



Peekskill Business Improvement District
Board of Director's Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 6, 2019 @ 6pm
Former Ford Piano Building

Call meeting to order: Meeting called to order by President Brian Fassett at 6:14pm.

Present: Brian Fassett, Frank Pugliese, David Kaminsky, Monique Michaels, Ivy Fairchild. Executive Director Bill Powers. **Absent:** LaFern Joseph. Brendon Fitzgerald, Councilperson Agudelo and Larry D'amico arrived later. Ms. Scaglione sent a representative.

BID Members present: Michael Safe Baker, Nancy Warham-Gordon, Susan Sheridan, Mary Foster, Drew Claxton, Scarlet Antonia, Carol Bash.

BID Member Public Comment: Pres. Fassett opened the floor for BID member comment on agenda items. Carol Bash offered an update on the Film Festival, Pres. Fassett asked to save that till the end of the meeting.

Cigarette Butt Canisters and Trash Cans - In waiting for a quorum, Pres. Fassett asked Mr. Powers to bring the board up to date on the trash cans and cigarette butt canisters. Mr. Powers indicated that the city manager wanted to schedule a meeting to discuss both and wanted the BID to come to a council meeting to address the council about the cigarette canisters since they may be attached to city property. Mr. Powers reported he received a price quote for painting trash cans of \$125 each. We would need to put out an RFP. Pres. Fassett suggested we prepare an RFP as we go into winter. Mr. Powers will reach out to City Manager and get on the September agenda.

First Fridays/Cancellation of Remaining 2019 Dates – Pres. Fassett indicated that First Fridays have not “taken flight” and has not taken on a life of its own. He said there was no indication that any businesses were participating, despite having monthly themes. Some of the early ideas to support First Fridays was to offer babysitting services while parents have dinner and shop, street entertainment, dinner specials related to the themes. Ms. Michaels suggested instead of 12 times a year, First Fridays are held four times a year. She stated that one of the reasons why the Lofts on main had difficulty in participating is the lack of insurance for the gallery space at the lofts. She said she would contact the membership in the building to get them more involved. A discussion was held about moving First Fridays to Thursdays since a lot communities do First Fridays (competition).

Gazebo Update - Mr. Kaminsky provided an update on the gazebo. He stated he and other committee members met with the city manager on 7/24/19. He stated the city manager was receptive to doing some maintenance on the gazebo but seemed more interested in hearing about a bigger concept, more of a re-do of the whole plaza. All were concerned about the time and money it would take, and Mr. Kaminsky is interested in a maintenance program now. He stated the city had done some additional gardening, planting and weeding around the boulder as well as the gazebo. A request was made to replace the damaged plexiglass; estimates to replace the plexiglass would cost \$35,000. Pres. Fassett felt that estimate was high. Mr. Kaminsky thought the estimate included UV protection. There was some discussion about taking out what is there now versus putting something else back in. Pres. Fassett suggested getting another estimate from architect Joe Thompson for diversified glass. Mr. Kaminsky stated that the committee plans to meet again. Pres. Fassett asked if Mr. Thompson had submitted any ideas yet. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald, who arrived, stated that Mr. Thompson had suggested using the steel structure, and attach a historically appropriate roof. Mr. Baker stated that there should be more than two estimates and that the flooring of the gazebo is uneven and dangerous. Mr. Kaminsky indicated that city staff may be able to reset the bricks.

Request Approval of July 9, 2019 Meeting Minutes – Frank Pugliese made a motion to approve the July 9, 2019 Meeting Minutes as submitted David Kaminsky seconded it, all in favor, Ann's appointee abstained.

Summer Sounds – Vice Pres. Fitzgerald reported that it was a busy day in downtown Peekskill for the Summer Sounds event, stating that there seemed to be a lot of people enjoying the restaurants; he estimated between 3K – 4K people attended and that there was a crowd from start to finish. Bands were great, he said. He reported that the event lost money. Pres. Fassett said presenting a summer event was an interesting learning experience. He noted Harvest Fest sold twice the amount of beer than what was sold at Summer Sounds and suggested that we may have made more money from selling diversified beverages like lemonade. He also noted that the one time purchases like tents will be reused for Harvest Fest, even though the expenses are associated with Summer Sounds. Mr. Fitzgerald noted that the former Ford Piano Building was used for large art displays and showing of film shorts during Peekskill Film Festival. He said the only concern raised was that there should have been more diversity among the performers. Ms. Michaels who handled the selection of the bands said that she was attempting to pull in local Peekskill area talent with a diversity of music genres as the focus. The BID will work on having a more diverse lineup for the Harvest Fest as we did last year. Pres. Fassett stated that the BID did not have a lot of participation and volunteers. He said the Board and BID members need to do more than just post the event to Facebook, we need more help. We

are a small committee with virtually few extra volunteers. Without volunteers, there is only so much the BID can do with these events. We need more participation. Ms. Sheridan noted that there was barely an uptick in business at TQM over a normal Saturday. Ms. Claxton stated that her business did not do well that weekend. Ms. Foster liked the idea of showcasing local music and stated that volunteers are important to an event like this. She inquired about what bands are booked for Harvest Festival. No bands have been booked yet. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald “party bands” are not always good choices and may have attributed the loss of beer revenue along with people on vacations and the heat and humidity. It was suggested to combat the heat and humidity, that the event is moved to earlier in the summer next year. It was also noted that the Film Festival may have limited the number of volunteers since there is quite a bit overlap. Pres. Fassett said some vendors did well, some did not. He said there was a lot of interest in the bouncy house. Ms. Bash thought the weekend was a success and that it brought new people to Peekskill. Mr. Pugliese said he heard positive comments about how much activity there was in Peekskill. Ms. Antonia heard from others that a lot was happening in Peekskill. Mr. D'Amico arrived. Mr. Kaminsky stated that sponsors seemed uninterested in supporting the event and he found that disappointing. He said we needed more sponsors, get to them earlier and have a better message to understand the value of sponsorships. Pres. Fassett said that to get larger sponsors, we need longer planning time. Mr. Fitzgerald thanked Sue Sheridan, John Sharp, Sepp Spenlinhauer and Cynthia Del Rosario-Neville for volunteering.

Harvest Festival/October Festival on Division Street – The Harvest Festival is planned for Saturday, October 5 and the Division Street businesses are planning an October Festival the following weekend, October 12 and 13, 2019. A discussion was had about joining forces and making it a two-day event with the BID taking the lead on Saturday and the Division Street folks taking the lead and doing a bigger event on Sunday than normal. It was noted that the Peekskill High School reunion weekend is that same weekend. Pres. Fassett stated that if the BID were to combine forces, the beer sales would have to go to pay for the festival. Treas. Pugliese noted that the beer sales last October did well, but stated that we need additional help. Pres. Fassett made it clear that the BID involvement would be limited to one day. It was suggested that we keep Bertoline's for October beer supplies. Ms. Fairchild suggested involving cider mills. Ms. Claxton asked that Esther Street be closed and be part of the Harvest Festival. It was noted that Croton is hosting its October Fest on 10/5. It was suggested to move the Harvest Festival to the following weekend, October 12. Mr. Powers indicated that the Harvest Festival takes about \$5K to cover city costs, \$5K for music and sound, and another \$5K in expenses. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald made a motion to have the BID host the Harvest Festival on Saturday, October 12, from 2pm to 10pm with a budget of \$15K, seconded by Larry D'Amico, all in favor.

Taste of Peekskill - Sue Sheridan Ms. Sheridan stated that since the Paramount is not open as much, downtown business is suffering. The Division Street restaurants want to utilize the existing street closure on September 14 to get people to try any other restaurants that they haven't tried. She wants to invite restaurants to participate in a Taste of Peekskill by offering them a spot on Division Street, brings a tent and serves one or two of their signature dishes for \$5; they would also offer wine tasting, and have a beer truck. She would ask that the BID take in the funds and provide radio and ad support. Pres. Fassett expressed concern that there was not a lot of lead time. Ms. Michaels suggested the BID support the effort. Ms. Fairchild made a motion to provide \$1K in Facebook ad support and \$1,500 in radio support. Mr. Kaminsky seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Continuation of Art Display at Ford Piano – Mr. D'Amico asked if the BID could continue the Big Art Display through September and October at the former Ford Piano Building, noting that with the other planned activities, it would be a nice addition. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald said he would check with Mr. Lanza about the availability of the space over the next two months. Ex. Dir. Powers noted that we would have to extend the insurance certificate to cover the next two months. He stated that he could make that arrangement if the art display was extended.

Holiday Decorations – Pres. Fassett wanted to start the conversation now about the holiday decorations and form a committee. He stated that the BID was planning to do what it has done in the past years, with the banners and lights. If there was interest in adding anything new, that would have to be discussed soon. There has been past discussion on adding over the street lighting and or encouraging window displays. Ms. Foster and Ms. Claxton volunteered to be part of the committee.

BID Members to be heard: Pres. Fassett opened the floor to BID members to be heard.

BID sponsored candidates' debates - Ms. Foster asked about BID sponsored candidates' debates and Pres. Fassett said that the idea has been tabled.

Code Enforcement – The question of how to get landlords/property owners to clean up vacant properties was brought up. Ex. Dir. Powers was asked to add this topic to the list of items for the city manager and BID members were advised to contact the city if there is a complaint about a specific property.

Film Festival – Carol Bash updated, on a positive note, film festival did great, presales already surpassed last years sales. Thank you to the volunteers. Carol stressed the success of any of these types of festivals relies on volunteers. Thank you to the BID for support.

Alcohol consumption in downtown – Ms. Claxton expressed concern that the bar owners in downtown need to better police alcohol consumption by patrons. Not to serve people that are already drunk. She pointed out that a man was unconscious in the gutter near her building and that sends a poor image to out-of-towners. She said it has happened multiple times. She said she called the police. Nancy also stated she has had to call the police for similar circumstances.

Executive Session - Pres. Fassett asked if there were any other comments, with none, he announced that the board was moving into executive session to discuss Mr. Powers' contract extension and another personnel matter.

Adjournment - Mr. Pugliese made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Vice Pres. Fitzgerald seconded the motion, all in favor.

Meeting Ended - 7:58pm