



DOWNTOWN ALBANY
Business Improvement District

Downtown Albany Business Improvement District
Board of Directors' Meeting
March 8, 2017
BID Office
21 Lodge Street

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Georgette Steffens
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Richard Rosen
CHAIRPERSON

James Hart
VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Daniel Fariello
TREASURER

Jeffrey Gordon
SECRETARY

ATTENDANCE:

Richard A. Rosen
Mark Aronowitz
Meghan Barkley
Stephen M. Cleary
Mark Yonally
Tracy Metzger
David Sarraf
Louis Bannister
Holly Brown
George Penn
Pamela Nichols
Darius Shahinfar

ABSENT:

Hon. Daniel P. McCoy
Hon. Kathy Sheehan
Daniel Fariello
Karen Laberge
James P. Hart
Jeffrey Gordon
Dominick Purnomo
Carolyn McLaughlin
Robert Sears

STAFF PRESENT:

Georgette Steffens
Rebecca Haizmann
Don Wilson
Schuyler Bull
Veronica Medina-Matzner

GUEST:

Jason Bonafide

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Richard Rosen at 4:34 P.M.

Mr. Rosen asked for approval of the January Board minutes | Motion by Mr. Cleary, Mr. Bannister seconds | All approved

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Rosen stated Bob Sears, the new Albany Police Chief, will be replacing Chief Cox due to his retirement, and will serve as the Mayor's representative on BID Board. He also congratulated Holly Brown and the Palace Board on their work with the Common Council on the transfer of the historic building. He stated that this was a critical step in moving the renovation and expansion of the theatre forward, which will have significant economic impacts for Downtown and the City as a whole.

Mr. Rosen welcomed recent BID hires Jason Bonafide, new Special Events Manager, and Veronica Medina-Matzner, new part-time Executive Assistant. Mr. Bonafide starts on March 22, and Ms. Medina-Matzner has started last week, initially working Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm. Ms. Steffens noted that Mr. Bonafide has worked in the City Special Events office for 10 years and both will be a great asset to our team.

Mr. Rosen announced the election results, stating that Seth Meltzer, Vice President of Maddalone Associates has been elected to the Board as a Class A property owner. His term will begin at our Annual Meeting in May (date TBD). Additionally, Louis Bannister and Holly Brown have been elected to another three year term. Mr. Rosen also noted that Karen Laberge's time on the Board is ending, after serving two 3 year terms with the BID. Mr. Rosen thanked Mrs. Laberge's for her service on the Board and hopes that she will stay involved on the Day Life Committee.

Mr. Rosen also announced that the BID staff and Executive Committee are recommending Anders Tomson for the James M. DiNapoli Award. Mr. Tomson was promoted to President and CEO of Chemung Financial Corporation in late December. Mr. Rosen noted Mr. Tomson's work as Division President of Capital Bank, relocating their corporate headquarters Downtown, bringing 20+ employees and a new bank branch to State Street, as well as his years of service on the Boards of organizations such as Capitalize Albany, Albany Medical Center Foundation, Historic Albany, and his valuable contribution as a Committee Member of the Arbor Hill Community Revitalization

project, Visiting Nurses Association, and Marketing and Development Committees at Albany Academy. The Board agreed this was a great selection for the Award.

BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Steffens presented the following New Special Initiative projects which have been reviewed by both the Budget & Finance and Executive Committees for approval by the Board:

Purchase of new garbage cans to replace all existing trash receptacles throughout the District - \$45,500.00
Madison Avenue Mural - \$7,200.00
William Kennedy Scrim - \$400.00
Panhandling Education and Safety Campaign and Donation Stations - \$1,500.00
Meeting and Travel Budget for NYS Urban Council - \$1,500.00
Dutch Culture USA – Travel for Workshops and Partnership Opportunities - \$5,000.00
NEDA Membership - \$175.00
Total amount: \$61,275.00

Motion by Mr. Cleary, Mr. Shahinfar seconds | All approved

DAY LIFE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Aronowitz stated the DAY Life Committee held its first meeting of the year where Capitalize Albany updated the group on the changes to the Albany Industrial Development Agency financial assistance application. A new points system was created and the level of financial assistance is based on the number of points the project meets, which allows for a more consistent and transparent funding process for developers to follow.

Mr. Aronowitz noted that the Albany Parking Authority also provided an update on their projects. They are piloting a pay by plate and pay by phone program on State Street this spring. They are also in the process of hiring a consulting firm to conduct a parking demand study, as parking garages are nearing capacity. The study is set to be completed by the summer. Mr. Aronowitz stated the lack of parking availability will quickly become a critical issue as we continue to work to attract new office tenants to Downtown.

Mr. Aronowitz also announced that he will be joining Ms. Steffens and Ms. Haizmann in a meeting with Upside Collective next week to discuss marketing for office attraction. Mr. Aronowitz noted that the BID has not updated the materials since they were created in 2014 and he also wants to look at how the BID can use the videos that have been produced for broader reach.

Lastly, Mr. Aronowitz announced that the next DAY Life Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 21, and the focus of the meeting will be on the creation of an office attraction incentive program. He mentioned there is currently financial assistance for residential conversions through the IDA and a retail attraction program through Capitalize Albany, but there is not an office attraction program and with a 21.5% vacancy rate this will be a main focus of the Day Life Committee.

CONVENTION CENTER DISTRICT

In January, a meeting with Stakeholders was held to discuss ideas for the investment of the \$250,000.00 grant awarded by National Grid, and the following four main impact areas were identified as priorities:

- Lighting: the creation of an arch lighting on William St, between Howard and Beaver Sts
- Furnishings: create temporary/movable parklets on the street to offer extra sitting areas for businesses and social spaces for the community
- Pavement treatment at the intersection of Lodge and Howard Sts

- Retaining wall on Lodge St, between State and Howard Sts

There was a discussion regarding timeline and other financial considerations, and all members expressed their support for the implementation of the priorities identified.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Steffens provided an update on the new retails in the District, sharing that 4 new businesses have opened so far this year, with a few others in the pipeline stated to open beginning this Spring.

Ms. Steffens announced Restaurant Week will run April 1-8, 2017.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Rosen asked if there was any other business the Board would like to discuss. With no further business, he noted that the April Board meeting had been moved to Monday, April 10 at 4:30 PM and asked everyone to update their calendars. Ms. Steffens stated a quorum would be critical at the April meeting as the Board will be approving the 2016 audit. With no other discussion to be had, the meeting ended at 5:29 PM.

NEXT MEETING

Monday, April 10, 2017
4:30 PM | BID office