

Board Meeting Minutes
Hoboken Business Alliance, Inc.
March 2, 2021
Video Conference - 4:30pm

Present: Hany Ahmed, Greg Dell Aquila, Edyta Espasa, Tiffanie Fisher, Jennifer Gonzalez, Dave Jacey, Meghan Lukin, James Runkle, Mark Stehli, Carol Swift

Also Present: Natalie Chape', Stuart Koperweis

Absent: Armando Luis, Chris Mazzola, John Nastasi, Pratik Patel

Call to order/Roll Call Announcements- 4:34pm

Adoption of February 2021 Minutes: T. Fisher, Second by D. Jacey Approved

Presidents Report

Conflict Policy: **G. Dell Aquila-** Reminded Board Members to sign conflict policies ASAP.

Carol Swift Invoice: There was a misunderstanding regarding the cost for the services of putting together and running the Window Decorating Contest. Carol stated she would get the flyers designed and that she would deliver to each retail location. The Board agreed and approved the contest and program; however, she decided she was going to take care of all of it on her own. She hired people on her own without board approval to do the design work and to deliver the flyers. The total she is requesting is \$ 3,826.60, of which \$1,013.83 was for printing, and was previously approved. A conversation took place noting that board members cannot take it upon themselves to hire third parties without prior approvals.

MOTION: To deny design costs and labor reimbursement to Carol Swift for the Window Contest: J. Runkle, Second by: G. Dell Aquila - Approved.
Opposed: H. Ahmed, T. Fisher, D. Jacey

G. Dell Aquila stated for the record that the HBA is thankful for the work that **C. Swift** has put in for this program.

Pro/Con Planning Meeting: **G. Dell Aquila** reported that we had our 2021 planning meeting- it was great meeting and thanked those who attended. The meeting reviewed how are 2021 funds are committed and where they have not been allocated. He will circulate the information this week. All board members were asked to complete a SWOT analysis for both Hoboken and the HBA. All responses should be posted in Teams.

Treasurers Report

N. Chape-Financials were not ready yet for this meeting, balances will be posted in Teams for this chat. We will approve these financials next month.

Committee Reports

Marketing

RFP Update: **J. Runkle** – We have narrowed it down to two great firms: Harrison Rand and Qualls Benson. We have to do one more debrief with each of them. Pending the outcome, the Marketing Committee would like to recommend Qualls Benson as the new firm and after the next meeting with them put it out for an E-Vote.

40% Gift Card Program Share the Love- **J. Runkle** noted it was a huge success with 136 retailers from all areas participating. S. Koperweis stated this is a remarkable participation rate across all retailers. It was a great program and all participants were ecstatic with the HBA. The program had huge social media presence. Stats will be posted on Teams.

Hoboken Honors Certificate: **J. Runkle** – This will be a City wide gift certificate program that the HBA would give out for consumer promotions. The certificates would be redeemed at business that signed up for the program, with the HBA providing reimbursements for the \$10 denomination certificates that are used. We are in the process of signing up retailers. More to follow.

Marketing Committee Membership: **J. Runkle** came across someone who lives in Hoboken and has extensive Marketing background. Her name is **Kristen Frank** and he has accepted her as a new member of the Marketing Committee only.

Visual/Capital

Banners: **E. Espasa** It has been decided that we are going to wait for the new marketing firm to come up with a new graphic designs for banners.

Window Display Contest: **E. Espasa** All winners have been awarded their checks and plaques.

Streetscape: **J. Gonzalez** stated we have received some feedback from the Shade Tree Commission- mostly for clarification and were positive statements, for the most part. The Historic Preservation Commission, however, provided a variety of general statements and specific comments. They basically said the HBA is going to destroy the Historic Preservation of Washington St. It was frustrating because we have been pro-active in outreach and not sure what the next steps would be to satisfy their concerns. **J. Gonzalez** has brought it the attention of the Mayor's office and is waiting to hear back. There was a long conversation on this. **J. Gonzalez** would like to get feedback from **John Nastasi**. **G. Dell Aquila** will speak to the HPC and he has asked that **T. Fisher** explain this to other City Council Members. We represent the commercial property owners and our mission is not to create retail options, eliminate vacant store fronts, and bring vibrancy to the City. All have agreed that the HPC has made it very challenging for businesses to open and HBA needs to continue to advocate for the businesses. **T. Fisher** has asked that **ALL** board members look at the guidelines that have been provided to us by Arterial and posted in Teams- Everyone should provide feedback on this. We need to get more store owners behind this.

Bistro Lights: **E. Espasa**- We have 4 proposals from 4 different companies (posted in Visual/Bistro Lights Channel) and we have interviews set up for next week.

Pet waste Stations: J. Gonzalez- We are looking to expand the pet waste stations by approx.50 more units to start with. We would add an HBA Sticker to each station. We have asked a vendor for a proof of the sticker for review. We are recommending \$5,000 for at least 50 stations and close to 6,000 bags. CDS has agreed to install and maintain the stations at no additional cost. We would like the board to also confirm the proposed locations. See the web map on Teams that is interactive.

T. Fisher has suggested that we strategically place the stations directly in front of the commercial apartments/businesses of our stakeholders. **S. Koperweis** will send **J. Gonzalez** the Schedule A Properties and we will do our best to place accordingly.

MOTION: to purchase pet waste stations not to exceed \$ 5,000- E. Espasa, Second by-G. Dell Aquila - Approved.

Old Business

Trolley- On hold.

New Business

G. Dell Aquila- City is moving forward with the parking rate increases effective March 5, 2021. Director Ryan Sharp is putting together a new flyer and **S. Koperweis** will assist in distributing. Our job as the HBA is to communicate to the retailers and commercial property owners on Washington St. or impacted areas that the rates are going up. The HBA is in support of the changes - here are the programs: Validation discount meter rate program through an app and the flyer will articulate specifics. There is also discounted parking in garages for employees. There is a 1st time sign up discount for park mobile.

J. Runkle- The “W” reached out to let us know there is a travel blogger in town and would like some restaurant recommendations. He will post in Teams in the event anyone would like to recommend any restaurants. Could be some great PR.

Motion to adjourn E. Espasa, Second by J. Gonzalez: 5:58 pm – Approved.

Next Board Meeting April 6, 2021