



Peekskill Business Improvement District
Board of Director's Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 4, 2020 @ 6pm
Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce

Board Members present: Brian Fassett, LaFern Joseph, David Kaminsky, Vanessa Agudelo, Ann Scaglione, Mike Hagerty, Monique Michaels, Larry D'Amico, Cynthia Del Rosario, Executive Director Bill Powers. Invited Guests: Andrew Stewart, City Manager, Dave Rambo, Acting DPW, Matthew Rudikoff, Economic development Director, City of Peekskill.

Board members absent: Brendon Fitzgerald, Ivy Fairchild.

BID Members present: Mary Foster, Paul Magliari, Sue Sheridan, Nancy Wareham Gordon, Eileen Sullivan, Arne Paglia, Scarlett Antonia.

Others present: Corinna Makris

Call meeting to order – Pres. Brian Fassett called the meeting to order at 6:05pm

BID Member Public Comment – Mary Foster had some questions about the DRI grant and Green Spaces, and Pres. Fassett stated he would address them in the DRI update agenda item and Ms. Wareham Gordon stated she had some concerns about Antonia Arts. Ms. Sullivan stated she had some concerns about the DRI process.

Request Approval of January 7, 2020 Meeting Minutes – LaFern Joseph requested a motion be made to accept the January minutes as written, Board Member Del Rosario made a motion to accept the minutes, Board Member Kaminisky seconded the motion, all in favor.

Invited Guest: Peekskill City Manager Andy Stewart - Pres. Fassett introduced the new City Manager Andy Stewart, and also welcomed Dave Rambo from DPW and Matthew Rudikoff from the City's Office of Economic Development.

Mr. Stewart stated that this was just day 16 on the job for him; that he was honored to be entrusted with a big job; that he was very excited to be in Peekskill; he's been in local government, having been Supervisor in the Town of Orangetown; he has also consulted in a

number of municipalities through Hudson Valley Patterns for Progress; he's also worked with non-profits including Keep Rockland Beautiful. He admitted that he is a nerd when it comes to municipal housekeeping. He said he is very interested in what the DRI could do for the city and how the BID interlaces with the city; it's about pulling together; he stated the city is blessed with an "extraordinary staff."

DRI Update – Pres. Fassett gave an update on the DRI process. There was a workshop conducted in Spanish on January 9, 2020 which was not well attended, but there will be additional outreach. There was a fourth DRI Planning meeting on January 15, 2020, and he announced that he recused himself from the Peekskill Pavilion project; he stated that there were 29 projects and that 18 had been removed from consideration. He stated that there was a public workshop held on January 23, 2020 that was well attended. He also stated that the DRI Committee has extended the deadline for new projects to be submitted by February 14. There will be a business roundtable on February 6, 2020 at the Neighborhood Center. The next public meeting will be on February 26 at the Firehouse, and that the public survey (online and in print) will run from February 21, 2020 to March 13, 2020.

2020 Election Committee Report – In the absence of Vice Pres. Fitzgerald, Pres. Fassett gave an update on the 2020 BID Elections. There are five people running for the board, four are incumbents; Mr. Paglia is the other candidate and he joins the incumbents in running for the property owner seats; one person, an incumbent, is running for the commercial tenant seat. Write in candidates are accepted. Ballot mailing will be going out soon. The Annual Meeting and Elections will be held at Dramatic Hall on Sunday, March 1, 2020 from 2pm to 5pm. Ballots will be counted in public by members of the Elections Committee, following the meeting.

2020 Event Planning & Sponsorships – Board Member Del Rosario presented the board with an overview of eight events, including a casino night, Cinco De Mayo, Freestyle Concert, Health Day, Big Top Circus, Harvest Festival, Holiday Market and the NYE Ball Drop. She stated that the BID could have done more for the Ball Drop to attract more people to Downtown. Board Member Del Rosario presented the board with sponsor packages. She said we could make Peekskill the Mecca of gathering places for friends and families. Pres. Fassett asked how the BID would manage all of these events, and Board Member Del Rosario stated that we could hire someone based on the income from sponsorships. Ms. Sullivan asked if she has guarantees from vendors to participate, and how the BID can guarantee these events will happen and questioned whether a gambling permit was needed for the casino night. Board Member Del Rosario stated that prizes instead of cash would be given out. With regards to the health fair, she would reach out to HRHC and that Rob from the Juice Bar was very interested in having a health fair. The casino would be indoors and the health fair would be outdoors. Exec. Dir. Powers stated his

concern about the pricing structures for small businesses. Pres. Fassett suggested it might be difficult to go from two signature events to eight in one year, and suggested maybe going to four events. He asked Board Member Del Rosario to form a smaller committee with her as chair and come back next month with a full report.

Harriet Tubman Statue Tour – Pres. Fassett discussed the Harriet Tubman touring statue that is touring the country. It will be in Newburgh, NY later this year and Peekskill has the opportunity to bring it here. He is investigating what it will take to bring the statue here. Costs are \$2K per month. Plus \$120 in insurance. It would possibly be placed at Jan Peek Square on Central Avenue, near the large post card. That placement would align with McGreggor Brook or it could be tied in with the HRHC sculpture garden on Bank and Main Street. Peekskill could host the statue from December to end of February (through Black History Month). We could host programming and speaking engagements around the installation. Councilmember Agudelo suggested that we could get sponsor partners. Total cost: about \$5,000. Secretary Joseph made a motion to approve up to \$5K for the statue tour; Board Member Del Rosario seconded it, all in favor.

Eagle Art Installation – Cynthia Del Rosario/Sue Sheridan presented a proposal about bringing unpainted sculpted/cast eagles to Peekskill as a way to bring people in to the downtown. Other sculpted animals could be used as well. Ms. Foster stated that eagles are 'the least friendly' bird. Board Member D'Amico stated that as an artist, eagles are hard to paint because they require a lot of detail, whereas cows have more flat surfaces and require less talent to paint. There was some discussion about tying this in with the DRI grant, but it was pointed out that there would not be enough time and that there are already art projects in the DRI "ask". It was suggested that artists be paid to paint the sculptures; Ms. Sullivan stated that they should not block sidewalks. Pres. Fassett stated that it would be a nice addition to have painted sculptures around town as part of a beautification program. Mr. D'Amico and Mr. Magliari will advise on the possible project and look at options for other objects to paint.

Oz Festival Request for Support – Scarlett Antonia is planning an Oz Fest on Saturday June 20, 2020 and the BID had indicated that it might move its July event to that weekend as well. She gave a history of her time here in Peekskill and of her experience. Ms. Antonia is planning on showing the Wizard of Oz outdoors at the Elks Club, having guest speakers and dancers and performers. Peekskill Farmers Market Manager Corinna Makris said she would be willing to work with Ms. Antonia on integrating the festival with the market. Ms. Sullivan said she would like to join the planning committee.

Executive Director's Report – Bill Powers

- **Monthly Eblast Newsletter Proposal** – Mr. Powers presented a proposal from Paul Magliari to create a monthly eblast newsletter for a one time set up fee of \$150 and a month fee of \$125. Board Member Del Rosario asked why Mr. Powers could not do this, and he stated that he would not have the time. Pres. Fassett asked if Deb Polhill could do this, and Mr. Powers said he would ask, but that he wasn't sure that she had the skills to create an online newsletter. Pres. Fassett stated that is a reasonable rate from Mr. Magliari. The Board agreed to go forward with one newsletter to see how it would work.
- **Peekskill Outdoor Farmers Market** - Since Farmers Market Manager Corinna Makris was present, Exec. Dir. Powers turned this agenda item over to her. Ms. Makris said she is running out of room for vendors on Bank Street and wants to move the market into the Bank Street parking lot. Board Member D'Amico asked how many spaces would be lost, she stated 15 since parking would open up on Bank Street. We would have to get approval from the City of Peekskill to use the lot. Pres. Fassett said we will move forward to see if the city approves.
- **Peekskill Flea Market** - The Flea Market is also running out of room, but the flea market plans to expand to the parking lot behind the diner. That should not present a problem.
- **AIM 2020** – Exec. Dir. Powers advised the board that AIM 2020 is scheduled for April 18-19, 2020 and the BID will look to see if we can support the weekend in some way.
- **Peekskill St. Patrick's Parade** – Exec. Dir. Powers advised the board that the 31st Annual Peekskill St. Patrick's Parade will occur on Saturday, March 14 at 3pm. It is preceded by a mass at Assumption Church, and that is preceded by a brunch at the Elks Club. Former County Legislator John Testa is the Grand Marshal. Downtown business owners, John Sharp and Ruben Alvarez, are aides among others.
- **Miss New York 2020** – Exec. Dir Powers stated the Miss New York Competition will be returning to Peekskill the last weekend of May.

Cigarette butt containers – Pres. Fassett returned to this topic, and took a moment to explain the recycling process. He brought in mockups of the label that he created. The Board chose the blue version of the four presented. Pres. Fassett indicated that these should now be purchased. Mr. Rambo asked if the City will need to do the installation. Pres. Fassett confirmed yes, but explained it should be rather simple. He will also provide locations for them to the city. Pres. Fassett asked Mr. Powers to move forward with the purchase.

Hanging Planters – Pres. Fassett explained that the BID has been discussing transitioning away from ground barrels to hanging flower baskets. Pres. Fassett presented an option to replace the

flower barrels with hanging baskets; he suggested we would need about 100 of them. He understands the concern with hanging baskets is the need to continue to water. He explained the baskets he is suggesting have a water reservoir and are designed to be self-watering from “EarthPlanter”, but we would still need help from the city to water them 2-3 times a week – depending on the size we chose. Price would be \$149 each, as there is a sale currently. He stated the only “negative” is that we still would need to plant these ourselves or find a company to do that. Mr. Rambo stated when he started with this position his predecessor had recently purchased the hanging baskets; they were not cheap, with the coco fiber. Within weeks they were dying and he had to purchase more. They take a beating and need to be watered every day. He felt this Earth Planter was a great idea. He would like the city DPW to be trained to do this planting. With our capital investment and the city labor it would be a great partnership. The city would also provide the flowers. Discussion turned to how many, and Pres. Fassett explained there will be an initial investment as we would need to purchase brackets as well. Pres. Fassett showed examples of brackets and explained the difference in cost and quality. The Board went with the lesser costly bracket. Mr. Rambo stated he would work with Pres. Fassett to make this happen. Mr. Powers mentioned that we do have 60K in reserves. Board decided we will purchase 100 baskets and 50 brackets. City agreed to water at their expense. Sec. Joseph made a motion to purchase the hanging baskets for up to \$18,500, Board Member Del Rosario seconded the motion, all in favor.

Paramount Update – Councilmember Agudelo stated that there was no update at this time, that is in the hands of the attorneys and they are in negotiations. No time frame was given as it is up to the attorneys at this point.

Ribbon-cuttings – Pres. Fassett stated that it is important for the board to attend ribbon cuttings. He would like to see at least half the board try to make an effort to be there each time.

Diven Street - Ms. Wareham Gordon stated there was drug activity again on Diven Street; that will be relayed to the police dept. She also said that there was less trash on Diven Street and thanked Mr. Rambo and Mr. Powers for their attention to this matter. She also reported that she had seen a man expose himself and urinate on a building wall on Park Street. Pres. Fassett explained that we are indeed a city, and these things will happen unfortunately. Pres. Fassett advised her to call the police in those instances.

Tree trimming – Mr. Paglia stated that the tree trimming on Division Street seemed extreme and questioned the credentials of those trimming the trees. Mr. Rambo explained they trimmed the Oak tree and re-layed some of the bad bricks from the roots of that tree.

Gazebo – David Kaminsky asked if he could arrange a meeting with Mr. Rambo at the gazebo to highlight some conditions and concerns. Mr. Rambo suggested he call or email him.

Adjournment - Secretary Joseph made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Del Rosario seconded the motion, all in favor, meeting adjourned at 8:01pm.