniversary design on the banners that remain up year-round, while seasonal banners would continue to rotate as usual.

Kacie and George will work together once the final design is complete to coordinate the Mall's participation.

Elections

Steve asked which board members are up for re-election.

Richard confirmed that Hillary and Chris's terms are expiring this year.

Steve noted that Kim will send out nomination forms in October in preparation for the upcoming election.

Adjourned: 7:40pm

Next meeting: October 13, 2025