



**Peekskill Business Improvement District**  
**Board of Director's Meeting**  
**Tuesday, April 5 2022 @ 6pm**  
**Via ZOOM**

**Present:** President Cynthia Del Rosario, Sec. LaFern Joseph, Board Members Matt Rudikoff, David Kaminsky, Ivy Fairchild, Brian Fassett, Monique Brideau, Monique Michaels and Executive Director Bill Powers. Matt Alexander joined the meeting in progress. **Absent:** Drew Claxton, Larry D'Amico, Frank Vasquez.

**BID Members present:** Mary Foster, Arne Paglia.

**Call April 5, 2022 Board of Directors meeting to order** – Pres. Del Rosario called the meeting to order at 6:03pm

**BID Member Public Comment** – BID Member Mary Foster asked if the Library could attend the Farmers Market for all the weeks in June since the library has to gather signatures for their budget and turn them in by July 4, 2022. Exec. Dir. Powers said he would alert the Farmers Market Manager and work something out even though the BID is limiting non-profits to one appearance per season unless space permits.

BID Member Arne Paglia quoted Exec. Dir. Powers as saying that there were approximately 40 commercial tenants who were purged from the BID database. Exec. Dir. Powers reported that there were approximately 130 commercial tenant ballots, 160 property owner ballots and 30+ artist ballots mailed this year. Mr. Paglia asked of the ballots mailed from New York City with the postmark of February 18, did they also have a postmark of February 17. Exec. Dir. Powers stated, "I do not know." Mr. Paglia stated that if they had a postmark of February 17, they should have been counted. He further stated that if Piedad ran for office, it would make sense that she would vote for herself. Mr. Paglia claims the BID disqualified the vote of her brother and sister, two other Spanish businesses in downtown and the bakery on Main Street. Piedad would have voted for herself which would have made her a winner 7 to 6 or 10 to 6 which was the actual vote she received. He further stated that she was intimidated and that is why she has withdrawn from running in a run off. He asked if Pres. Del Rosario was aware of the agreement between the city and the comptrollers office and if anyone from the city briefed her on ethics. She stated she was not, and Mr. Paglia noted the Board Member Drew Claxton was on the council at the time and would be familiar with the agreement. He noted that he believed it was problematic for Councilman Fassett to also be on the BID Board and be President of Peekskill Pride since Peekskill Pride is seeking \$2,000 for the Pride event in Pugsley in June.

BID Member Ruben Alvarez joined the meeting. BID Board Member Matt Alexander joined the meeting.

He also stated that he has an issue with the Cinco De Mayo request for funding since it benefits one business. He complimented Mr. Alvarez and the event, but he stated that he did think the funding was appropriate. He stated that he had not responded to the request for updated information and that he was not purged from the roles at the Division Street Grill. Mr. Paglia admitted that, "I personally dropped those ballots into the post office a cross from the felt forum on February 17, 2022." He further stated that there should be no discussion about Ivy Fairchild being seated on the board. He went on to say the majority of ground floor businesses are Spanish owned and they are not familiar

with the BID.

Pres. Del Rosario stated that the election issues were addressed by the BID's attorney and that Piedad withdrew her name on her own. She also stated that the BID is here to improve business and she stated that whenever there is an event downtown, like Cinco De Mayo, people come into her place.

Mr. Paglia stated that the BID does not support the businesses in the Crossroads shopping plaza. Pres. Del Rosario stated that she is discussing with the board ways to get around and meet more businesses.

**Request Approval of February 2022 and March 2022 Board Meeting Minutes** – Sec. Claxton was not yet on the call and Pres. Del Rosario asked to skip this item for now.

BID Member Scarlett Antonia joined the call.

**Update of 2022 Election and Run Off Election** – Pres. Del Rosario noted that Piedad has withdrawn her name from the run off election. Board Member Fairchild will be the new commercial tenant board member if approved tonight by the board. There will be a run off election between Mr. Paglia and Rob Joseph from the Sav Mor property Peter Tuite from the consulting firm in the old bank building on Division Street has withdrawn his name since he is retired and lives in Florida.

Board Member Fassett asked how the run off election will happen. Pres. Del Rosario stated that new ballots will have to be mailed out and that the BID should pick three dates where voters can drop off their ballots in person. She added that there are no rules or guidelines in place for doing a run off election and that there will be no mail in option; ballots will have to be handed in in person. Exec. Dir. Powers recommended designating an election date at least 30 days out to give time for the ballots to be mailed and time for them to be handed in. Board Member Fairchild asked what do people have to show or do to vote. Exec. Dir. Powers stated that voters would have to complete a registration card and ballot, and that they would place their ballot in a sealed envelop to maintain confidentiality--the same process as in the election in February. Mr. Paglia asked why voters can't mail the ballot back. Pres. Del Rosario stated that she wanted to seat the board member as soon as possible. The runoff would be only for property owners.

**Resolution to accept 2022 Election Results of Ivy Fairchild as Commercial Tenant Representative** – Pres. Del Rosario made a motion to accept the 2022 Election Results of Ivy Fairchild as Commercial Tenant Representative, seconded by Vice Pres. Joseph, with yes votes from Board Members Fassett, Rudikoff, D'Amico, Brideau, and Kaminsky. Board Member Alexander and Michaels did not vote. Pres. Del Rosario welcomed Board Member Fairchild back to the board.

**Executive Director's Report** –

**Statewide BIDs request to remove BID Assessments from Property Tax Cap** – Exec. Dir. Powers stated that the BIDs from across New York State are seeking to have the BID assessment removed from the property tax cap and that he was seeking board approval to support that effort. If approved by the Senate and Assembly, the city would recoup the \$100,000 a year and put it back into the city budget. Motion by Vice Pres. Joseph and seconded by Board Member Fassett, all in favor except Matt Alexander who did not vote.

**Farmers Market/Flea Market** - Exec. Dir. Powers stated that 25 vendors have already signed up for

the Farmers Market including some new ones, including a homemade peanut butter vendor, a new seafood vendor, a new coffee vendor, a grass-fed beef vendor, a vegan doughnut vendor. It rained this past Sunday, so the flea market will be opening this Sunday. Board Member Fassett asked if the Farmers Market was going to stay on Bank or flow into the parking lot. Mr. Powers stated that the market will be confined to Bank Street.

**IDA/BID/Chamber Initiatives** – Matt Rudikoff reported that the BID, Chamber, IDA and City Economic Development have a working group focusing on destination marketing. They cooperated on the development of the business survey, database development and seeking to launch spotlight videos. All this is in prep for when the DRI destination marketing campaign gets going (\$500K). The IDA is working on its own branding.

#### **City of Peekskill Update –**

**New City Manager/Corp Counsel** - Councilman Fassett announced that Peekskill has a new City Manager, Matt Alexander and Peekskill has a new Corporation Council, Tim Kramer.

**Con ED Gas Main Upgrade on South Street** - Con Ed is upgrading gas service on South Street through May 20 with temporary closures, temporary road construction. Exec. Dir. Powers asked if Con Ed will repave the entire street; Board Member Alexander stated that the city was trying to do additional work and that together, between the city and Con Ed, the entire street will be repaved.

**Hydrant Flushing** – The city will be doing their annual hydrant flushing through May 6 from 8am to 4pm. There may be decreased water pressure or discoloration in the water.

**Board vacancies** – The city has several board vacancies; if anyone is interested in volunteering, the Board of Ethics, Board of Historic Preservation, Housing Authority, Human Relations Commission, the Planning Commission, and the Zoning Board of Appeals. Interested? Send a letter to the City Clerk.

**Farm/Flea Market Street Closure Permits** – The City approved both.

**DRI RFPs** – The city is sending out RFPs for city projects through the DRI. Fleishman's Pier, the marketing and wayfinding, the gazebo improvements, Pugsley Park and Monument Park improvements and a \$700,000 fund for revitalization.

**Streetscape Improvements** – On the north side of Main Street, between Nelson and Division, the city will start streetscape improvements.

**Central Fire House Event Space** – City is moving forward on being able to rent out the events space at the Central Fire House.

**Food Waste Recycling Program** – The city is implementing a Food Waste Recycling Program; the CAC worked very hard on this initiative. Residents will have a food waste canister and can bring it to the city drop off on Saturday or at a self service station through the week.

**CHHOP** – CHHOP received their permit to operate for the next three years.

**One Park Place Public Hearing** - The new construction on Broad/Brown and Park is proposing to have a day care center on the first floor which generated questions about keeping Park Street one way there or going to two way. There is concern about where the drop off for children would be and other parking concerns. Hearing is April 11 at 730pm in the Council Chambers.

**Fort Hill Trail Repairs** – A contractor has been awarded the contract to start the upgrades to Fort Hill trails with trail markings, bridges over wetlands and signage.

**Fire Department Donation to Ukraine** – The Peekskill FD has donated out of date, but still useful fire equipment to the Ukrainian Fire Service.

**Parklettes** – Parklettes are going away in their current form, but the city is continuing discussion about future extended dining options in a safe and appropriate way. Board Member Alexander added that he would like to get more feedback on parklettes, where people would like to see them and where, and how they should be managed. He stressed the city is not against outdoor dining, just concerned that the concept needs to be more thoroughly thought out.

**Business Town Hall** – Matt Alexander and Matt Rudikoff are planning on having a town hall for business to discuss the challenges being faced today and what the city can do to help. Board Member Alexander would like to create a needs assessment and take a look at walkability and pedestrian safety enhancements through the DRI grant.

**PAA Request to close the K lot** – The city has received a request from the PAA to close the K lot for June 4-5 for Open Studio weekend and the city also received a request for Cinco De Mayo on May 7, 2022. Both are on the council agenda for approval.

Pres. Del Rosario offered to support the city's efforts on the Town Hall and the pedestrian improvements. She also noted that there was a pop up market in the former Paramount East building and she went in and there were a lot of young people there. Board Member Rudikoff suggested she connect them with Westchester Launch 1000.

**Art Projects for 2022 @ Former Tubman Statue Site** – Board Member Michaels requested that a committee be put together from the BID Board or membership. She stated that the committee will work on a legal document, calendar of dates, insurance options, naming the initiative, She is looking to generate a call for artists to bring art to the Jan Peek Square area where the Tubman Statue was placed. The committee will have to come up with a budget, how to cover costs, are we offering awards? The space has been vacant since last March. Will it be Hudson Valley artist or just Peekskill artists. Board Member Fairchild asked what the time frame was to accomplish this, and Board Member Michaels stated it would be dependent on how many people join the committee and how fast they can move on it. She would like to see something in place by the Summer Sounds event. Monique Brideau and Scarlett Antonia volunteered to serve on the committee. Any one else interested, they should reach out to Board Member Michaels.

**2022 Audit Report of BID Finances** – Board Member Alexander asked to move this agenda item to next month so he can give an update.

**June Music Festival/October Harvest Festival** – Pres. Del Rosario noted that Vice Pres. Joseph, Board Members Fairchild, D'Amico and Claxton have met. Harvest Fest is scheduled for Saturday, October 22, 2022 with the Music Festival scheduled for either July 16, 2022 or July 23, 2022. It was noted that there may be issues with July 16. Because of heat, the July event will be from 4pm to 10pm. All of the necessary paperwork will be submitted to the city. Board Member Michaels expressed concern about doing the event in July with vacations schedules.

#### **Artist District Report** –

Board Member Brideau stated that the PAA had announced her position on the BID Board in their newsletter. She provided her email to the artists and she is encouraging the artists to register on the BID website. She will be attending the PAAs quarterly meeting and will encourage artists to participate in the BID. She will also be promoting the BID at her art show when artists come to view her show at

the Field Library. She met with some members of the Lofts on Main getting ready for Open Studios. Still needs to meet with more of the tenants in the Lofts. She is funneling information to Exec. Dir. Powers from member artists who need to update their listings. She was excited to see Retake/Remake, supplies for reuse by artists at the Hat Factory. She reported that the Peekskill Film Festival is running from Friday June 24 to Saturday June 25 at the Paramount. Outdoor event scheduled for outside the Hat factory on June 23. After parties scheduled for Friday and Saturday nights.

**Situational Awareness Invitation** – Pres. Del Rosario offered Board Members to participate in a situational awareness seminar to learn how to be aware of your surroundings to protect yourself. If anyone is interested in participating, let Pres. Del Rosario know. The trainer will be in town May 10-11.

**Request Approval of January, February and March 2022 Board Meeting Minutes** – Vice Pres. Joseph made a motion to accept the January, February and March 2022 Board Meeting Minutes, with minor edits to the March meeting minutes presented by Brian Fassett, seconded by Board Member Kaminsky, all in favor.

Vice Pres. Joseph made a motion to permit the board to consider all of the requests for funding because they all fall less than 90 days. Seconded by Board Member D'Amico, all in favor.

**Request for Event Support Funding of \$1,500 plus mention in BID radio Advertising for PAA Open Studio Tours Weekend** – Board Member D'Amico stated the BID has supported and funded the the last 23 Open Studio Tour Weekends. The former Truck Stop Gallery is taking place under tents in the K lot June 4-5. Most of the funding for the event is coming from Arts Westchester and the PAA membership. Exec. Dir. Powers will followup on the city's insurance requirements. The entire event requires about \$12,000. The BID's contribution of \$1,500 will go towards printing the brochure, and the post cards and mailing and other marketing. Exec. Dir. Powers was asked how much funding did the BID set aside for supported events and he stated \$15,000. Exec. Dir Powers also noted that the BID has reserves if the board wants to tap into it for future event support. Board Member Fassett stated he supported the request since the artist community has been hit hard by the pandemic. Vice Pres. Joseph made a motion to approve the PAA's request, seconded by Board Member Brideau, all in favor.

**Request for Event Support Funding for Cinco De Mayo** – Pres. Del Rosario stated that she had received the request for support for funding for the Cinco De Mayo event just today. Ruben Alvarez stated that he was seeking financial support from the BID to cover the City DPW, Police and permit fees. He stated that he does not make any money off the event, that he is only looking to bring people into downtown Peekskill. He stated that it costs about \$16K - \$18K to do the festival and he asking for \$6,500 from the BID. He stated that the city told him that the cost for DPW and Police is about \$6,000 and change. Pres. Del Rosario stated that she had attended the Cinco De Mayo event in the past prior to the pandemic and noted that it brings a lot of people into the downtown. Vice Pres. Joseph stated that the BID should support the event, but did not know to what extent. Mr. Alvarez stated that going back years ago, the BID provided about \$6,500 in support. Exec. Dir. Powers could not confirm that but added he didn't think it was that much, more like \$1,500. Vice Pres. Joseph said it was more. Mr. Alvarez was asked if he had any other sponsorships and he said not right but that hew would get more. Board Member Alexander said he would check on the estimate provided by the city. Exec. Dir. Powers noted that prior to the pandemic, BID events of the same size were charged about \$5K for police and DPW. Board Member Fassett stated that that the BID should keep an eye on stretching funds across many events that since the BID has been supporting projects in \$1K to \$2K range, it was

difficult to get to a \$6,500 allocation. He said he was comfortable with a \$1,500 allocation, Board Member Fairchild noted that she would support up to \$2,500. Board Member Kaminsky complimented Mr. Alvarez on his efforts to bring people downtown and that he would support \$2,500 in funding. Vice Pres. Joseph stated that the BID had provided \$5,000 in funding. Board Member D'Amico stated that he would support \$5K in funding for the event. Board Member Fairchild made a motion to provide up to \$4K to cover city police and DPW expenses, with the hope that Board Member Alexander can get the estimate for city fees reduced. Seconded by Vice Pres. Joseph, all in favor. Board Member Alexander did not vote. Mr. Alvarez thanked the board for its support.

**Request for Event Support Funding of \$2,000 for Peekskill Pride Event** – Board Member Fassett stated up front that he is still the President of Peekskill Pride. This is the second annual free event that will be conducted in Pugsley Park at the end of June. It's a family focused event. He said the event was incredibly successful last year even though it rained. This is to support the LGBTQIA community in Peekskill. The Westchester Circus Arts is coming to to perform in a pop up circus. There will also be a second stage for Drag Queen story time, live music, spoken word etc. Working with the GSA at the high school to have them involved in the event. Peekskill Pride made a strong commitment to keep the event in the downtown. Organizers will not be bringing in food vendors, but instead hope to have the restaurants participate. This is not a money maker, they raise funds at a June fundraising event on June 11 at Dramatic Hall. The total budget is \$15K. \$2K funding would represent about 13% of the total budget. Pride is also getting additional sponsors. Exec. Dir. Powers noted that the request for funding came in from Mary Beth McGowan who is the Vice Pres. of Peekskill Pride. Vice Pres. Joseph supported the event and thanks Pride who doing the event in the downtown. Board Member Brideau asked if the artists could get involved and Board Member Fassett said yes and would hope that the artwork is connected to the LBGQIA community. Board Member D'Amico stated he had attended the event last year and there were a lot of people. Board Member Fairchild made a motion to approve Peekskill Pride's request for \$2,000 in funding, seconded by Vice Pres. Joseph, all in favor, except Board Member Fassett. Board Member Fassett said, on behalf of Peekskill Pride, thank you.

**Request for Event Support Funding of \$5,000 for Ray Blue's Cross Cultural Connection Jazz Concerts** – Exec. Dir. Powers referred the board to Mr. Blue's proposal, which the BID supported last year for four concerts for \$5K. He stated that in discussions with the board, there was interest in trying to get other jazz performers beyond Ray Blue's Cross Cultural Connection. He asked for guidance from the board on how much to spend on the series, does the board want to open it up to other performers. Exec. Dir. Powers reminded the board that Ray Blue is self-sufficient and brings his own sound systems and generator and that he would want any other performers to bring everything they need to perform. He also stated that going with four different performers would require more coordination and management by the BID. Board Member Fassett would like to see a diverse group of artists perform. Board Member Michaels questioned the cost per performance as proposed, but Pres, Del Rosario pointed out that the performers at Pugsley bring all of their own sound equipment and generator. Exec. Dir. Powers was directed to speak with Mr. Blue and advise him of the board's directives. Board Member D'Amico said that we should consult with Board Member Claxton. Exec. Dir. Powers said he would speak with Mr. Blue and reach out to Board Member Claxton to see if she can secure three other acts.

**BID Member Public Comment** – Board Member Kaminsky took exception to Mr. Paglia's comment that the BID either through negligence or deliberately discourages participation from the Spanish-speaking businesses. He stated that such a comment is unfair and incorrect. He stated that he has seen only open and kind behavior from every person on the board and that such comments are unfair

taint on the board. Pres. Del Rosario thanked Board Member Kaminsky for his comments and stated that she would like to meet with every board member to discuss how to move the city and the BID forward. She encouraged meeting participants to stay positive during the board meetings.

Mr. Paglia asked what obligations the city has to the state comptrollers office to educate the members of the BID Board regarding their obligations. He said if he removes the city reps and the executive director, only 2% of the participating membership is represented. He claimed that Cinco De Mayo benefits Mr. Alvarez, and further stated that the people on the call all have good intentions. He further stated that it is City Manager Matt Alexander's responsibility to run the city and the BID. When Board Member Fairchild stated that "the burden should be on all of us," Mr. Paglia then addressed Board Member Fairchild as "sweetheart" twice, trying to make a point. Mr. Paglia stated that the BID should not be operating now and that the City should not be issuing checks until everyone is educated on the board's responsibility on how to dispense taxpayer money.

**Adjournment** - Board Member Fairchild made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Board Member Brideau, all in favor at 8:13pm.