



Peekskill Business Improvement District
Board of Director's Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 2, 2019 @ 6pm
Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce

Call meeting to order: Meeting called to order by President Brian Fassett at 6:03 pm.

PRESENT: Brian Fassett, Frank Pugliese, Brendon Fitzgerald, Lafern Joseph, Ann Scaglione, David Kaminsky, Monique Michaels, Vanessa Agudelo, Jim Pinto, Larry D'Amico, Executive Director Bill Powers. **Absent:** Jeff Tracy

BID Members Present: Marlene Ball, Nancy Wareham Gordon, Mary Foster, Michael Baker, Arne Paglia, Brian Conigliaro, Barbara Connie, Paul Magliari, Lisette Lecours, Scarlett Antonia, Eileen Sullivan, Carol Bash.

BID Member Comment: President Fassett opened the floor for BID Member comment on agenda items.

Eileen Sullivan questioned if an RFP went out for valet parking program and if there is revenue, will the revenue be earmarked for a specific purpose. She also stated her concern regarding the safety of the gazebo. Pres. Fassett stated that those questions would be addressed when we get to that agenda item.

Request approval of April 2, 2019, Meeting Minutes – Secretary Joseph made a motion to approve the April 2, 2019 Minutes as submitted, Treasurer Frank Pugliese seconded, all in favor.

AIM Debrief – Pres. Fassett stated that by all accounts the AIM weekend was a success. He attended the Economic Development Forum at the Lincoln Depot. MOCA event with Director Paul Schrader was sold out and the Bre Pettis talk was well-attended. There were some bands in restaurants, John Sharp projected videos, however, we had minimal BID participation.

Jim Pinto and Councilwoman Agudelo arrived.

PAA/Open Studios – Mr. D'Amico stated that there are over 100 artists involved in Open Studios weekend. He said they were advertising in the Brooklyn Rail and doing a large mailing, the brochure is ready to go. Ms. Sullivan asked if the Lofts on Main are included and Mr. D'Amico stated that they are. Executive Director Powers stated that the radio advertisement is in place but needs to receive the copy from PAA, the Chamber also needs more postcards as the BID used 400 to mail out to the BID members. BID also emailed out info.

Banner Program – Pres. Fassett stated that the new banners are in and that he created and sent a 32-page map with banner placements to Brent VanZandt and City Management. He had not heard back from them. He noted the PAA banners are up. He hopes the city will soon begin to install the new banners on poles that do not have PAA banners currently.

Peekskill Summer Sounds Music Festival – Vice Pres. Fitzgerald stated that D. Bertoline will be a big sponsor again this year and that the BID will file the necessary applications to the city and state for the beer, along with obtaining appropriate insurance again. Due to limited time to review with the committee, he passed around logos and names for consideration by Board. After consideration, “Peekskill Summer Sounds” was selected and the green and purple logo was selected by a show of hands. There will be six bands, with the main act being the Billy Joel Tribute band. All are from the Peekskill/Cortlandt area. Mr. Fitzgerald thanked Ms. Michaels for getting a great line up together. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald stated that we will be using the same sound guy from the Harvest Festival. President Fassett asked if the festival committee had met to approve the bands as presented. Ms. Michales urged a vote at this meeting and Pres. Fassett stated that it would be good if we could vote tonight so we can get the bands booked. Bands were presented, Pres. Fassett verified we were on budget. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald motioned to accept the band lineup as presented, Mr. Pinto seconded and all were in favor.

Valet Parking – Vice Pres. Fitzgerald stated that the valet company we chose came to do a site survey, and they liked being able to use the gazebo as the drop-off and pick up point better than using the James Street ramp area. Mr. Kaminsky asked if the program would need to reserve parking spots. We would need to request the three parking spaces on the north side of Park Street and possibly the Southside be set aside for valet service. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald stated no RFP for the valet service went out as we were under the dollar limit needed for an RFP at the time – he also stated that there are very few valet companies that service municipalities and this were one that came recommended and big enough to handle the project. Pres. Fassett also stated in terms of revenue expected, the BID did not plan to make any money on this project currently, so no earmarks have been suggested. It was recommended that Mr. Fitzgerald meet with businesses on Park Street and he stated he met with the businesses on the north side and they were all in favor of trying anything to help with parking. He will visit those on the South side as well and it was suggested he meet with the police chief to get his take on traffic congestion. The valet company earlier today came back and stated that because they are driving cars farther in a longer loop, they got a lot higher insurance price quote than being close to the garage; they stated that they may need to do the service Fridays and Saturdays to make it worth their while. There would be between 7 and 8 attendants. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that he would contact the valet company again to discuss options. Questions about the Gazebo's safety were raised and Pres. Fassett stated that no RFP had gone out regarding fixing the Gazebo, but that there seemed to more of an interest to make minor fixes until a more permanent solution could be achieved.

Treasurer Pugliese stated that he is concerned about traffic with the valet parking at the Gazebo. He stated that these changes to the valet parking plan should have been brought to the board before there were any changes made. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald stated that the city suggested the use of the gazebo area and the valet company agreed when shown the location. Pres. Fassett stated this is a pilot program. that if it does not work then we will change it. Ms. Foster stated that there was a discussion about valet service on Saturday night and not Friday night. She has a different opinion about Fridays. There should also be a backup spot. Mr. Paglia suggested just to do Saturday nights. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the committee will reconvene to discuss it all further.

Flower Barrels – Vice Pres. Fitzgerald stated that Cortland Farms will have flowers for us to plant. We need to pick a day to plant them. Friday afternoon at 4:30 pm will be good and if it rains it will be postponed until Monday at 4:30 pm. We need a few volunteers. Mr. Pugliese and Ms. Michaels

volunteered. We will meet at the Gazebo. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald stated that he looked at the leftover flowers from the Rotary event and felt they may not survive, so it was decided to go back to Cortlandt Farms. May need some garden tools and shopping cart might be helpful.

Downtown Summer Concerts – Ms. Sheridan was unable to attend. Marlene Ball explained she was working with Sue to book the bands. Pres. Fassett asked if the folks with a direct interest in the music series brought a plan to discuss.

Mr. Paglia stated that there are 30 days of music and that \$12,000 dollars is needed. They are seeking \$2,500 dollars in BID advertising support, and \$3,000 in financial support to cover the costs of the music.

Pres. Fassett was trying to clarify what Ms. Sheridan originally asked for and Ms. Ball explained that it has changed. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald asked where the funding would go, Mr. Paglia explained the Chuck at The Quietman set up a company to run the event through. Pres. Fassett asked if the company was non-profit or profit. Mr. Paglia was not sure. Vice President Fitzgerald stated concerns about the BID writing a check to this company. Mr. Paglia suggested the BID can pay the bands directly instead of going through the Downtown Business Association. Executive Director Powers stated that there are certain requirements from the city to write checks to bands that would have to be followed.

Ms. Foster asked what happens when it rains, Ms. Ball said there were no band contracts currently in the works. Mr. Paglia stated that if it rains then the group will play later in the season, but we should have a contract. Ms. Ball also stated they need money to pay people to set up the chairs and the stage. Mr. Paglia suggested then that the BID pay for the chairs. Pres. Fassett stated he has not seen chairs out there for the time he's lived here. He also asked who else is currently sponsoring the music. Mr. Paglia stated they are working on getting more sponsors and funds to cover the costs. White Plains linen has committed to giving \$2,500 dollars, and they are working on the hospital and beer companies like Bertolini. They must pay for the stage and the truck and to have a crew to set up and break down. They also are thinking about offering vendors @ \$50 dollars a night to vend. The time frame for the music in the streets is Memorial Day weekend to October 14, 2019. Mr. Paglia stated he was not looking for a vote tonight.

Ms. Michaels stated that the information needs to be more organized and perhaps a plan written down and then they come back to present it for consideration. She would also like a plan that involves local artists. Ms. Ball stated she won't have trouble finding musical acts, but it is very late to book for this season and feels this is a bit scattered. She is also concerned that a contract is not available. Pres. Fassett again stated he does not feel there is a plan that we can vote on with confidence, and that at the last meeting he requested this to be presented at this meeting. He also is concerned that the people showing interest for this have not properly weighed in and that a collective meeting of the businesses does not seem to have happened. He would like to see a plan that involves something that benefits all of downtown. Mr. Paglia then spoke more on the potential of vendors and the trouble that sometimes entails. Pres. Fassett again stated that the Divison Street Music Series is not a BID event, and for this to be presented for BID funding it must be clear how it benefits all – with or without vending. Mr. Paglia stated it is clear. Mr. Fitzgerald asked if BID members would be free to vend, and Mr. Paglia agreed they should be. Ms. Ball suggested this needs to have someone in charge and no one is in charge.

Mr. Baker asked what the bands are being paid. Ms. Ball stated that bands get paid \$500 on Saturdays and \$300 on Sundays. Mr. Baker asked if there was some type of committee he could join for this music series. Ms. Michaels offered to be an advisor for their committee.

Pres. Fassett stated that this item will be tabled until the next meeting when the BID Board can see a more cohesive proposal.

2018 Audit – Comptroller Scaglione stated that the annual audit of the BID was completed and the BID fund balance nearly doubled to \$64,542. Revenue in 2018 was \$164,000, higher than the previous year by about \$22,000. Most of the increase came from the Harvest Festival. President Fassett thanked and congratulated the board for their hard work making this happen.

Meeting with the County Executive – Exec. Dir. Powers stated that he and Pres. Fassett met with the County Executive George Latimer and they discussed the Paramount theater, gazebo improvements, placing marketing materials at Blue Mountain, and a shuttle/bus loop. County Exec. stated that he will send his experts on transportation to a meeting with us and they will look at ways to create an effective shuttle service in Peekskill. Councilwoman Agudelo asked if this was a bus loop? Vice Pres. Fassett stated that it could be a bus loop, but more options are being considered.

DRI Grant – President Fassett explained this is the fourth year for the grant, and we have been a finalist all three years but not won yet. The BID is concerned that all efforts are made to push this forward. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald stated that New Rochelle won the \$10 million grant last year and he reached out to them to see how they did it. It was recommended to produce a video to help in the grant process.

The City is responsible to write the grant, but we are looking to step in to help produce the video. Mr. Pinto explained there needs to be a message and theme with our video and we have a very short timetable. The city will put up \$2,000 to help put it all together. Exec. Director Powers stated that the BID could possibly put up \$2,000 for the video and we have other private donors willing to help. He suggests pushing this along to be able to get three price quotes. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald stated that several businesses are willing to put up \$2,000 and so the bid will only have to put up \$1,500 and then no RFP would be needed. He highly recommended Enormous Creative to produce the video and they can do it right away.

Ms. Foster asked what the theme of the video will be. Pres. Fassett stated that in the past perhaps we showed too much success and that we need to show more of the missing gaps, the streetscapes, connecting the city to the riverfront, youth involvement, job development, economic development, the Paramount to name a few. He stated it still needs to be focused and that is the work to be done this coming week.

Vice Pres. Fitzgerald made a motion to allocate \$1,500 of BID funds to help produce the video, allow the BID to solicit and accept the donations on behalf of the city, and to be able to choose the production team to produce the video. Seconded by Mr. Pinto, all in favor.

Grand Central Station Getaway Day – Exec. Dir Powers stated that we will be attending the Grand Central Station Get Away Day on May 22; we will be attending to promote events and advertise the city of Peekskill. If you want your business advertised please leave 50 pieces of information here at the chamber by May 15, 2019.

Diven Street Update – President Fassett stated that following the last meeting, they reached out to the Police Dept, city council, and management regarding the safety concerns on Diven Street. He reported that immediate action was taken; as of last Tuesday, 168 police check-ins have happened. Trespassers are no longer permitted at 930 Diven and can be arrested. Nancy Wareham-Gordon also mentioned that a major drug dealer was arrested as a result and it has made a big difference.

The chief of police stated that he needs a complaint to act, and he stated that if you hear something or see something, call the police.

Paramount Update – The City received two proposals and the City Council decided to bring one of them in for a presentation. Councilwoman Agudelo stated that they may have to go back out with a new RFP. She stated the City had a lead on a “Booker” from Poughkeepsie who has agreed to take on the booking of the Paramount if the City had a manager for the property. She will update the BID after the interview of the interested individual. Vice. President Fitzgerald stated that three months ago the BID asked the City to work on a second RFP should this RFP not bring the results required, has anybody done that. She stated that the City Manager said to create another RFP with professional help, it would cost the city \$700 - \$1,000 dollars to have it written. It would be something done outside of city hall and within the industry. Pres. Fassett stated that the city has prolonged the decision long enough; he indicated that the BID would likely fund a new, glossier and proper RFP. Ms. Agudelo stated the concern for that is delaying the process further. Pres. Fassett stated that we were very clear that we were concerned that there was no backup plan, as recommended by the BID earlier in the year, ie have another RFP ready to go if the first round failed. Now the city is faced with responses that don't seem viable. He asked that these concerns be brought back to Council.

Gazebo Update – Councilwoman Agudelo stated the DPW is committed to short term fix - repairing the flower bed, replaced with stone border pavers, Brent will get a bid to repave the brick pavers and plexiglass replacement. The city council will have a sub-committee for the Gazebo and the repair of it and the best ways to address it.

Ms. Agudelo suggested the BID should form a subcommittee as well. Mr. Kaminsky volunteered as Chair. Ms. Foster and Ms. Sullivan volunteered to be on the BID Committee.

End of Agenda Items.

Pres. Fassett asked if there was anyone else who had any issues they wanted to bring up to the Board's attention.

Ballard Building - Mr. Kaminsky stated that the Ballard Building has a proposal to change office space into residential living. He stated he is opposed to the change. He stated that there is a meeting on 5/14/19 at 7:30pm and would be good if some of us could attend. Pres. Fassett stated that such a change is disturbing as converting all our commercial spaces to residential is not a sustainable solution to downtown growth. Mr. Kaminsky stated that it will hurt the downtown.

Peekskill Film Festival - Carol Bash stated that her father was Dr. Bash and she is a filmmaker. She stated that she wants to discuss plans for the Peekskill Film festival at the Paramount on July 26th and

27th the same time as the Peekskill music festival and how the BID can help promote both. Pres. Fassett asked that for our next meeting, it be put on the agenda.

First Fridays - Ms. Foster asked how First Friday is going and was concerned about the weather we've had keeping people away. Pres. Fassett stated that it has not grown as we had hoped. He stated his concern that to make this work, all the businesses in the downtown need to participate and feels that would certainly help. He'd like to see some of the other ideas like childcare, music, entertainment start happening. The BID has provided radio advertising and postcards, but this is really up to the businesses to push to make work.

Lack of Code Enforcement & Household Trash – Nancy Wareham-Gordon also noted the lack of any code enforcement about household trash in public receptacles. Mr. Fassett stated that there is no code enforcement at this time regarding household trash, and the larger issue remains, if code enforcement agent does not see it happening, they cannot issue a ticket.

Cigarette butts, dog droppings - It was then noted that there are many cigarette butts on the street. It was further noted that there is considerable dog droppings being left around the city. Ms. Foster advocated for more trash cans; Mr. Paglia suggested repainting the trash cans. Pres. Fassett suggested placing cigarette butt containers on the agenda for May.

Flea Market Contact - Ms. Sullivan stated that she wants to know how to get into the Sunday flea market. Pres. Fassett stated that she should call Ferdinand as he is our Flea Market Manager.

New Trash Cans - Mr. Paglia asked if new trash cans are on order. Councilwoman Agudelo stated that that is we feel there are areas that need additional can, please let her know and she will bring it to city management. Mr. Paglia mentioned Bank Street needs more, other members mentioned South Street needs many more. Pres. Fassett asked Ms. Agudelo to discuss with the city the potential of the BID purchasing new cans, would they be accepted and put on the streets and let us know.

Adjournment – Pres. Fassett requested a motion to adjourn; Jim Pinto offers motion and Councilwoman Agudelo seconds, all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.