



Peekskill Business Improvement District
Board of Director's Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 9, 2021 @ 6pm
Via ZOOM

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

Call November 9, 2021 Board of Directors meeting to order – With the absence of Pres. Brian Fassett, Vice President Cynthia Del Rosario chaired and opened the meeting approximately 6:03 without a quorum.

BID Member Public Comments - Vice Pres. Del Rosario asked that the BID Member Public Comments be held until we reach a quorum and asked Exec. Dir. Powers to give his report first.

Executive Director's Report –

- **2022 Board of Directors Meeting Dates** - Exec. Dir. Powers provided the board with the 2022 Board of Directors Meeting dates and noted that the January, July and September meetings will be held on the second Tuesday of the month due to adjacent holidays. A vote will be held on the calendar as soon as we reach a quorum.
- **Presentation to City Council on BID Bylaws** - Executive Dir. Powers also advised the board that he and Pres. Fassett plan to make a presentation to the City Council on Monday night about the improvements made to the BID By Laws, noting that the BID was renewed with the old By Laws.
- **Peekskill Makes Me Merry Campaign/Tree Lighting** – Exec. Dir. Powers stated that the Tree Lighting will be held on Saturday, December 4, 2021 at 4pm at the Gazebo. He noted that the BID is working with the City of Peekskill on the event and that the showmobile will be brought up and placed on Park Street. Performances include, the Kiley Center Stars, The Peekskill City Singers from PHS, George DeFeis from the Paramount, The Dance Conservatory, Santa Claus and Ovation Strings from Arts 10566 and others. The only change is that the children will not be allowed to go up on stage and meet Santa, as a COVID precaution. Mr. Powers also stated that we intend to have Frosty the Snowman and our Elf on the Loose visit downtown businesses for photo ops that will be placed on social media. It was suggested we focus on new businesses and those not on the ground floor.

Sec. Joseph joined the meeting and therefore there was a quorum.

- **BID Member Public Comments** - Vice Pres. Del Rosario opened the floor to BID Member comments and Scarlett Antonia said she would love to have the Elf stop by and visit. There is no set schedule, but Exec. Dir. Powers stated that he would alert Ms. Antonia in advance.

- **Approval of October 5, 2021 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes and Tuesday, October 19, 2021 Special Board of Directors Meeting Minutes** – Sec. Joseph made a motion to approve these minutes, seconded by Mr. D'Amico, all in favor.
- **Temporary Art/Tree of Life** – Larry D'Amico reported that it will cost \$4,000 to dismantle, cut apart and re-welded the sculpture at Jan Peek Square. He wants to check to make sure there is nothing underground since the sculpture weighs about 500 pounds. Exec. Dir. Powers stated that the Tubman Statue weighed in at 2,000 pounds and that he did not think there was anything of concern underground. Exec. Dir. Powers asked if it would cost the same amount to move the sculpture. Mr. D'Amico said he did not know if it would cost the same amount to move it back. There are no alternatives at the moment if we don't move forward with the tree of life.
- **Art Installations at Jan Peek Square 2022** – With Monique Michaels' absence this item was delayed until next month.
- **Appoint 2022 Election Committee** – With the absence of Pres. Fassett, Mr. Powers noted that Pres. Fassett appointed LaFern Joseph as Chairperson of the E2022 Election Committee, along with Board Members Frank Vasquez, Matt Alexander (city appointee), Monique Michaels, and Drew Claxton. Vice Pres. Del Rosario made a motion to accept the appointees, seconded by Board Member Vasquez, all in favor.
- **Appoint BID Event Policy Committee** – With the absence of Pres. Fassett, he asked Exec. Dir. Powers to ask for volunteers to review the BID's event policy. Since there were no volunteers, Mr. Powers said he would review the policy and make recommendations at the next meeting.
- **2022 Budget Presentation** – Exec. Dir. Powers noted the BID Budget is required to be past by the end of November and forwarded to the City Manager. He stated the budget does not dramatically differ from year to year. The BID receives a set \$100,000 a year from the property taxes, the farmers market income and expenses are up, but is doing well; the flea market should start in April next year; we had a late start on the flea market this year, starting in August because of COVID. We may consider increasing the flea market vendor fees because they have not been increased in awhile. Both the Summer Festival and Harvest Festival are include in the budget for next year. Mr. Powers is anticipating \$205,00 in revenue, and about \$205,000 in expenses. There are no major changes in administrative expenses, office expenses, etc. Expenses associated with the website have been reduced since we have a really good contract with Westchester Marketing Cafe. There are no major changes in the beautification line item, the city is picking up the cost of watering the hanging flower baskets. He added \$1,200 for tree replacement in the BID district, dependent on the capacity of the city to maintain new trees. Mr. Powers noted that the BID will have to replace the existing pole banners because they are fading. Hoping to work with the artist community to select four designs to replace the existing banners. The farmers and flea markets are projected to have increased expenses and income. No major changes to holiday campaign, or general advertising. We did increase the BID event support by two fold. Board Member D'Amico said that Open Studios are planned for first weekend in June. Sec. Joseph noted that there will be a Juneteenth Parade in the downtown in 2022. Mr. Powers also noted that we are looking to re-

do the We Are Peekskill/Somos Peekskill Campaign with new business owners next year. Mr. Powers also noted that we have money in reserves for any special events/projects not listed. Assuming the City purchases the Bank Street bollards this year (the BID's contribution is about \$14,000), Mr. Powers is anticipating a surplus balance of \$57,000. He stated that Ivy Fairchild and Treasurer Matt Alexander reviewed the budget and supported it. Treasurer Alexander would like to see us reduce the fund balance a little bit. Board Member Fairchild would like to see us generate more revenue on the Farm and Flea Markets. Board Member D'Amico stated that the DRI is funding the artwork, but not how it gets here or any of the logistics around it, so they are trying to raise between \$180,000 - \$250,000 and have about \$30K now. Vice Pres. Del Rosario asked for an update on the Harriett Tubman replacements statue, which Mr. Powers could not provide, noting that Pres. Fassett was going to reach out the artist for an update. He noted that the statue was a large expense and that the artist is planning on getting the statues out in the public late in 2022. Mr. D'Amico stated that there are plans to have between 9 and 11 light sculptures as well as several Underground Railroad projects out in the public as part of the DRI grant. Mr. D'Amico offered to send the full proposal to the board for review.

- Sec. Joseph made a motion to accept the 2022 Budget, seconded by Mr. D'Amico, all in favor. Mr. Rudikoff complimented the BID on doing many projects. Mr. Powers stated, "We do a lot with a little." Mr. Powers was directed to send the approved budget to the city.
- **Business Survey Results** – Mr. Rudikoff gave an overview of the IDA's business survey results, which has a destination marketing committee. Most notably, the IDA wanted to survey local businesses in collaboration with the BID and the Chamber of Commerce. The results were published in the River Journal; Mr. Rudikoff is looking to post the article to social media platforms and the River Journal has already indicated they want to do a follow-up article. Mr. Rudikoff is planning to have another business survey done to go more in depth. While there was limited quantitative responses (16), there were significant creative ideas and thoughts. Overall, respondents thought Peekskill was vibrant place, and that they thought property values were still reasonable. Some thought there was perception that Peekskill was not safe, that parking was not convenient. Or that the city doesn't reach out enough. Two thirds of the respondents had difficulty in hiring qualified, technically trained employees. Biggest challenges were that businesses don't hear from government and that there wasn't support for retail services, that there wasn't enough on pandemic support services. In several spots, AIM got mentioned, so that there seems to be a resource there. Two thirds of respondents said they would participate in a new video about their business. Vice Pres. Del Rosario mentioned that a business registry would help in terms of disseminating the survey and that having some urgency on taking the survey and why might generate a larger response.

Adjournment – Sec. Joseph made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. D'Amico, all in favor. Adjourned at approximately 6:44pm. Everyone wished each other a Happy Thanksgiving.