

Hoboken Business Alliance, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Video Conference – July 12, 2022 4:30pm

Present: James Runkle, Edyta Espasa, Pratik Patel, Hany Ahmed, Jennifer Gonzalez, Mario Fini, Chris Mazzola, Phil Cohen, Dave Jacey, Mark Stehli, Catherine Willhoit, Anthony Pino

Absent: Jenny Davis (On leave)

Also Present: Daniel Ackerman, Chris Bernardo, Rose Markle

Call to order - 4:34 pm

The Board Meeting began in a Closed Session to discuss personnel matters. A motion was made by **J. Runkle**. Second by **E. Espasa**. All approved with no opposed or abstentions.

At 4:47 pm the Board Meeting resumed in an open session.

J. Runkle welcomed everyone and asked **D. Ackerman** to read the Open Public Meetings Act statement. **D. Ackerman** read the statement of compliance with Chapter 231 of the Open Public Meetings Act noting that adequate meeting notice was provided.

The minutes from the June 7th meeting were approved. **Motion to approve the June 7th minutes: P. Cohen**. Second by **E. Espasa**. All approved with no opposed or abstentions.

Treasurers Report

P. Patel reported that there is a bank account balance of \$1,126,157.32 as of May 31st. The Statement of Financial Position (balance sheet) shows a balance of \$1,054,787.85 which accounts for uncleared transactions of \$71,369.47. The reconciliation report shows a register balance of \$934,493.85 as of 6/10 which accounts for additional uncleared transactions after 5/31 of \$120,294. **Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report: P. Cohen**. Second by: **M. Fini** – All approved with no opposed or abstentions.

President's Report

J. Runkle reported that the FY 23 budget passed at the June 15th Council meeting with unanimous support noting the hard work that went into the process and thanking **P. Cohen** for guiding us through the process and **D. Ackerman** for analyzing and compiling the numbers and supporting documentation. **P. Cohen** noted that the HBA was prepared and thanked the Board for all the hard work getting this done.

J. Runkle provided a recap of the success with the “Through the Windows” program noting that with advanced planning we think next year can be an even bigger success. We received a lot of great feedback from the businesses.

J. Runkle reviewed the process of onboarding the new Executive Director and the discussed desire of the board to keep CDS in place to support the transition. Included in the packets is a revised proposal that would start in August keeping the monthly cost the same with CDS serving in a support role. The proposal includes a 30-day out so both parties can mutually decide when the new Executive Director is ready to handle everything without the assistance of CDS. **Motion to approve the CDS Administration and Management Support proposal for a monthly cost of \$12,083: E. Espasa. Second by: J. Gonzalez – All approved with no opposed or abstentions.**

Committee Reports

Events

D. Ackerman updated the Board on a meeting with the city to discuss the proposed Irish Heritage week events including bringing back the St. Patrick's Day Parade. **D. Jacey, M Fini** and **H. Ahmed** were in attendance. **D. Ackerman** shared that the city would like some guarantees that there would be no more Con events. To keep moving this discussion forward, we need to approve a deposit for Cliffhanger Productions. **D. Jacey** mentioned that he had spoken with a few bar owners and the consensus is that the bars would go with the majority decision to forego the Con events if the parade were to come back. **H. Ahmed** asked about how we get the bar owners to commit to this. **M. Fini** asked what the financial commitment would be for the HBA. **J. Gonzalez** will speak with Director Ferrante on the costs and get back to us. **D. Jacey** said that it sounds like we talk to the major bar owners and then go back to the city to confirm they won't participate in the Con events.

Motion to approve the Cliffhanger Irish Heritage Week with the release of \$10,000 deposit and further approval contingent on commitment from city: J. Runkle. Second by: D. Jacey – All approved with no opposed or abstentions.

D. Ackerman updated the group that the artist for the proposed August concert would not commit to the dates. The committee continues to pursue other artists; however, an August date will be difficult.

Visual/Capital

D. Ackerman shared a proposal from Triple R Lighting for a pilot bistro light installation on Washington St from 10th St to 11th St. The original contractor could not deliver, and this revised proposal is a better price but will require some engineering analysis to be completed. **M. Fini** asked to make sure that the lumens used are warm lumens in the 3500-4000 range. **A. Pino** noted that the streetlights are overwhelmingly bright and asked to make sure the bistro lights are warm.

Motion to approve the Décor Smart Triple R Lighting proposal for \$11,893.25 with an additional approval of an amount not-to-exceed \$5,000 for engineering analysis: E. Espasa. Second by: H. Ahmed – All approved with no opposed or abstentions.

D. Ackerman reviewed a memo on waste storage highlighting the difficulty for businesses that close before 9pm when their trash is supposed to be out. These businesses either get fined for putting their trash out early, pay a team member to come back at 9 to put out the trash, or dump their trash elsewhere. We are proposing a pilot of CitiBin waste enclosures in roughly six

locations. We will partner with specific businesses and give them key access to the unit to place their trash into it. The pilot locations are a mix of business type, size and location and will give us a good idea of how a larger program could be implemented. **A. Pino** asked how big the units are and **M. Fini** asked about access and collection. **D. Ackerman** replied that the height is roughly 3.5 feet and 4.5 feet depending on whether it is a standard or xl unit. **J. Gonzalez** shared that the access would be limited to partner businesses during the pilot and that the city's carter would be given a key to access the units and the City and HBA Sanitation team would have access. **D. Jacey** mentioned that he believes La Bouche and Cool Vines deal with a similar closing time issue. **D. Ackerman** said that he would look into it.

Motion to approve the CITIBIN Inc estimate of \$34,867.50 for 18 units for use in a pilot program: M. Fini. Second by: D. Jacey – All approved with no opposed or abstentions.

J. Runkle reported that the Board approved the CDS Supplemental Contract for 6 months in January and that we should extend that contract for another 6 months since the pricing will not change. With the Fiscal Year change the Board can ask CDS to line up the next contract or continue to handle the contract on a calendar year basis.

Motion to approve the extension of the CDS Supplemental Sanitation contract for an additional 6-months at the same monthly price of \$23,130.64: E. Espasa. Second by: J. Gonzalez – All approved with no opposed or abstentions.

Art Mural

D. Ackerman updated the board on the proposed mural installation by Michelle Hoogevelde on Garage B. The HBA is working with the Hoboken Arts Advisory Committee on a shared project to leverage the assets of each organization. The HBA is supporting the HAAC with finding and lining up artists for Garage B, the Multi Service Center and the maintenance shed in Church Square Park. Currently, Garage B is the priority since we have Michelle Hoogevelde lined up and a tight time frame to complete this project this season. The overall estimated cost of the project is \$154,525 with a proposed contribution from the HBA of \$70,625. In order to have enough approval to get the project completed, **D. Ackerman** is requesting an additional buffer in the HBA share of the costs. **D. Ackerman** proposed an amount not-to-exceed \$87,625 which would cover the design fee of \$5,000, the artist's stipend of \$80,000 and then an additional paint \$2,625 for paint costs and project management fees. **E. Espasa** asked about the hurdles that the City needs to go through to approve their funds and how we settled on this location. **D. Ackerman** shared that the HAAC needs a few more approvals from the Mayor and Council before the funds can be used to the project. **D. Ackerman** said that both the HBA Art Mural Committee and the HAAC separately identified Garage B as a great location due its visibility and foot traffic. **E. Espasa** noted that the Council has discussed the useful life of these garages and we want to make sure the Mural will be up for a significant period. **H. Ahmed** requested that the HBA seek compensation if the mural is not up for 5 years or longer. **H. Ahmed** also asked about the potential for the art to be used on one of the other city garages in the event that Garage B is an attractive development site. **J. Gonzalez** said she would speak with the City Planner about the proposed development plans and report back.

Motion to approve a design fee of \$5,000 and the approval of a not-to-exceed budget of \$82,675 pending approval of the HAAC and City and the request that the HBA be

reimbursed if any development takes place within 5 years: **C. Mazzola**. Second by: **H. Ahmed**. None opposed. **J. Gonzalez** abstained.

Parking

D. Ackerman updated the board that he and **M. Stehli** have discussed ways for the HBA to help address parking concerns in Hoboken. **D. Ackerman** has been in touch with the city who has asked for a list of business pain points. The Parking Committee will meet in the coming weeks and all Board Members are invited to attend.

Old Business

None

New Business

J. Gonzalez shared a proposal for a comprehensive citywide rat baiting plan. The City remains focused on this issue and the HBA had previously expressed a desire to help. The rodent situation in some areas is getting out of control as evidenced by the recent headlines and social media stories. If the City goes forward with the comprehensive proposal, they will not have the funds to do quarterly maintenance at a cost of \$19,975. **H. Ahmed** shared the concern over rodents and wanted the HBA and City to analyze the overall bill by the areas covered by the HBA. This way the HBA is contributing to the problem in an amount that acknowledges our constituents do not cover the whole city. **D. Jacey** remarked that the problem is significant, and that Castle Point Terrace has rats everywhere. **M. Fini** mentioned that the Post Office downtown continues to be a hotbed of activity. **H. Ahmed** mentioned that the approaches can't be piecemeal and citywide coordination is needed so that Stevens, Parks and South Waterfront all line up their treatments to be at the same time. The Board decided to hold off on any approvals until there was time for further discussion of cost and effectiveness,

J. Runkle mentioned that the Board has discussed the potential of moving office space to a location that is more central to the Terminal/Washington area. **M. Fini** offered his assistance with this endeavor. **D. Ackerman** mentioned that he was putting together an overview memo and including some benchmarks of similar sized organizations.

Public Session

Rose Markle asked if the mural programs consider local artists, where does the HAAC get their money and what public approvals are necessary. **D. Ackerman** shared that there are several local artist murals and a current goal of the HBA and HAAC is to get some well-known national and international artists to add to the Hoboken mural program. **H. Ahmed** noted that the HAAC gets their money from 1% of any bonds that the city offers. In regard to CitiBins and Concerts, **Rose Markle** asked why the city isn't doing these things. **D. Ackerman** replied that the HBA is focusing the CitiBin project on small businesses and that the City does some concerts but the HBA would like to do more. **Rose Markle** noted that she doesn't see rat baiting as a benefit of the HBA for the hybrid district. She asked if the increase might be due to more streeteries and can't we require businesses to keep things cleaned. **H. Ahmed** shared that he understands Rose's point about rat baiting, but this would be a full citywide approach, and everyone would benefit.

So far there is a lot of finger pointing and this approach of joining the city should be able to hit the problem on the head.

Motion to adjourn **J. Runkle**. Second: **E. Espasa**. 6:25 pm - Approved

Next Board Meeting September 13, 2022. August meeting canceled.