



**Peekskill Business Improvement District
Special Board of Director's Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 10, 2018 @ 6pm
Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce**

Special Meeting was called to order by President Fassett at 6PM.

Present: Brian Fassett, Jeorjia Shea, Frank Pugliese, Brendon Fitzgerald, John Sharp, Jeff Tracy, Executive Director Bill Powers. Absent: Jim Pinto, Ann Scaglione, Sean Kearney, Kathie Talbot. Mr. Pugliese noted that he had a proxy from Ms. Talbot.

New BID Office:

Mr. Fitzgerald made a presentation on securing new office space for the BID. Proposed office is at 101 South Division St., Unit 305.

Mr. Fitzgerald presented an overview of current annual office expenses: Rent @ \$6,480, Con Ed @ \$1,040, cable Internet/phone @ \$1,800 for a total of \$9,320. Current lease is month-to-month.

Terms of new lease: Rent @ \$2760/yr (includes common charges), Con Ed @ \$0, Internet @ \$1200/yr, phone @ \$0 if the BID sets up a Google account. Office is on the third floor. One year lease with extension option for 5% increase. Total proposed costs of new office is \$3,960. Total proposed savings over current office is \$5,360 as presented by Mr. Fitzgerald, which can be used for other BID projects.

Mr. Powers explained the BID office uses an answering machine that gets filled with telemarketing/hang-up calls making it difficult for someone to leave a message. Mr Fassett and Mr. Fitzgerald agreed that looking at a Google phone account makes sense.

A discussion was held on details for moving office supplies, files, furniture, etc. to new space. Mr. Fitzgerald suggested hire a moving company or BID board would provide moving. Mr. Pugliese offered use of his trucks, trailer and equipment to move office items. Mr. Fassett expressed concern with moving the four metal file cabinets and steel desk. Mr. Powers noted that he had cleaned out the BID office when it was painted by the landlord last fall, so there is only important items left.

Mr. Pugliese suggested we leave behind the steel desk since it will be difficult to move down the stairs and up three flights at the new location; Mr. Powers will check with the landlord. Mr.

Fassett offered to take the desk for his building if the landlord did not allow to leave the desk behind. Mr. Fitzgerald offered to donate a new desk to the BID office. Mr. Powers suggested perhaps we should move the BID files/records with city permission to the basement of the library which is the city's official records storage facility. Mr. Powers will look into this.

Mr. Powers explained the BID may be able to end the current lease early by May 1 or by May 15, but needs to discuss with Mr. Weeks, the current landlord.

Mr. Fassett expressed concern that this new space is on the third floor and not handicap accessible. Mr. Powers explained he would still have access to the chamber of commerce meeting room. Mr. Fitzgerald suggested we could use the library if necessary.

Motion was made by Mr. Fitzgerald and seconded by Mr. Sharp to accept the lease terms and conditions as presented and to execute the lease document. Motion was carried unanimously, including use of Ms. Talbot's proxy.

Flower Barrels

Mr. Fitzgerald gave a presentation on his research into the flower barrels in the Downtown area, indicating that there are more than 100 barrels in use, some in very poor condition.

Mr. Fitzgerald presented a variety of options:

1. Downsize to 50 and retire 50+ of worst conditioned barrels.
2. Remove all flower barrels and convert to all hanging baskets and supplement the city plans to increase their number of hanging baskets. 50 brackets with 2 hanging flower pots per post would cost approximately \$11,000. This could be phased in as an option over the course of years.
3. Keep approximately 25 flower barrels and and look into possible addition of hanging baskets.

Mr. Powers explained that the intern has done an inventory of barrels and we will have that soon.

Mr. Pugliese expressed concern about saving the boxwoods in the transition. Mr. Fassett suggested speaking with the city or garden club and find permanent locations where they could be planted in Peekskill.

Mr. Pugliese suggested a "sponsorship" of barrels for building owners or tenants in order to keep more barrels on the sidewalks. Mr. Sharp noted that this had been done before and it is a difficult and time consuming task to collect the sponsorship money.

Mr. Powers explained that if the BID provided hanging baskets in conjunction with the city, the City Manager suggested our cost would be \$225 per pole, includes two brackets and plants. The city would also like an undetermined contribution towards watering/maintenance.

Mr. Fassett presented the correspondence he received in email form and as seen on social media concerning the support for the sole bidder of the current RFP and continuing flower barrel support in the downtown. He brought copies for the board to read. He further explained he felt that last year we did not save the money on the planting of succulents vs. flowers, that we saved money on the maintenance and watering. Last year we spent \$15,000 on approximately 120 flower barrels @ an average cost of \$125 per barrel. Mr. Fassett stated that the current bid received is more than twice last year's average at \$274 per barrel. That would bring the total cost to \$13,700 for only 50 barrels. Mr. Sharp expressed concern over how and why the vendor took to social media; Mr. Powers reminded the board that he had been asked by the Board to speak with the vendor regarding a clarification on pricing.

Mr. Fassett expressed concern at having no other bid to compare. He explained he heard from another local vendor as to why they did not enter a bid and that resulted in concern that "requirements, equipment wise are not being followed" and this was being allowed against specification. The Vendor further explained that increase in minimum wage makes it quite difficult to compete with previous low bid award amounts. In addition, Mr. Fassett stated the RFP did not go out to the public long enough and that a better effort should be made in issuing RFPs. He noted the 2018 RFP deadline was earlier than last year. Mr. Fassett explained that he does not want to eliminate the barrels yet because there is not enough information to make an educated decision.

Mr. Sharp did explain that he felt the hanging baskets promote a visual sense of looking up versus down at the sidewalks and that they create an overall better streetscape.

Mr. Fassett noted that purchasing the hanging basket brackets would be a "one time" expense and the BID could expand efforts each year. He explained that the city will do 40 planters, but that is only 20 locations. He believes the city plans on placing hanging baskets along Main Street (as usual), and adding baskets to Division Street from near the Hudson Room to the Monument, mainly on every other light pole.

Mr. Tracy asked why the BID can not work together with the city and combine efforts. Mr. Powers stated that he attempted to do this by combining the flower barrels and the hanging baskets into one RFP, but when the city decided not to send their portion out to bid and decided instead to take the hanging baskets in house, plant them, and maintain them. That left the BID with no choice but to issue its own separate RFP.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked if the BID could still work with the city at least on the watering of plants as they are already out there watering the hanging baskets. He asked if the BID could pay the city to water the remaining barrels. Mr. Tracy stated that we should try to work with the city, and felt people are not concerned whether there are hanging pots or barrels--they just want flowers. Mr. Sharp stated that maybe the BID could sell off the barrels to the businesses that want them and avoid sponsorships.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated he is not a supportive of spending more money for less deliverables. However, Mr. Fassett stated that the brackets require a five-week lead time for delivery, placing the BID in a tough spot.

Mr. Fassett suggested that there be a review of the RFP, adjust it accordingly and get it reissued in larger distribution for May 1st return with 50 barrels. He suggested the BID sees what the city does with the baskets this year and then explore possibly phasing out the barrels next year with a smarter plan. Plan is to take the 50 of the worst flower barrels off the street, and request the city plant the boxwoods somewhere else. Mr. Fassett asked for input from any member of the board as long as it was quick. Mr. Fassett and Mr. Powers agreed that the revised RFP should be done by the end of the week in the interest of time.

Mr. Powers suggested looking into using the Keon Staff to do the plantings if a professional landscaper is not hired. Mr. Fassett suggested asking Garden Club if they would be willing to assist in some way. Mr. Powers stated he did not have a contact at the Garden Club. Mr. Fassett will try to obtain proper contacts.

Mr. Pugliese offered to donate up to three yards of topsoil for the new plantings, requested a location to dump the dirt for the gardeners, and will supply his trucks to move/remove the unwanted barrels.

Motion was made by Mr. Fitzgerald and seconded by Mr. Sharp to identify the worst 50 barrels and remove them from the sidewalks. Motion carried unanimously (including Ms. Talbot's proxy).

Adjournment:

Motion for adjournment was made and carried; meeting ended at 6:55PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Frank Pugliese
Secretary