



Peekskill Business Improvement District
Board of Director's Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, December 3, 2019 @ 6pm
Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce

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

Board Members Present: Brian Fassett, Brendon Fitzgerald, LaFern Joseph, Ann Scaglione, Mike Hagerty, Larry D'Amico, Ivy Fairchild, Cynthia Del Rosario, Executive Director Bill Powers. Board Members David Kaminsky and Monique Michaels arrived later.

Board Members Absent: Councilperson Vanessa Agudelo.

BID Members Present: Michael Safe Baker

BID Member Public Comment: Pres. Fassett opened the floor for BID member comments on agenda items. There were no comments.

Request Approval of November 5, 2019 Meeting Minutes – Sec. Joseph asked to have the November 5, 2019 meeting minutes approved as written. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald made a motion to accept the minutes, Board Member Del Rosario seconded them, and all were in favor, except for Board Member Fairchild who abstained because she was not present at the previous meeting.

Comptroller Scaglione noted that Acting DPW Head Dave Rambo was unable to attend tonight's meeting. He had been invited to attend and he will be invited to the next meeting.

Holiday Lights/Banners/Parking/Peekskill Makes Me Merry – Pres. Fassett reported that the BID hired GreenPro to fill the flower barrels with holiday greens; some have some missing pieces which will be filled in. They have bows and lights as well. The company will also be decorating the Gazebo. The city put up the lighted snowflakes, but some on Main Street will have to be flipped inward to the other side of the poles so that trucks don't hit them. The skylines should be here next week. The BID ordered four of them. Discussion about where to place the skylines was had. Most agreed on South Street and Main Street and one near old Weeks' Jewelers/Eagle Saloon.

Board Member David Kaminsky arrived.

Board Member Monique Michaels arrived.

Pres. Fassett noted that the BID purchased four banners with the snowman/holiday strand lights/Peekskill Makes Me Merry graphics to promote the free four hour parking which has started in the garages; the banners promoting the free parking are still to be installed. Pres. Fassett asked whether the city's free parking signs were installed yet, but no one recalled seeing them. Ann Scaglione will look into that.

Exec. Dir. Powers noted that the Holiday Tree Lighting is scheduled for Saturday, December 7, 2019 at 4pm. Entertainment includes the Arts 10566 Youth Choir, Kiley Center STARS, the Dance Conservatory, Cross Cultural Connection with Ray Blue, and others. Some are performing for the first time at the tree lighting. Santa will be arriving by Stella the Trolley. Free cookies and hot chocolate will be provided by Kathleen's Tea Room and the Chamber of Commerce. Kacey Morabito from WHUD will be MCing. 2,800 flyers promoting the tree lighting were distributed to Peekskill School children. Radio ads are running as well. The new Peekskill Makes Me Merry Snowman buttons are a big hit and we are getting a great response to them. It is the first time the BID has gone to a cut out instead of round buttons.

DRI Update – Pres. Fassett stated that the boundaries have been slightly extended to the Presbyterian Church on South Street and to the monument on Division Street. Project proposals are starting to come in. The deadline for the Open Call for projects is December 6, 2019. Peekskill Pavilion and the PAA initiatives have the BID as a partner so far. The next public DRI meeting is December 18 at the Neighborhood Center and public unveiling of projects will be on January 23, 2020 at the Central Fire House. The meetings are now on TV and available to the public. He mentioned in response to a question from Vice Pres. Fitzgerald that a shuttle related proposal had been submitted. Exec. Dir. Powers noted that he had been told that “nothing on wheels” could be considered for grant monies, but Pres. Fassett suggested that if it were part of a larger project, that it might be eligible, but that he thought our continuing contact with the county regarding transporting people around Peekskill should go forward. In response to other questions, Pres. Fassett stated that the DRI Committee consists of 21 people and stated that if the grant was for \$60 million it probably wouldn't be enough to cover all the submitted projects. He stated they have defined criteria to follow and gave examples of projects involving the Youth Bureau, shuttle service, and the arts center to name a few. More info is available at www.peakskilldri.com.

Peekskill Public Art Project/DRI – Board Member D'Amico presented the PAA's public art project which will consist of mural and banner installations from the riverfront to uptown, as well as a project known as Enlighten Peekskill consisting of 15 light sculptures. The idea is to get

people flowing from Central Ave/South Street to Downtown, with art located in strategic spots. There are 18 people on the working committee according to Board Member D'Amico and this is a BID-Arts Alliance project. They have spoken with the Audubon folks to see what the impact would be of the lights on birds. He also spoke of a putting a mural on the side of Fern's building. Board Member D'Amico was asked to send any documentation to Exec. Dir. Powers for distribution to the board after he noted that they were still working on the documents in advance of the Friday deadline.

Peekskill Pavilion – Peekskill Farmers Market Manager Corinna Makris stated she wanted to make the farmers market “bigger, much bigger.” Ms. Makris presented her DRI concept called the Peekskill Pavilion which would require placing a roof and structure with retractable doors over the Bank Street parking lot. It would allow us to present the Farmers Market, Flea Market and other events all year round. The location could also be rented out for weekend events to raise revenue as a BID initiative and could have sound and stage equipment. Pres. Fassett said that it could cover the entire lot and through street, or just part of it. It would double as an open air pavilion and parking lot. Board Member Del Rosario said it is an awesome project to promote downtown Peekskill as the place to go. It will create more foot traffic. She said she would connect Corinna to a solar panel installation company to see if solar can be part of the project. Pres. Fassett said the structure will cost upwards of \$400,000. Ms. Makris is also pursuing other funding sources because the project could cost more depending on the final design. Board Member Fairchild asked how many parking spaces will be lost. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald looked up the information and reported that the lot has 71 spaces. Ms. Fairchild was concerned about losing access to so many spaces. Exec. Dir. Powers noted that parking spaces on Bank Street would become available. Board Member Kaminsky asked if perpendicular parking spaces can be put on Bank Street to increase the number of spaces. Pres. Fassett stated that people could park in the James Street garage. Concern was expressed about the condition of the garage and Pres. Fassett stated that the wall bricks could be painted white and that the lights can be replaced for better lighting. Comptroller Scaglione stated that new lighting is going into the garage. It was suggested that people could find their way from the garage to other points of interest with a good wayfinding app. Board Member Fairchild stated that when she parks in the James Street garage, it is quite full. Board Member Kaminsky stated opening the pavilion would likely not happen until 2022 to get all the approvals.

Cleanliness/Maintenance Issues Downtown – Board Member Kaminsky discussed his concerns about the cleanliness and poor maintenance of the downtown. The discussion centered around people littering and even how the tree pits are poorly maintained. Board Member Kaminsky posed the theory that maybe we have become used to the trash and other problems. Board

Member Kaminsky asked if we know what the city budget is to clean up the city and does the city have enough staff and the systems in place to keep the city clean. Board Member Fairchild said she had a group of funders come into the city and they remarked that it was dirty. She asked if a coloring book for young students on the topic would help educate people. She asked if the BID could print them. Comptroller Scaglione stated that the city is not able to handle a lot of disrepair situations because this is an old city with decaying infrastructure with limited staff. Board Member Hagerty stated that the city is currently applying for grants to help address some infrastructure issues. He noted that the city is applying for a grant to determine water main/sewer needs. Pres. Fassett suggested maybe the BID can start a list of maintenance issues and work with David Rambo and the city to figure out a format to get the city cleaned up and taken care of. Exec. Dir Powers expressed concern that we may be heightening the expectation that any issue brought forward will be addressed through the BID when we are not the ones who can accomplish that. Pres. Fassett expressed his frustration on how to move forward, perhaps we could gather a list and tackle one block at a time. Board Member Kaminsky asked to be designated point person for the list. Perhaps we could set up a Google docs list. Board Member Del Rosario asked if we could get sponsorships to help keep the city clean. Pres. Fassett stated that we have some help from the Keon Street Sweeping program, but it's not enough. Exec. Dir. Powers noted that Wheelabrator currently provides \$20,000 for the Keon program, but noted that that source may not continue next year. Board Member D'Amico noted that the CAC is applying for DRI grant money to replace the treeless tree pits. Pres. Fassett noted that the BID had done a Stash the Trash Campaign a while back and it seemed to help a bit. Exec. Dir. Powers noted that posters and a letter were sent to property owners. It was suggested to send an updated version again, Stash the Trash 2.0. Board Member Del Rosario also noted that the property behind her building (former McDonald and Peacock building) is not maintained by the city and that she would be interested in maintaining it. She is in discussions with the city.

Paramount Update – There was no Paramount update.

2020 Election Committee Report – Vice Pres. Fitzgerald said the Election Committee plans to meet next Tuesday. Pres. Fassett noted that he, Board Members D'Amico, Fairchild and Del Rosario are all up for re-election.

2020 Event Planning – Pres. Fassett and Exec. Dir. Powers met with Westchester Circus Arts representatives to see if we can replace one of our 2020 events with something different. The circus would bring a tent, but would need a 150 foot by 150 foot space. A smaller possibility is to have circus performers part of an existing event and replace the kids zone with circus

performers teaching and mingling with the general public. The latter option would cost about \$5K. It worked well in White Plains. They are also looking at Lepore Park at Pres. Fassett's suggestion and at the grassy area outside of Peekskill HS (which is out of the BID). The reps are coming back to Peekskill to look at possible options. The Elks lot and Assumption Church lot were also suggested as possible locations. Exec. Dir. Powers advised the Board that Scarlet Antonia is planning an Oz Fest based at the Elks Club on Saturday, June 20, 2020. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald thought a carnival event might be good. The board agreed to move the July event to June 20 and work with Scarlet since cooperating with another event like we did with the film festival made both successful. Board Member Del Rosario said the BID needs to develop a sponsorship package to raise funds to present these events. Board Member Fairchild agreed and said we have to do it early because last time we were too late. Pres. Fassett appointed Board Members Del Rosario and Fairchild to lead a sponsorship committee. Attention turned to the Harvest Festival and the board agreed to move the date to Saturday October 3, 2020. Farmers Market Manager Makris said it should be more of an agriculturally-focused event. Start and end times were also discussed and the board settled on noon to 8pm for now.

Treasurer – Pres. Fassett noted that with the resignation of Frank Pugliese from the board, the board needed to appoint a new treasurer. Pres. Fassett asked Board Member Kaminsky to serve as treasurer; he agreed. Board Member Fairchild nominated Board Member Kaminsky to serve as treasurer, seconded by Secretary Joseph, all in favor. Board Member Kaminsky was appointed the new BID treasurer.

Executive Director's Report –

- **Administrative Support Plans** – Exec. Dir. Powers noted that approximately 10 applications were received for the administrative support position here at the BID. Interviews will start next week. Pres. Fassett and Board Member Fairchild are serving on the interview committee along with Mr. Powers.
- **Peekskill Winter Farmers Market** – Exec. Dir. Powers turned this agenda item over to Ms. Makris to discuss. Ms. Makris stated that the winter market will be held at the Peekskill Youth Bureau starting this Saturday.
- **Reduced Rate Parking/James Street Garage Top Floor** – Exec. Dir. Powers was asked by the city manager to get input from the board regarding a proposal to offer free or reduced parking rates on the upper floor of the James Street garage. Mr. Powers stated that the request came after internal discussions at city hall about trying to get employees to use the garage instead of parking in prime spots. After discussion, Mr. Powers was asked to advise the city manager that the board did not think reduced

rate or free parking on the upper level of the James Street garage was something the Board supports. Pres. Fassett asked Comptroller Scaglione if she could include a note on water bills indicating that already reduced parking is available in the James Street garage and she said yes. It was also suggested that we launch a facebook/social media campaign encouraging employees and others to park in the garage.

BID Member Public Comment –

Kwanzaa Request - Exec. Dir. Powers brought a request from the Kwanzaa celebration for the BID Board to purchase a table of ten. After discussion, it was decided to donate \$250 to cover one of the group's scholarships, but not buy tickets. The group gives out three scholarships at the dinner/dance which will be held on December 28 at the Presbyterian Church. Board Members can purchase their own tickets if they wish to go. Pres. Fassett asked Mr. Powers to work with Secretary Joseph to figure out how to give the \$250 donation. The board voted all in favor of the \$250 donation to be used as a BID Scholarship. Sec. Joseph will email Mr. Powers details of the event to send out to the board.

Gazebo – Mr. Baker asked the status of the gazebo improvements. Treasurer Kaminsky stated the he had a letter into the city manager about the status, but had nothing to report back yet. He thought the city wanted to wait until spring to do anything with the gazebo. Mr. Baker stated that he hoped the matter was not being tabled. Treasurer Kaminsky stated that he would send a followup letter.

Historic Preservation Meeting – Pres. Fassett stated he had attended the last Historic Preservation Meeting. Third Eye Studio's hardwood sign was approved, but her hanging banner was not approved. Discussion moved onto to flashing neon signs. Pres. Fassett said “we” have to take ownership of these kinds of things and noted that the sign ordinances were updated in 2011 and does not permit blinking flashing signs. Board Member Del Rosario was concerned that the BID is here for businesses and that we should not be the enforcer of codes. Board Member Fairchild expressed concern that code enforcement should be applied equally and not target certain businesses. Instead of enforcement, it was suggested the code enforcement officer go in, explain the rules, and make an informal request before issuing a violation. Pres. Fassett stated that the Stop N Go sign was too large according to our codes. Signage at 1038 Park for a new coffee shop was approved. Discussion shifted to the State Farm signage in the new lofts on Main building—their branding signage is very obtrusive. The question was asked, do new businesses get a copy of the regulations they have to follow. The answer is no. Exec. Dir. Powers asked Comptroller Scaglione to invite the city's code enforcement officer to the next board meeting. She said she would ask.

Adjournment – Sec. Joseph made a motion to close the meeting, everyone seconded, all in favor, meeting adjourned.