



Peekskill Business Improvement District Minutes
Tuesday, January 8, 2019 @ 6PM
Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce
One South Division Street, Peekskill, NY

Call meeting to order

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

Present: Brian Fassett, Frank Pugliese, John Sharp, Ann Scaglione, Larry D'Amico, Sean Kearney, Brendon Fitzgerald, Vanessa Agudelo, Jim Pinto

Absent: Jeorjia Shea, Jeff Tracy, Executive Director Bill Powers

BID Members present: Sue Sheridan, Evelyn Lee.

Guest: Ben Green

Meeting called to order by President Fassett @ 1805 hrs

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

Secretary Pugliese made motion to accept the minutes from the December 4, 2018 meeting. Motion carried.

AIM Presentation by Ben Green – Mr. Green recapped the 2018 AIM initiative and described how AIM is truly an economic development initiative for Peekskill. For AIM 2019 he noted the various groups and entities they plan to work with explaining that each entity will do their own programming. He is interested in producing a celebrity panel discussion about filming in the Hudson Valley – this would be used as a fund raiser for Peekskill High School with emphasis on the PHS Robotics team. Regardless there will be a \$1500 award to be given to PHS. Discussion continued and President Fassett opened a brainstorm session with the Board as to how we can integrate a BID initiative as part of the AIM offerings that would promote our downtown businesses and be more integrated with the AIM vision. We focused our discussion on music and filling the restaurants with music acts, preferably with a tech component attached. We also discussed having a central location in the BID that could be used as the hub of information for AIM. We discussed using the Ford Piano space, and Mr. Sharp will discuss with the ownership of that space. We also presented an idea that we do a music performance (with an act that draws attendance) in the Ford Piano space on Saturday evening and use that as the kick off of Saturday night music in the downtown. We also discussed outdoor projects, perhaps with videos that have been produced by Westchester Community College film students that focus on Peekskill and technology. Mr. Sharp mentioned an AP that we could use to produce a “battle of the bands” Sat evening – winner of the battle gets a free AIM video – Mr. Sharp will research.

By-Laws update – President Fassett, Bill Powers, and Tom Langan met with Corporation Counsel

regarding the City's concerns with amending the bylaws without amending the management agreement with the City. Mr. Fassett and Mr. Powers then attended the Committee of the Whole work session with City Council and explained the changes to the bylaws and allowed for questions to be answered. Melissa Ferraro, City Corporation Counsel, will draft a resolution allowing the changes to the bylaws without changing the management agreement and that will be approved by City Council at the next public session on Monday. President Fassett requested attendance by the BID board at that public session.

Holiday Events – in light of Mr. Powers' absence, to be reviewed at the next meeting

BID Office Lease - expires 4/30, and has 90 day renewal clause - an increase of \$10/mo noted, bringing the monthly amount to \$240/mo. Motion by Sharp/Pinto second to accept increase as well as an additional year, motion carried.

Trash Task Force Follow-up – Mr. Powers was to discuss with the city the missing actions of the task force report that have not been implemented. One concern was the 5 new large containers to be strategically placed in the downtown – President Fassett requested that Mr. Pinto will look into and advise.

Bank Street Bollards – President Fassett presented the email request from the City Manager for the BID to purchase and install 20 bollards on Bank Street, 10 each end to protect the Flea and Farmers Markets. The price presented by the City would be app. \$11,900 plus \$2,800 for the bollards and associated work and materials. Mr. Sharp asked if the BID was approached to pay for the bollards on Division Street, discussion continued as to why the City would provide this to benefit a block of private businesses and not the Flea and Farmers Market location that brings thousands of people to the downtown and benefits the entire city. Fassett explained that Bank Street would require more bollards than Division Street because of its width and presented cut sheets and explained that each bollard weighs app. 40 lbs. Each; there would be a concern about asking our Market Managers to move 1,000 pounds of steel to close and then open the street each weekend. Mr. Fassett reached out to other companies that provide bollards and presented a few other options and costs that could save money; one quote was in the \$8,000 range for bollards. Mr. Fassett also presented an option for a bollard that was a bike rack and thought this might be an option and we could promote being green and biking to the market. Vice President Fitzgerald asked if the City was requesting us to do this; Fassett explained that is only a request at this point. The Board continued the discussion with the understanding there is a safety concern, however, most in attendance were opposed to having to pay for their bollards with BID funds. President Fassett will discuss options with the City Manager, perhaps using large vehicles i.e. trucks, in lieu of the bollards.

Big Belly Trash Follow-up – Mr. Fitzgerald provided handouts with a description of the product, specs, etc. Terms would be a 5 year lease; the company would service and maintain; the container would have a software program to alert the City when it is in need of emptying; the firm will do a garbage study, gratis, if we sign up; proposal was for five dual units, 1 can each for recycling and trash; advertising spaces on the sides could help offset the costs, there is also a foot pedal to open the. Mr. Fassett stated he felt this only solves a piece of the trash problem, and wondered if there was a way to slowly implement this plan; get one unit, and do the trash study they offer; Mr. Fitzgerald explained that in order to do the monthly rental option you had to have a minimum of five units. Mr. Pinto asked how much each unit would weigh full, out of concern for the DPW Staff having to lift heavy amounts, no

answer found in literature; the program would cost \$878/mo for 5 units as a lease, would be \$10,500/year; individual purchase of each unit would be around \$10,000 each. Mr. Fassett was concerned with committing to a five year lease of anything as that outlives this current board. Mr. Fassett suggested that perhaps the BID purchase more pitch cans and supplement what we currently have, or replace, with trash and recycling can double units. Due to the high costs of Big Belly, it was suggested that more garbage, as well as recycling containers, be looked into for purchase. Mr. Pinto will reach out to other communities to ascertain the pros and cons of their Big Belly program and get feedback. The BID will contact the City to see if BID be allowed to purchase more trash/recycling cans. Ms. Agudelo expressed concern for adding more cans as there are studies that show fewer cans help to control trash better, however, was in favor of adding recycling cans. Ms. Agudelo would talk to the City to see if there was interest in the Big Belly solution. Mr. Fitzgerald did explain this was discussed by businesses out of the BID district and seemed to be squashed as they could not put sponsor advertising on the trash can. Mr. Fassett will reach out to Corporation Counsel and see if he can obtain the wording or concern regarding sponsorship.

Valet Parking Follow-up – Mr. Fitzgerald explained that the initiative would make use of the James Street parking garage, and the lot next to it. Proposed for use on weekends. Talks with the valet vendor are ongoing; the BID would need to look into getting cash sponsorship from the businesses to offset the initial start-up costs, discuss the plan with the city, figure out marketing campaign, etc. Springtime is targeted for launch of the initiative; the initial idea would be free to use the service for the first month to get the word out and make sure it works. Then start charging users a fee, possibly giving comps when dining in restaurants; current costs being discussed would be around \$800/night. The idea would be to roll out the plan, BID providing half the fee and restaurants/businesses providing the other half. Once it gets rolling, the BID would no longer provide funding as the user fees would cover that portion, while the business sponsorship covers the rest. Mr. Fassett suggested starting a committee to oversee the implementation and not to start this until the Paramount is back to functioning. Mr. Pugliese suggested we might have BID members concerned that BID funds would be going to an effort that does not help businesses that are closed at night.

2019 Board of Director's Elections – As feedback was received only from one member of election committee, Mr. Fassett passed out copies of the announcement of the election for review and approval. Mr. Sharp noted returns by mail should be clarified as to when they arrive; three property owner seats and one tenant seat up for nominations. Mr. Fassett explained February 1, 2019 is deadline for interest to be on the ballot; discussion of slate to take place at meeting on February 5, 2019, and slate to be announced on February 6, 2019. Mr. Fassett suggested perhaps we do the election annual meeting on a weekend in hopes to have more interest in attendance. Mr. Sharp asked if the meeting needed to take place in the BID district; Mr. Fassett explained that he felt it would be better but not required by bylaws. The Board approved election will be Sunday, February 24, 2019 from 2PM-4PM, venue to be announced (possibly Dramatic Hall, Factoria, or Firehouse). Ballots will be counted on Wednesday, Wednesday February 27, 2019. Mr. Sharp and Mr. Fassett will contact different venues for accommodations.

Peekskill Community Congress – Mr. Fassett noted that the first meeting went well. Next meeting will be January 17, 2019 at the Peekskill Brewery, the second of three public forums. Mr. Fassett asked, Does the BID want to present any collective idea to be considered. Mr. Fassett explained that he has held off presenting anything himself or on behalf of the BID as he was curious what the citizens would present.

He wanted feedback from Board as to whether the BID wanted to present an idea or should we just let citizenry be heard. Mr. Fassett stated that Board could discuss again at the February meeting and still have time to present at the third forum. Ms. Agudelo suggested we present a sidewalk improvement district, where property owners are in charge of the sidewalks in front of their property, and property owners would pay into this and money used to solve sidewalk concerns. Mr. Fassett felt asking BID members to pay essentially another tax would not go over very well. Hiring a grant writer for the city was discussed and Ms. Agudelo explained the City has hired a planning department grant writer to look into applications. BID discussion tabled at this time.

Spring/Summer events – Mr. Fassett asked Board Members to decide if they are interested in producing a spring/summer downtown festival as well as the Harvest Festival. The Board agreed to move forward with both and the proposed date for the spring/summer festival is Saturday, July 20th – 4 PM to 11 PM - details to follow. Tentative name, Peekskill Music Festival or Peekskill Summer Fest. Mr. Sharp suggested that the band that wins the AIM battle of bands is the headliner for this festival.

Harvest Festival 2019 - The date for the 2019 Harvest Festival is set for October 5, 2019 the weekend of the Rotary Horse Show. Discussion included if Board felt it would be OK to share the date; Board felt it was a good option. Mr. Fassett also explained the Horse Show is earlier in the day and over by 5 pm, and our event not till 2pm or 3 pm. Mr. Sharp will reach out to the Rotary for comment.

Flower Barrels - President Fassett noted our options: (1) remove the remaining barrels, and transition to hanging baskets, or (2) make permanent fixes ie planting of trees, in lieu of barrels or hanging plants. Ms Agudelo will reach out to DPW and find what the plan for tree pits is currently. The opinion of those present was to keep the flower barrels, and again plant them ourselves. Perhaps also start to purchase some hanging baskets, starting with one or two blocks. Help will be needed in the spring for planting. Mr. Fitzgerald will again head up the planting sessions. Mr. Powers will put a budget together.

Website – President Fassett reminded the Board that he requested that the Board review the new website. He expressed disappointment and noted that no feedback was received - the site will be launched soon, with a registry for Class B members.

Paramount Center – President Fassett read an email from Richard Leins in response to his requesting an update on the Paramount. Ms. Agudelo explained that the current entity in charge of managing the operation of the theater is seeking a new or additional partner. Without new partners, there is a concern with them being able to manage moving forward. The city is hoping to reach agreement in the next couple of months. Ms. Agudelo asked Mr. Pinto and Ms. Scaglione if they had any further comment; they did not have any additional information. The city is looking into some renovations to the facility – this is the reason that current staff has been released until such time. Mr. Fassett asked if there was a timeline, Ms. Agudelo explained as soon as possible but no timeline was given.

Façade grants – President Fassett explained briefly that there is a grant currently being implemented through NY Main Streets Grant Program. The target area is North Division, North of Main and some on Main Street. He will bring more information forward as this progresses. The city has the grant and many steps to do before they can issue requests for interest from property owners; could be launched in April.

Comments - President Fassett opened floor for any new business or BID member comments. Ms. Lee

from Evolution Gallery suggested another downtown “stroll” around Valentine’s Day to increase exposure and sales. Also suggested that it become a monthly event, perhaps get stores to stay open later on Friday nights from 5pm-9pm to pick up the dining crowds. Suggested February 8, 2019 as starting date; Ms. Lee will be the point person.

Secretary Pugliese had to leave the meeting, Ms. Lee continued taking minutes.

Ms. Agudelo discussed Westchester Power Program--a community choice aggregation, with a bulk buy of energy. The City is considering participating, and residents and businesses will have the opportunity to opt out or stay with their ESCO. The program offers stable, fixed rates lower than the 12 month average with a two year contract. Users would still be a Con Ed customer, but with a different energy supplier. She thinks this will be implemented within two months.

Adjournment @ 2020 hrs
Respectfully submitted,

Frank Pugliese
Secretary