



**Peekskill Business Improvement District**  
**Board of Director's Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, April 6, 2021 @ 6pm**  
**Via ZOOM**

**Present:** Brian Fassett, Larry D'Amico, Cynthia Del Rosario, Ivy Fairchild, Monique Michaels, Lafern Joseph, Matt Rudikoff. Exec. Dir. Bill Powers. Vanessa Agudelo and Ivy Fairchild joined the Board Meeting late.

**Absent at start of meeting:** LaFern Joseph, Matthew Alexander, Vanessa Agudelo, Ivy Fairchild, Monique Michaels.

**Call April 6, 2021 Board of Directors meeting to order** – Brian Fassett called meeting to order at 6pm.

**Protocols during BID Board Meetings -**

- Pres. Fassett made an opening statement reminding the board that he serves the board as President and that he has but one vote.
- He requested that board members keep their cameras turned on during the meeting, especially during discussions.
- He requested that during Executive Sessions, that Board members keep their cameras on and state that they are in private location.
- He also asked Board members to respond to the Executive Director as to whether they will or will not be attending the board meeting.
- Role call voting will be implemented to keep better track of votes.

**BID Member Public Comment** – There were no BID member comments.

**Request Approval of March 2, 2021 Annual Meeting and the March 2, 2021 Board of Directors Minutes** – Pres. Fassett made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by Board Member Del Rosario; Yeas: Fassett, Del Rosario, Claxton, D'Amico, Rudikoff, Vasquez. There were no No votes, and no Abstentions.

**Appointment of By Laws & Election Review Committee –**

Upon recommendation of the Election Committee, Pres. Fassett appointed Board Members Fairchild, Michaels and Claxton to a Bylaws & Election Review Committee to make recommendations for changes to the bylaws and election procedures to assure the integrity of the BID's election process.

Pres. Fassett, upon recommendation of the Election Committee, he asked to appoint Council member Agudelo and Executive Director Bill Powers as advisors.

Pres. Fassett asked Board Member Claxton to temporarily chair the committee, and she agreed.

**Open Art Location (Former Harriet Tubman Site) –**

- Board Member D'Amico stated that he is investigating how much it will cost to fabricate an art piece that Carla Rae Johnson has that directly relates to Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad.
- He also reached out to Wilfredo Morel for ideas and will followup with him.

- Pres. Fassett asked that a package of information be assembled and presented to the City Council for approval.
- This proposal would be temporary art, not a replacement of the larger scale project from the Woffords' creation of a new Tubman statue as discussed previously.

#### **2021 Harvest Festival/Fall Events –**

- Vice Pres. Del Rosario stated that in following up with an organized effort to do a much larger event in the Fall with an outside entertainment group, it was recommended that the BID separate itself from that event because of its size and expense, and instead, plan for the BID's own Harvest Festival event as we did prior to the pandemic.
- An October date is still to be selected for the BID's event.
- Vice Pres. Del Rosario asked for volunteers to help plan the Harvest Festival and Board Member Claxton and Vasquez volunteered.
- Board Member D'Amico noted that the PAA is considering doing Open Studios in October and it may be a good idea to coordinate dates.
- Pres. Fassett presented an idea to plan an event where we could celebrate all the birthdays we missed over the last year and provide free cakes or cupcakes to diners at participating restaurants over a certain weekend with the BID sponsoring the cupcakes.
- Vice Pres. Del Rosario suggested doing a Dine Out Peekskill.

#### **Jazz Series in Pugsley Park by Ray Blue –**

- Exec. Dir. Powers detailed a proposal from Ray Blue to do a four part concert series in Pugsley Park in coordination with the Peekskill Farmers Market for \$5K (performers and equipment) on Saturdays from 12noon to 1pm on June 5, July 10, August 14, and Sept. 11 and he would follow COVID safety guidelines.
- Request was made to start the concerts at 1230pm for restaurants and to extend the length of the concert from 60 minutes to 90 minutes.
- Vice Pres. Del Rosario made a motion to accept the proposal as presented with the start times moved to 1230pm and the length extended to 90 minutes, seconded by Board Member D'Amico. Yeas: Fassett, Del Rosario, Agudelo, D'Amico, Claxton, Rudikoff, Vazquez.

#### **IDA RFP Update –**

- Board Member Rudikoff provided an update on IDA activities, including the IDA's intent to bring some one on board to help with next steps which includes an initiative to create database of available properties for development through the assessors office; developing a map that plots these parcels by working through Westchester County GIS services; obtain database of non-residential commercial buildings.
- Pres. Fassett clarified that this is an IDA, city-wide initiative, and that the BID is part of it, not the lead on it.

#### **BID Annual Audit –**

- Exec. Dir. Powers noted that the BID is in excellent financial health (with more than \$60K in reserves) and that independent auditors completed their audit of the BID's finances.

- The audit report will be available on the BID's website soon.

#### **Executive Director's Report – Bill Powers**

- Peekskill Farmers Market Update – Exec. Dir. Powers noted that he expects most of the vendors to return and that we have opened up vendor applications. He stated that eight or nine new vendors wanted to come into the market. He expects to submit the street closure permit to be submitted this week and that we are requesting an expansion into the east side of Park Street lot. All of the information for the Farmers Market is on our website, including a new interactive application form, and a new drop down Q&A section. The Lepore Park Farm project will be participating in the Peekskill Farmers market this year, capacity to be determined.
- Peekskill Flea Market Input – No decision was made to move forward with the flea market yet because COVID is still a concern as is insurance.
- Film Inquiries – Exec. Dir. Powers noted that he and others will be on a Zoom call on Wednesday April 7 with the head of the Westchester Tourism and Film Office since the city is getting TV and film inquiries. The AIM website can be used as a depository of photos for possible shoot locations.

#### **Board Member Comments -**

- Board Member Agudelo alerted the board to a \$2.1 Billion initiative to provide people who were not allowed to access unemployment benefits, most of them undocumented workers and suggested the BID could publicize the initiative.
- Board Member Agudelo asked if the individuals whose 41 ballots that were deemed invalid had been contacted to reaffirm their ballots. Board Member Agudelo stated that she is still waiting to hear from the Attorney General's office to see if they can give any advice in this matter and that she had been referred over to the DA's office.
- Pres. Fassett stated that he expects a letter to go out to the 41 soon, but a re-vote is not going to happen.
- Board Member Agudelo made a motion to include the ten page Election Memo with the mailing to the 41 property/commercial tenants whose ballots were invalidated. Seconded by Pres. Fassett. No: Del Rosario; Yeas: Fassett, Agudelo, Claxton, D'Amico, Fairchild, Rudikoff, Vasquez.

#### **BID Member Public Comment –**

- **Ozland** - Scarlett Antonio presented her idea to do an Ozland Festival, as she had done prior to COVID and would like to do something at the end of the summer or early fall.
- **Zoom Account** – Arne Paglia requested the Zoom account be the BID's own account, and Pres. Fassett pointed out that the Zoom Account used for the BID meetings is the BID's.
- **Attorney General's Office** – Mr. Paglia asked if the Executive Director had followed up with the Attorney General's Office and Exec. Dir. Powers stated he did not, on the advice of the BID's legal counsel.
- **Open Meetings Laws** – BID Member Paglia presented information about open meetings, linking the information to the release of the video recording of the Ballot Count and a memo sent to the City Council regarding the elections. Exec. Dir. Powers stated that he had not

contacted the Attorney General's Office on advice of legal counsel.

Vice Pres. Del Rosario reminded the board that Board Member Agudelo had spoken to the Attorney General's Office and she stated again that the AG's office was still trying to determine whether they can provide legal advice in the matter and suggested it may be more under the DA's Office. BID Member Mary Foster stated that a board can direct someone to do something, but unless the legal counsel is present at the time for legal advice, it may be an inappropriate directive. She suggested having legal counsel present at relative meetings if the election is going to be an annual issue. In addition she stated that open meetings laws have been modified under COVID and make for allowances on meetings. BID Member Foster stated that as a long time member of the BID, she finds these discussions "tiresome."

- **Post COVID Reopening** – BID Member John Sharp offered to volunteer for any committees that will help bring people back into downtown. He thanked the board and noted that being on the board is a "thankless job" and whenever this "nonsense" pops up, it makes it even more thankless, but "please know that most of us out here appreciate what you are doing."
- **Adjournment** Vice Pres. Del Rosario made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Board Member Claxton, all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:05pm.