



**Peekskill Business Improvement District
Board of Director's Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 5, 2019 @ 6pm
Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce**

Call meeting to order: Meeting called to order by President Brian Fassett at 6:05 pm.

Present: Brian Fassett, Frank Pugliese, Brendon Fitzgerald, LaFern Joseph, Ann Scaglione, Jim Pinto, Davis Kaminsky, Monique Michaels, Vanessa Agudelo, John Sharp, Executive Director Bill Powers

Absent: Jeorjia Shea, Jeff Tracy, Sean Kearney, Larry D'Amico

BID Members present: Evelyn Lee, Sue Sheridan, and L. Leguia

BID Member comment: President Fassett opened the floor for BID Member comment on agenda items. There were none.

Review of 2018 Budget: Mr. Powers indicated that the BID brought in extra income which resulted in surplus in excess of \$17,000. In addition, Mr. Powers noted that due to savings on office rent and flower barrels, and not funding the shuttle, the BID added approximately \$31,000 to the reserve fund, which now stands at almost \$60,000. He added that the BID is in good financial shape.

Peekskill Banner Update: Pres. Fassett stated that five banner designs have been chosen and approved by the City Council after some discussion at the COW meeting. There was a concern about the "Lincoln" artwork by the Council. The City and the BID are splitting the \$3500 cost and the Council is expected to vote for approval of sharing the expense equally at the 3/11 Council meeting. Mr. Fassett urged the City to create a process for banner submission, review, posting, changes, including a calendar so that there will always be banners on the poles. Pres. Fassett stressed the need to put the policy for use of banners in writing; this was discussed by the Council at the COW meeting as well. He noted that this was part of the original PEP committee's suggestions. He also stressed the need for a calendar to coordinate banner placement for AIM and PAA Open Studios. Ms. Scaglione volunteered to be the City liaison for this endeavor. Pres. Fassett stressed that the goal is never to have a pole that has hardware to be empty. Pres. Fassett noted that it would take 4 to 6 weeks to get the banners from the time of approval.

John Sharp Arrived. Thus making a quorum.

February 5, 2019 Minutes: Motion was made by Mr. Pugliese and seconded by Mr. Pinto to accept the February 5, 2019 monthly minutes as presented –carried, all in favor.

Review of Annual Meeting and Elections: The meeting and elections were held on Sunday, February 24, 2019 at the 12 Peekskill Lounge. A power point presentation was given by Mr. Powers, Pres. Fassett, and Vice Pres. Fitzgerald at the meeting, highlighting all that was accomplished in 2018. Pres. Fassett stated that it was pretty amazing to see all that the BID had accomplished in 2018. Pres. Fassett thanked the board for the work of 2018 and thanked Mr. Powers for the prepping of the presentation.

Vanessa Agudelo Arrived.

Board member elections were held in conjunction with a buffet brunch. Pres. Fassett thanked outgoing board members Sharp, Shea and Kearney for their service, and hopes they continue their involvement with our efforts. Pres. Fassett indicated that approximately 30 ballots were received for property owners, 43 for tenant representatives. Both groups had higher voting totals than in 2018. Pres. Fassett revealed that LaFern Joseph and David Kaminsky were elected property owner representatives and that Vice Pres. Fitzgerald was re-elected in the same class. Monique Michaels was elected tenant representative in a close race. Mr. Fassett thanked Mr. Powers for a smooth election process. Motion was made by Mr. Pugliese and seconded by Mr. Pinto to accept the election results as presented. Carried unanimously.

Election of Officers for 2019-2020:

Secretary for 2019-2020 term: Motion was made by Mr. Fassett and seconded by Mr. Pugliese to nominate Ms. Joseph as Secretary. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer for 2019-2020 term: Motion was made by Mr. Fassett and seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald to nominate Mr. Pugliese as Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice President for 2019-2020 term: Motion was made by Mr. Pugliese and seconded by Mr. Fassett to nominate Mr. Fitzgerald as Vice President. Motion carried unanimously.

President for 2019-2020 term: Motion was made by Mr. Fitzgerald and seconded by Ms. Joseph to nominate Mr. Fassett as President. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Fassett thanked those involved in this decision and looks forward to continuing in his position as President.

Mr. Pugliese was asked to take balance of minutes of meeting, agreed to by all present. Ms. Joseph will take minutes at next meeting. Mr. Pugliese stated he will explain how he takes minutes to Ms. Joseph.

AIM Update: Mr. Sharp and Ben Green met with Pres. Fassett to discuss activities for April 13-14, 2019 for AIM weekend. An event planned for the Ford Piano building had to be scrapped due to a burst pipe ongoing work. It was suggested that BID send out a request to restaurants and venues to host live entertainment with a technical component and ask participating locations with proper A/V equipment to show AIM videos. Various exterior “ wall “ locations are being explored for projections.

Mr. Sharp added that AIM was looking to have projection stations around town. He stated that Birdsall was intending to project on the Baxter Building. Mr. Sharp indicated that he was having difficulty in securing projectors. There was some discussion about trying to rent or have projectors loaned for the project and about other possible locations and whether the BID wanted to host some sort of party, but with no suggestions forthcoming from the board, it doesn't look like the BID will host a reception. Ms. Lee stated that she may have a source for projectors and will check into it, but it would be for purchase.

Motion was made by Mr. Kaminsky and seconded by Vice Pres. Fitzgerald to allocate \$2,500 for April radio advertising. Motion carried, all in favor.

Community Outreach Publication with Peekskill PD: Pres. Fassett brought forward a request to advertise in a safety booklet sponsored and endorsed by the Peekskill Police Dept. The publisher is selling advertising to support the printing of the book with safety topics like how not to be a victim of a crime. The publication would be given out for free and would be printed on an as needed basis. Ad prices range from \$200 to \$1,000. The BID would take an ad with our logo and a message of support. Discussion centered on including the new website. Back page was approximately \$1,000. Ms. Michaels suggested using the new banner designs as part of the graphics. Mr. Kaminsky asked what kind of quality was the booklet and what kind of cover is it. Discussion included adding all dates of BID events we currently have as part of this ad. Motion was made by Mr. Pinto and seconded by Ms. Joseph to take the back page ad for \$998. Motion carried unanimously. Ad will be in color, Mr. Powers to work on the copy and was directed that in the event the back page is already taken, it was agreed that the second choice would be the inside front cover. Agreed to by all present.

First Friday Plans for 2019: Ms. Lee stated that for the first event held, attendance was a bit low due to the cold weather. 5x7 postcards are being printed with the BID logo to note all planned dates for First Fridays and themes through rest of the year. Reported that a Facebook page for First Fridays was being developed just for the initiative and that participants would be able to post their involvement. Will also be posted on BID website. Participants will be able to post to the website to announce their respective hours, events, promotions, etc. To identify participating locations, Pres. Fassett showed a proposed banner that could be put in the storefront of participating businesses and adhered with suction cups to a window. They are 9" by 20" and some suggested that they may take up too much real estate in the window. Mr. Pugliese suggested a window sticker, noting each year being a participant. Pres. Fassett noted that the cost of banners with suction cups would be \$900 for 25, 2-sided or \$600 for 25, 1-sided. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald suggested stickers or posters with a bar code containing pertinent info. Ms. Lee said that they were looking to add live music outside in strategic locations. She also said that she was in touch with Mary Foster who suggested having babysitting service for kids so that parents could enjoy the evening. Maureen Winzig is helping and it was noted that a lot of artists are interested. Mr. Powers was asked to send an eblast out to encourage participating by restaurants and businesses. It was suggested that they could offer a special themed offer, drink special, dessert special, etc. It was also suggested that the BID could help connect artists who wanted to pair up with existing businesses.

Further discussion on placing blue lights in windows to designate participating venues as well as whether A frames would be better option, pending city approval for sidewalk placement. It was also suggested that the BID use the kiosks for posters. Mr. Pinto stated that it would be a good idea to look into attaching solar lights to the kiosks so they are visible at night. Discussion tabled pending further info.

Paramount update: Ms. Agudelo reported that an RFP for a new management company was sent out by the City, to be returned within 45 days (by 4/12) and that they were seeking new partners. She stated that the Council is committed to keeping the Paramount open and get it back running as soon as possible. She noted that a number of community events are being planned with other events into May and June. Ms. Agudelo stated that the RFP review process would go through the Council, Legal Dept. and various City reps. Mr. Sharp expressed concern that a 45 day window to return the RFP may not be enough time to bring in a viable management team. He suggested that the city have a back-up plan, and perhaps even a second RFP. He stated that he and other businesses are concerned about the Paramount and want to make sure that the finances, resumes and experience of the next operator be fully vetted.

Pres Fassett inquired as to how the BID could help. He noted that maybe the city could have a committee of stakeholders to offer advice and guidance, noting that there a lot of talented people in the community who would be willing to offer advice or review proposals. Mr. Sharp noted that Jason Angel was on the committee that reviewed the last round of applicants. Mr. Sharp mentioned we had a representative from Cortlandt as well on that committee. Pres. Fassett felt it was of vital importance to have people who are professionals in the entertainment industry review the RFP and not just our staff and elected officials. Pres. Fassett felt in his professional opinion finding the right fit of a company with the financial and business assets to mobilize as quickly as we expect is a difficult task. He also felt the RFP was missing some important information that should be provided by the city. Ms. Agudelo noted that there are legal and economic issues and those terms of the negotiations are done in executive session. Mr. Fassett asked Ms. Agudelo to take these concerns to the Council. Ms. Agudelo asked if we had suggestions of who could help write the back-up RFP. Mr. Sharp mentioned Ben Green, Pres. Fassett mentioned Victoria Cairl as a Peekskill citizen rep as she understands this business from a ticketing and management side. He also mentioned Jen Garvey-Blackwell who ran the Vineyard Theater in NYC for 20 years and is more than happy to discuss and brings a wealth of contacts with that discussion.

South Street/Division Street Decorative Street Lights: Pres. Fassett has continually asked the City for an update on the South Street decorative lighting that was installed a year ago that continues to not ever have been turned on. Councilperson Agudelo noted that the City and Brent are working on the issue with Con Edison and we are at the mercy of ConEd.

Firehouse Community Room: Ms. Agudelo stated the city was reviewing usage fees for the public to use the community room at the new firehouse, including priority for Peekskill residents and non-profit organizations. They are comparing pricing with the Neighborhood Center rental. Still not ready for

public use due to design and security and access issues. Ms. Sheridan spoke against the use of the station by the public, stated that it should be for Fire Dept. use only, citing liability issues, potential damage to the 193 year old apparatus, people drinking, access to personnel quarters, etc. Ms. Agudelo will follow up.

Paramount Currently Moving Forward: Mr. Fitzgerald explained his understanding of moving forward with the Paramount is currently bare bones. He feels the Paramount is a massive resource and drives business and people to downtown. He presented an idea that we add the upcoming shows to the existing BID radio advertising. Pres. Fassett asked Mr. Powers to explain our past advertising efforts for those upcoming months – May and June. There is some radio advertising we can piggy-back onto. He also approached the topic of the BID possibly underwriting some shows. Mr. Powers cautioned that there was push back before on whether the BID could support the Paramount since it was a private venture. Pres. Fassett stressed we would not be looking to provide advertising services if this was running as a for-profit institution, but as it is currently half in and half out, we could jump in and support efforts that local businesses are already working on.

Further into the discussion was that there are community people that are working to underwrite shows being put into the Paramount while the facility is looking for a new management partners. It was noted that the costs associated with the acts, and opening the doors was between \$2,500 and \$8,000 a night. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald stated that it was no brainer to underwrite the shows.

Mr. Sharp stated that it was important to get “butts in the seats,” that the Paramount being “dark” scares people, and may be more difficult for the city to fulfill that RFP. The people currently planning these events are looking for the City to pay the rent and utilities. These people would bring in volunteers and modern ticketing, Patrick at the Tattoo parlor is doing art for posters, River Outpost Brewery would provide beer and concessions – but not profiting off the event, but returning it to pay for the endeavor. Peekskill Brewery will be looking to underwrite some shows. Mr. Sharp asked if there was possible interest for the BID to underwrite some of these upcoming shows. He stressed that it is important to pull everyone together to support the Paramount. Mr. Sharp explained further how the underwriting would work. Pres. Fassett felt it would be a great PR item to show how this community is coming together to keep the doors open. Ms. Scaglione suggested that we meet with Corporation Council before the BID make any movement on this topic.

July Music Festival: Vice Pres. Fitzgerald said plans were in the works to hold the July Music Festival on Saturday, July 20, 4-11PM. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald to chair. We are going to model the music festival like the Harvest Festival and follow that successful template. Committee members requested to volunteer. Pres. Fassett suggested that anybody with musical contacts that might like to perform to get information to us immediately. He suggested that we “copy and paste” what we did for Harvest Festival.

Motion was made by Ms. Scaglione and seconded by Ms. Michaels to form a committee to run the festival. Carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Mr. Pugliese and seconded by Ms. Scaglione to allot \$10,000 to start planning the festival. Motion carried unanimously.

Valet Parking: Vice Pres. Fitzgerald outlined plans for valet parking at the James Street ramp, with pick up/dropoff on the Park St. side. He stated that this would be a public/private partnership with 20 or so restaurants. An app will be created to offer discounts at the restaurants that are sponsors. He stated that the pan may have the BID to fund ½ the cost to implement and sponsors to pay \$200/month, inc. an advertising banner. Initially the parking will be free, once established the fee will be \$5/nite/vehicle unless there are sponsor discounts.

The Valet contractor, Tri-State Valet, will charge \$1600/weekend (Fri,Sat,Sun), half to be paid by the BID, half by sponsors. Once established, the BID monies should no longer be needed. Projected start date is mid-May. Ms. Lee expressed concern that there could be a backlash if the first month was given free, but then fees are to be charged. May be a public relations issue; she suggested starting off with paying the full fee. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald when asked, noted that the valet company has not done this type of valet parking in a municipality; he saw the valet parking in action at a Croton restaurant. Ms. Scaglione noted that this initiative had been brought up and that city did not see any conflict with using the garage.

Motion was made by Pres. Fassett and seconded by Vice Pres. Fitzgerald to form a valet parking committee to research options. Carried unanimously. Valet Committee members: Fassett, Powers, Lee, Fitzgerald and Sheridan.

Concern was brought up by Ms. Michaels on reaching out to other BID members in the community to ask for them to join the committee. After discussion Pres. Fassett explained a targeted committee like valet parking is very different than the Harvest Festival planning and we should focus on targeting where we really need the energy of a larger committee. Ms. Michaels also mentioned she thought the BID should have a monthly newsletter. Pres. Fassett explained he loves the idea, but with limited resurces and time, who would do the newsletter? Vice Pres Fitzgerald asked Ms. Michaels if she could take that effort on and she explained she could not do it on her own.

Mail Chimp/Database Integration: Pres. Fassett provided Mr. Powers with returned mail from the direct mail piece we sent out for the elections. Mr. Powers stated data base of businesses had been created in the past for use in elections. Pres. Fassett was concerned about the amount of mail returned from the election. The data base was based on an Excel spreadsheet generated by an intern last summer mostly commercial tenants. Mr. Powers stated that there were no issues with property owner mail. Ms. Scaglione offered to cross-reference with the City records. It was noted that the Council is looking in to creating a business registry. Mr. Powers said we need to look into the creation of databases further now that we have the website up and running. Pres. Fassett asked Mr. Powers to make cleaning up the databases a priority, and get the Harvest Festival contacts entered, and if we are not getting interns, we will need to pay someone to help with this so that we can more effectively

communicate with our members.

PAA open studio plans and request: Mr. Powers, in the absence of Mr. D'Amico, presented the PAA's request for funding as per the handout for a total requested of \$1713.19 for Open Studio weekend. PAA suggested \$500 in enhanced Facebook advertising. Mr. Fitzgerald suggested we promote the Open Studios on our Facebook page and use the money for that. All agreed. PAA proposed a \$550 ad in the Brooklyn Rail. Board never heard of it, and suggested we pass on that. Two additional large street banners for \$138. Board thought that was generally a good idea. Additional 500 post cards for BID to send out, \$125, board thought that was generally a good idea. Reimbursement for permit fee for K lot for Truck Stop Gallery. That is in keeping with our event policy. Rental for Artisan's Boutique, declined since it sets a precedent. Pres. Fassett asked if they were still going to allocate \$2,500 for radio advertising, Mr. Powers stated they were not looking for that and felt this was a better plan. Request will be reviewed again at the April meeting for approval.

New Business: Councilperson Agudelo announced a "repair café" to be held 3/16 at the Neighborhood Center which will offer free on-site repairs of many household items such as lamps, clothing, bicycles, etc-sponsored the City Council. She is hoping that it be a quarterly event. She said she would welcome anyone with repair skills as well. Pres. Fassett asked Ms. Agudelo to put this on the BID website and to remind people that we have a functioning calendar that needs to be used.

Division Street Music/Outdoor Dining: Ms. Sheridan mentioned she has almost fully booked the Division Street music series.

Name Tags for New Board Members: Mr. Powers will order name tags for all new board members and positions.

K-Lot Pay Station Changes: Pres. Fassett thanked Ms. Scaglione for helping to get the pay station in the K-lot programmed properly for parking.

Incoming/Outgoing Board Members: Mr. Pugliese welcomed the newly-elected board members, and asked that the outgoing members receive a certificate of appreciation from the BID Board. Will be looked in to by Mr. Powers

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Pugliese, seconded by Ms. Michaels. Carried unanimously.

Meeting ended at 2050 hrs

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Pugliese

Secretary