



Peekskill Business Improvement District  
Board of Director's Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, December 7, 2021 @ 6pm  
Via ZOOM

**Present:** Pres. Brian Fassett, Vice President Cynthia Del Rosario, Board Members Larry D'Amico, Frank Vasquez, Matt Alexander, Vanessa Agudelo, Exec. Dir. Bill Powers. Board Members Ivy Fairchild, Matt Rudikoff, and Secretary Joseph joined the meeting in progress. **Absent:** Board Members Monique Michaels, Drew Claxton. **BID Members present:** Mary Foster.

**Call December 7, 2021 Board of Directors meeting to order** – Pres. Fassett called the meeting to order at 6:04pm.

**BID Member Public Comment** – Pres. Fassett asked if there were BID Member comments and there were none.

**Board Member Ivy Fairchild joined the meeting,**

**Request Approval of November 9, 2021 Meeting Minutes** – Pres. Fassett asked for a motion to approve the November 9, 2021 Meeting Minutes; motion made by Vice Pres. Del Rosario, seconded by Board Member D'Amico, all in favor, except Pres. Fassett, who abstained. **[See second vote later in minutes.]**

**Request for \$1,200 for Esther Street Holiday Market from Brian Orsi** – Exec. Dir. Powers discussed with the board Brian Orsi's funding request, which had been previously forwarded to the board. Mr. Powers indicated that Mr. Orsi said the funds would go towards marketing and promotion and that the permit fee was \$350. Mr. Orsi says they have 30 vendors who will be participating over two weekends, starting this weekend, Dec 11-12 and 18-19. They are charging vendors fees. The request is for \$1,200. Mr. Powers noted that he is working on revised event support request policy so that the board has more time to consider proposals. A number of concerns were raised, including what the funding would be used for, the makeup of the vendors (BID Members/PAA Members vs. outside vendors), why the BID would support for-profit entities, and whether 10 vendors a day is too small for the BID to support. Board Member D'Amico stated that one PAA member tried to get a spot and was told that they were all sold out. POME Florist is a sponsor, while not from Peekskill, POME has participated in the Farmers Market and Exurbanist, which is very active in Peekskill, is also a sponsor. The board also expressed general concern about whether the organizers had consulted with the other businesses on Esther Street.

**Secretary Joseph joined the meeting.**

Pres. Fassett asked if the Board wants to support the event fully at \$1,200, cover the permit fee of \$350 or not support the request for funding. Vice Pres. Del Rosario asked if we could gather more information, but Exec. Dir. Powers noted that there was no time to do that since the event is this weekend. Board Member D'Amico said the market is a worthwhile event if they can make something happen, but suggested he would only support the \$350 fee. Board Member Fairchild stated that she did not like the last minute request again. Since the consensus seems to be to support the \$350 for the permit fee, Mr. Fassett asked for a motion to provide \$350 to support the holiday market on Esther Street, Sec. Joseph made the motion, seconded by Board Member D'Amico, all in favor.

**Request Approval of November 9, 2021 Meeting Minutes -**

In recognizing that we did not have a quorum when we first voted to accept the November 2021 meeting minutes earlier, Pres. Fassett asked for another motion, now that we have a quorum. Sec. Joseph apologized for being late to the meeting, noting technical issues with her computer; motion to accept the November 2021 draft meeting minutes was made by Vice Pres. Del Rosario, seconded by Board Member D'Amico; Pres. Fassett, Board Member Agudelo and Board Member Fairchild abstained. All others were in favor (Vasquez, Alexander and Joseph).

**New Year's Eve Ball Drop/Request for \$1,000 to support event** – Pres. Fassett stated that this is another last minute request primarily because the City was not sure the Ball Drop would be held because of COVID. As of now, it's a go, following a meeting between Pres. Fassett, Peekskill City Manager Stewart, Peekskill Police, Peekskill Parks and Rec and Peekskill DPW and Kenny Lewis (event organizer). This is a city event, not BID event. They plan to bring the showmobile up, with live band at about 1030pm across Central Avenue at the corner of Division St., with fireworks at midnight—similar to what it was pre-COVID. While we do not have a detailed budget, in the past, the event was an \$8K-\$12K event. Sec. Joseph and Vice Pres. Del Rosario support funding the ball drop. Vice Pres. Del Rosario was concerned about having a contingency plan if the COVID numbers keep going up. Exec. Dir. Powers asked if the board approves, who the check is made out to since it can't go to an individual. Pres. Fassett said he would check with the City. Exec. Dir. Powers asked if there are any police or DPW overtime fees. Pres. Fassett stated that he believed the city was absorbing those expenses. Board Member Fairchild asked if we could direct advertising to encourage people to have dinner prior to the Ball Drop. The Paramount is having the B Street Band perform NYE, according to Exec. Dir. Powers and Pres. Fassett stated that he did not know who the outdoor band is yet.

Motion by Vice Pres. Del Rosario and seconded by Board Member Fairchild, all in favor, to provide \$1,000 to support advertising of the Ball Drop as long we can determine the appropriate entity to make the check out to and that we are not on the hook for the \$1,000 if the event is canceled.

**Black History Month** – Sec. Joseph would like to have a zoom event (or multiple events) like we had last year. Exec. Dir. Powers suggested setting up a zoom call with some of our partners from last year and start the planning process. Sec. Joseph stated that we have a wonderful following thanks to all of the activities that we had last year. Pres. Fassett noted that the BID retained ownership of the website HarrietTubmanPeekskill.com for future use and stated that the BID should revisit the potential new Harriet Tubman statue.

**Temporary Art/Tree of Life** – Board Member D'Amico stated he did not have an update, but stated that the BID would have to negotiate with Highland Welding over the \$4,000 fee that they said it would take to move and reassemble that sculpture on location at the corner of Central and Division. The artist would not receive any portion of that. Pres. Fassett asked if there was a \$4,000 fee to move it back when we want to return the sculpture. Not sure. There are additional questions that need to be answered before we make a decision.

**Art Installations at Jan Peek Square 2022** – Board Member Michaels sent an email to the board with some ideas about how this would work, but Pres. Fassett wants to wait until Board Member Michaels is available to present in person.

**Trash Collection Schedule** – Board Member Fairchild stated that she had received the BID notice that commercial tenants should put their trash out before 10am, but she noted that many businesses do not open until 10am, and some are not open every day. She also stated that she volunteers with the library and that sometimes the volunteers rush to lug the books out by 10am only to find out the DPW

truck already went by. Pres. Fassett suggested we add this to an upcoming meeting the city manager. Board Member D'Amico stated that the pick up on South Street is between 7am and 8am; Pres. Fassett stated that the BID has been told that there are two passes in the downtown, one early and one later.

**2022 Election Committee Report** – Exec. Dir. Powers summarized the results of the meeting of the Election Committee on December 2, 2021.

- **Third Two Year Term:** The committee had a discussion about allowing current board members to run for a third two-year term. Most were in favor of allowing existing board members to run for a third two-year term. Michaels voted no, citing a conflict of interest of those board members who voted to change the bylaws which allow them to stay longer. Others stated that allowing current board members to run for a third two-year term does not preclude new people from running, plus it keeps experienced people on the board, if new people don't run.

**Matt Rudikoff joined the meeting.**

- **Election Timetable:** Timetable tentatively approved, pending a detailed look by Sec. Joseph and Pres. Fassett. Executive Director Powers asked that they look at the timeline to make sure it adheres to the new bylaws. Election date is scheduled for February 17, 2022.
- **Allowing Commercial Tenants to Appoint a Representative:** Now that the bylaws allow for an entity property owner to appoint a representative the committee had a discussion about allowing commercial tenants to appoint someone from their business to represent their interests on the board and allow them to run for a board seat. All were in favor because it opens up more opportunities for active participation on the board.
- **Video Resumes:** We are going to offer candidates the opportunity to submit, and we would post, up to a 5-minute video to our website about their candidacy based on questions which the committee will approve. All were in favor.
- **Follow-up Items:** Executive Director Powers will (1) draft the solicitation letter for new board members now that the committee has made the above determinations, (2) send questions to to the election committee for final approval that will be asked of board candidates for video or printed submission, (3) send to the committee the Property Owner Representation and Commercial Tenant Representation forms for review. Will be posted to the BID website and will be included in a direct mail piece to BID Members.
- **Follow-up Items:** Chairperson Joseph is going to (1) reach out to Board members up for re-election under the new bylaws to see if they are planning to run again, and (2) review the timeline for compliance with the new bylaws.

**Executive Director's Report** – Exec. Dir. Powers reported that we had the largest crowd at the tree lighting in six years, and noted we did not hold the tree lighting in person last year. He reported that the Ovation Strings program through Arts 10566 featured 21 kids from third grade through fifth grade playing the violins. Also performing were the Peekskill City Singers, the Dance Conservatory, the Kiley STARS, George DeFeis (GM at the Paramount), and Amy Reyes singing Feliz Navidad and a traditional Latin holiday song, and Santa Claus. Exec. Dir. Powers stated that he sees an opportunity to showcase all of the holiday talent at other times in the downtown next year, perhaps at Pugsley Park. Instead of doing the Frosty/Elf photos again because of COVID concerns, we shifted our focus more to promoting the business listings through the Brighter Travel app. for the Peekskill Makes Me Merry initiative.

**Peekskill Farmers Market & Flea Market** – Exec. Dir. Powers stated that both markets ended on a strong note, having brought a lot of people into downtown. He is planning to meet with the Farmers Market team next week to get the Farmers Market Applications out in January. He stated that he had taken a trip to the Farmers Market in Rockland County and met with a seafood vendor; we lost our seafood vendor due to an injury; and the Rockland vendor is planning to come into our market next year. He stated that the plan is to open the flea market in April as we have done in the past, not delay it until August as we did under COVID. Board Member Fairchild asked what our plans were with the flea market; Exec. Dir. Powers stated that we are looking at how to expand the flea market or refine it into more of an antiques market, but that would have to be discussed further.

**2022 Event Policy Review** – Exec. Dir. Powers said he is revising the Event Support policy with an eye towards getting requests in earlier; that downtown businesses and PAA members can participate if there are vending opportunities, and that we are only covering a portion of the overall event expenses.

**Elections** - Vice Pres. Del Rosario asked if we could put together a one sheet on what the BID does to attract new interest. Board Member Fairchild stated that we also need to have a strategy for dissemination since putting that on the website is not enough.

Pres. Fassett asked Exec. Dir Powers to see if the BID could get a blurb on the city's newsletter about BID activities. Exec. Dir. Powers took the opportunity to encourage all the Board Members to attend the ribbon-cuttings and Grand Openings, even the members can't attend the actual ceremony, he encouraged the Board to stop in at another time to welcome the new businesses to the community. Board Member Fairchild asked if we could invite new businesses to attend our board meetings and talk about their businesses. It was suggested that we do videos of the new businesses and Exec. Dir. Powers noted that the city already does these videos and we share them on our social media. Pres. Fassett asked if we could host or place the videos on the BID website. Exec. Dir. Powers said he would check into it. Board Member Rudikoff suggested having a conversation with Chereese about her ideas on how to better promote new businesses and encouraging more participation in the BID.

#### **BID Member Public Comment –**

**Holiday Market** - BID Member Foster said she was happy to see the holiday market, and suggested that if it is successful, that it be done for whole month, maybe expanded, and start right after the Farmers Market ends.

**Snowflake banners on Division Street across from Assumption** - Board Member Agudelo asked why the snowflake banners don't go up past the Third Eye Gallery. Pres. Fassett stated that he had specifically asked the city to address placing the banners on Esther Street now that it's blocked off, he would have to check the map to see where the cut-off point is. Exec. Dir. Powers noted that the poles in that area do not have electrical outlets and cannot support lighted snowflakes, but may be able to support banners.

**Adjournment** – Prior to adjournment, Pres. Fassett wished everyone a happy holiday and nothing but positive energy in 2022. Motion by Board Member Vasquez made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Vice Pres. Del Rosario, all in favor.