

Board Meeting Minutes
Hoboken Business Alliance, Inc.
March 1, 2022
Board of Directors Meeting
Video Conference-4:00pm

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

Absent: Jenny Davis, John Nastasi

Also Present: Natalie Chape', Daniel Ackerman, Chris Bernardo, Rose Marie Markle

Call to order/Roll Call Announcements- 4:35pm

J. Runkle welcomed everyone and asked **D. Ackerman** to read the Open Public Meetings Act statement. **D. Ackerman** read the statement and noted that the meeting link on the HBA website was down this week and the link was repaired this morning when it was brought to our attention.

The minutes from the February 1st, 2022, meeting were approved. **Motion: P. Cohen. Second by E. Espasa. All approved with no opposed or abstentions.**

President's Report

Board Member Nominations: Two previously discussed board member nominations were put to a vote after introduction by **J. Runkle**. **J. Runkle** noted their involvement in the community and the great contributions we expect from them. **P. Cohen** noted that both proposed members are significant members of the community that will add a lot to the board.

J. Runkle asked for a motion to add Anthony Pino to the Board. **Motion: E. Espasa. Second by P. Cohen. All approved with no opposed or abstentions.**

J. Runkle asked for a motion to add Catherine Willhoit to the Board. **Motion: P. Cohen. Second by J. Gonzalez. All approved with no opposed or abstentions.**

J. Runkle updated the board on the remaining board nominations that are pending.

Treasurers Report

P. Patel reported that there is a bank account balance of \$458,062.70 as of January 31st. The balance sheet has uncleared checks in the amount of \$71,676.71 leaving a balance of \$386,385.99.

MOTION to approve the Treasurer's Report: P. Cohen Second by: E. Espasa – All approved with no opposed or abstentions.

D. Ackerman presented the 2020 Audit that was included in the packets. The audit conducted by Matthews and Nulty was found to be clean. The financial statements present fairly, in all

material respects, the financial position of the HBA. The HBA ended 2020 with current assets of \$468,176 and liabilities of \$22,444 for a Total Net Asset position of \$445,734.

MOTION to accept the 2020 Audit: J. Gonzalez Second by: P. Cohen – All approved with no opposed or abstentions.

D. Ackerman asked for a motion to accept the 2021 Audit engagement letter from Matthews and Nulty at a cost not to exceed \$6,000 including the filing of tax returns.

MOTION to approve Matthews and Nulty for the 2021 Audit at a cost not to exceed \$6,000: P. Cohen Second by: D. Jacey – All approved with no opposed or abstentions.

D. Ackerman presented a proposal for bookkeeping services from Accuracy Plus at an hourly cost of \$100 an hour with an annual projected cost not to exceed \$10,800. After some discussion, the Board expressed their desire to hire locally as much as possible and asked **D. Ackerman** to come back next month with more proposals.

Committee Reports

Marketing

J. Runkle reported on the electronic voting approval for the Earth Day, Wild and Scenic Film Festival event at 770 Jackson Plaza scheduled for April 30th not to exceed \$30,000. **J. Runkle** shared information regarding the Spring Arts and Music Festival and the request from Cultural Affairs for the HBA to support bringing in a headliner. **J. Runkle** also mentioned the need to promote the event to businesses, based on previous feedback that the event does not involve enough local businesses. The board discussed ways we could better support the event and get more local businesses involved. **M. Fini** spoke about the event being stagnant and maybe there is a way we can add to it. **D. Jacey** said there is a need for a short-term and long-term approach, with a focus on bringing new events and improving existing events. The board discussed a fall music event, food and wine festival, and the potential for car shows and art shows.

J. Runkle shared the proposal for sponsorship and lead music provider at the Artisan Market. We are trying to find ways to support the businesses that are growing and find these markets helpful in reaching their audience. There was a discussion about measuring metrics and doing meaningful social media promotions. **H. Ahmed** mentioned events in Meatpacking District that are geared to Instagram and online promotion. This type of event would drive people to our city and to our website. **H. Ahmed** also mentioned the upcoming World Cup events and previous success with outdoor viewing events.

Visual/Capital

E. Espasa asked **D. Ackerman** to deliver the visual and capital update. **D. Ackerman** reported on the electronic voting approval of landscaping contracts with Hufnagel. Hufnagel Landscaping proposal for spring and summer plantings in the existing ground planters at a cost of \$23,325. Hufnagel proposal for the purchase and installation of 97 brackets and 194 hanging baskets as well as the plant materials for \$71,445. Hufnagel proposal for the installation of a gazebo and 4 obelisks and mix of perennial and annual plantings at a cost of \$30,240. Hufnagel proposal to expand 26 tree pits, install three trees, and plant Liriope in 86 tree pits at a cost of \$49,070. **D. Ackerman** shared his concerns with the significant amount of watering needed to make hanging baskets successful. With that, **D. Ackerman** suggested to move forward with half of the baskets this year and then expanding the program next year.

M. Fini asked about the need to repair the fence and railing by Texas Arizona as well as the planters in the terminal area. **J. Gonzalez** shared that the HBA already has repair quotes for the fence, and she will find them. **D. Ackerman** shared that the planters for terminal area have been approved and that we are awaiting planting quotes. **H. Ahmed** expressed a desire for the HBA to come up with a long-term plan to improve the area of the fence. The board agreed that a short-term and long-term solution should be pursued for this area.

D. Ackerman mentioned the discussion of holiday lights and that the committee was seeking various quotes for the 2022 season and would come back to the board soon. In the meantime, a motion is needed to approve the existing storage agreement for holiday lights.

MOTION to approve \$6,000 for storage of holiday lights: E. Espasa Second by: D. Jacey – All approved with no opposed or abstentions.

Mural

D. Ackerman said there was an upcoming meeting with City Arts Council. **M. Fini** asked for more details about the process of putting up a mural. **J. Gonzalez** noted that she is waiting on a memo describing the steps necessary to get a mural approved mainly related to the historic district.

Parking

No committee report

Old Business

D. Jacey mentioned that the group had been exploring Irish Heritage Week and the desire to bring back the St. Patrick's Day Parade. The board should focus these efforts and come up with a 12–18-month events plan.

H. Ahmed asked about a round of graffiti removal and power washing for a spring cleaning of certain areas. We should expand the areas that we are doing it in and give the business owners notice of who is responsible for the cleaning, so we get the credit.

Public Session

Public Guest Rose Marie Markle asked about the various events discussed and said she didn't think this was the point of the HBA. In regard to holiday lights and the railing in front of Texas Arizona, she asked why isn't the City doing these things. She mentioned that the HBA needs to engage with more people through surveys and ask people what they think. **H. Ahmed** remarked that many of the board members are paying significant assessments and they take it very seriously since they are aware of the cost to property owners. **H. Ahmed** mentioned that there are things that are not being done by the City and that is where the HBA comes in.

Motion to adjourn M. Fini, Second by E. Espasa: 6:11pm – Approved.

Next Board Meeting April 5, 2022