



Peekskill Business Improvement District
Board of Director's Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 7, 2020 @ 6pm
Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce

Board Members present: Brian Fassett, Brendon Fitzgerald, David Kaminsky, Vanessa Agudelo, Ann Scaglione, Mike Hagerty, Monique Michaels, Larry D'Amico, Cynthia Del Rosario, Executive Director Bill Powers. Invited Guest: Nicholas Cecere, Building Inspector, City of Peekskill.

Board members absent: LaFern Joseph, Ivy Fairchild.

BID Members present: Scarlett Antonia, Cecilia Quirino, Nancy Wareham Gordon, Mary Foster, Paul Magliari, Howard Copeland, Michael Safe Baker, John Sharp, Ed Marussich, Arne Paglia, Eileen Sullivan, et al.

Call meeting to order – Pres. Brian Fassett called the meeting to order at 6pm and opened the meeting with moments of silence for BID member Larry DeNoia and former BID board member Ken Laudon, both of whom recently passed away.

BID Member Public Comment – One of Scarlett's supporters, George Coniglio thanked her for all she has done for Peekskill and welcomed her back from surgery; she was given a hearty round of applause.

Mary Foster asked about the DRI grant and the gazebo area and who is spearheading it, the BID or the city; Pres. Fassett said he would address that issue during the DRI agenda item.

Request Approval of December 6, 2019, Meeting Minutes – In the absence of LaFern Joseph, Treasurer Kaminsky made a motion to accept the December 6, 2019 minutes as written, seconded by Board Member Del Rosario, all in favor.

Guest: Nicholas Cecere, Building Inspector, City of Peekskill – Pres. Fassett introduced invited guest Nicholas Cecere, who is the Building Inspector for the City of Peekskill. Mr. Cecere noted that he had volunteered at the Harvest Festival. He also noted that his department is for the first time in eight years fully staffed with Code Enforcement Officers and Fire and Plumbing Inspectors, as well as an office manager. He said his team is working hard and he's looking to

make changes that will help speed up the process including applications, fees, etc to make it easier. They are accepting online payments. Mr. Cecere gave a brief overview of his department, noting that he is there to protect the public and the property owners. He wants things done the right way, and not have the public get scammed and he wants things done as quickly as possible. Mr. Cecere was asked how he would approach a business owner who has a blinking sign in the window, for example. He said his staff is a good group and they would reach out to the business owner first to educate the owner and have them rectify the situation; he would give a warning first unless it was a safety issue. Mr. Cecere noted that the public is his eyes and they should report contractors doing work that is not approved or permitted.

Vice President Fitzgerald arrived.

As a new commercial tenant having just gone through the process, Board Member Del Rosario noted that the permit approval process needed some work and clarity.

Ms. Wareham Gordon asked about multi-family dwellings on Diven and Paulding and what the regulations were regarding zombie homes. What kind of follow-up is there? Mr. Cecere conceded that at times the city's hands are tied when it comes to a home owned by corporations or banks.

Holiday Lights/Banners/Parking/Peekskill Makes Me Merry – Pres. Fassett noted that three holiday skyline decorations were installed and that one more was going to be going up. There was a delay in shipping the skylines. He also noted that for the first time the BID designed, created and installed holiday parking banners over the garage entrances and over Main Street coming in from the Town of Cortlandt to promote free four hour parking in the garages during the holidays. There was some discussion about how the parking app worked with the free parking and some noted that there might have been problems. Board Member Scaglione was asked to look into it, but she noted that the pay stations had free holiday parking messages on them. Exec. Director Powers noted that there was a good turnout at the tree lighting and that the snowman Peekskill Makes Me Merry buttons were a big hit. The gazebo and flower barrels had greens and lights.

DRI Update – Pres. Fassett reported that 39 proposals were submitted for DRI consideration and 15 were deemed not fundable in their current state. In total, there are 32 proposals (including those from the city) that are under consideration. Pres. Fassett noted that there will be a public DRI meeting in Spanish, on January 9, 2020, at Assumption Church at 8pm. On January 15 there will be a planning committee meeting that is open to the public. On January 23 there will be another public workshop held at the Firehouse at 7pm for the public to give

input on projects that were whittled down by the committee. In response to Mary Foster's earlier question, Pres. Fassett noted that David Kaminsky is representing the BID in regards to the gazebo. Pres. Fassett noted that the consultants presented some projects to the city council for about 2.5 hours during the recent council meeting. Ms. Wareham Gordon stated that she felt that there was not enough time for public input at the DRI meetings, Pres. Fassett will relay that concern but he noted that there were ways to email the consultants through the DRI website. Board Member Kaminsky asked what the timing was for the projects. Pres Fassett stated that the consultants will provide recommendations by the end of March 2020, then it goes to New York State, and projects selected for funding, like the gazebo area, should start within one year. Board member D'Amico indicated that the consultants seem to be combining similar projects or elements of projects for consideration. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald asked what projects the BID was partnering with, and Pres. Fassett stated that the BID was supporting the Peekskill Pavilion, and the PAA art projects, but could support others.

Cleanliness/Maintenance Issues Downtown – Board Member Kaminsky asked when the city manager was leaving and Board Member Scaglione stated that Richard Leins was leaving at the end of the month and that his replacement started as assistant city manager so he can get up to speed while Mr. Leins was still here. Board Member Kaminsky was interested in addressing the cleanliness issues with the new city manager. He noted that there did not seem to be as much trash on the streets in the winter and wondered if that was because of the weather; it was noted that perhaps the extra trash cans were helping. Board Member Kaminsky asked if the BID should fund someone to help keep the streets cleaner. Pres. Fassett reminded the board that the BID does fund and support the KEON street-sweeping team, but that may not be enough. BID member Baker asked about the cigarette butt containers previously spoken about. Exec. Dir. Powers stated that the city was on board with the placement of the containers, but we needed to decide where they would go and if they would contain a message/advertisement.

Paramount Update – Councilperson Agudelo reported that the Honeywell energy project is complete and that negotiations with the new management entity are moving forward but could not provide specifics citing the ongoing negotiations, but that she expected a smooth transition. Details still have to be fleshed out and that there may be some physical improvements that may be done in the theater. Pres. Fassett implored Councilmember Agudelo to push things along. BID Member John Sharp stated that the Paramount is doing well, with diverse shows. BID Member Baker noted that he had been at three recent shows and that they were excellent and they were sold out.

2020 Election Committee Report – Vice Pres. Fitzgerald stated the Election Committee met on

December 11 and laid out the election process. The Annual Meeting and Elections will be held on Sunday, March 1, 2020, at Dramatic Hall, from 2pm to 5pm. The cost to rent the space was \$500, a good deal. The election committee will meet again next week to determine additional marketing, Facebook posts, and a flyer to encourage people to run for the board. Vice Pres. Fitzgerald reminded the board that three Class A board positions are open and one Class B spot is open.

2020 Event Planning & Sponsorships – Board Member Del Rosario said she and Board Member Fairchild are putting together sponsor packages for all of the BID events. She will report back at the next meeting. She hopes to bring in more vendors and that to be successful we need to plan, plan, plan. Pres. Fassett noted that Sue Sheridan wants to do a holiday market in cooperation with the annual tree lighting in 2020 on Division Street. Pres. Fassett also offered the opportunity to bring a traveling Harriett Tubman Sculpture to Peekskill for a month; cost would be \$2K per month. We would have to make arrangements to transport it and pay for insurance as well. The sculpture is scheduled to be in Newburgh in November.

Spring Flower Barrels – Vice Pres. Fitzgerald asked if we should look to swap out the flower barrels for the hanging baskets in light of having to replace the overgrown boxwoods. It was suggested that we find a firm willing to plant smaller boxwoods in exchange for letting them take the larger boxwoods which can be priced higher for their other clients. Board Member Del Rosario asked if businesses would sponsor a barrel and Pres. Fassett stated we tried that but it did not work in the past. BID Member Baker said that people leave bottles and trash in the planters. He stated he would like to volunteer on the committee.

Executive Director's Report

Administrative Support Plans – Exec. Dir. Powers reported that Deb Carlin Polhill has started as our administrative support person. Ms. Polhill started last week and is focused first on our registry and outreach databases.

Peekskill Winter Farmers Market – Exec. Dir. Powers reported that the indoor farmers market is being housed in the Youth Bureau.

2019 Budget Review – Exec. Dir. Powers reported that the BID is in excellent financial condition and noted that the BID's reserves are \$62,990, only \$1,000 less than 2018. He noted that even though some of the 2019 events lost money, the increase in revenue from the Farmers Market and Flea Market offset those losses.

Stash the Trash Campaign – Exec. Dir. Powers reported that he is working with the city on the next stash the trash campaign.

Brian Fassett selected the chamber's Volunteer of the Year – Exec. Dir. Powers added that BID President Brian Fassett will be honored in February as the chamber's Volunteer of the Year. The BID will be taking an ad in the dinner journal. Mr. Powers alerted the board that they could purchase an ad or attend the dinner.

Trash Can Painting – Exec. Dir Powers advised the board that Malles Auto Body will paint one of the city's garbage cans for free so we can decide if we want to proceed with repainting the other trash cans that are in disrepair.

BID Member Public Comment – Board Member Del Rosario stated that she and other businesses had not been notified about the water main break. There was some discussion about how the BID could alert businesses in such instances, but Exec. Dir. Powers questioned why the reverse 911 system wasn't activated to alert area businesses.

Holiday Decorations – Board Member Kaminsky asked if there were fewer holiday decorations; Pres. Fassett said we added holiday decorations. He asked if we could have more decorations next year.

Construction/Downtown Noise – Paul Magliari asked if there was any compensation or other action that can be taken against the construction company doing the renovations on the upper floors of the former Weeks building. He stated that construction was making a lot of unbearable noise for three weeks and on the weekends. Mr. Cerece said that they could only do construction between 8am and 5pm, and start time of 9am on weekends, but he added that if Mr. Magliari had complaints, it would be a civil matter. It was also suggested that maybe there should be a noise ordinance that would protect live/work residents like Mr. Magliari. He also noted that there was considerable noise from the Eagle Saloon after 2am in the mornings. He was advised that he can call the police for noise complaints on the street. BID Member who owns 8 South Division Street also complained about the amount of noise coming from the Eagle Saloon. It was noted that these kinds of issues are related to how the establishment is managed and that maybe there needs to be additional bouncers employed. Pres. Fassett asked Exec. Dir. Powers to draft a letter to advise the owner of the Eagle saloon about the concerns and issues brought to the attention of the BID Board.

Board member Del Rosario made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Board Member Kaminsky, all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:23pm.