



DOWNTOWN ALBANY
Business Improvement District

**Downtown Albany Business Improvement District
Board of Directors' Meeting
February 28, 2019
BID Conference Room**

21 Lodge Street
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Georgette Steffens
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Richard Rosen
PRESIDENT

Mark Aronowitz
VICE PRESIDENT

Daniel Fariello
TREASURER

Pamela Nichols
SECRETARY

Dan Fariello
Lena Hart
Tracy Metzger
Frank O'Connor, III
Hon. Darius Shahinfar

Seth Meltzer

ATTENDANCE:

David Galin
Chief Eric Hawkins
Pamela Nichols
Richard Rosen

ON PHONE:

ABSENT:

Mark Aronowitz
Louis Bannister
Meghan Barkley
Stephen M. Cleary
George Penn
Chris Pratt
Tyler Wrightson
Mark Yonally

STAFF PRESENT:

Jason Bonafide
Rebecca Haizmann
Georgette Steffens
Don Wilson

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Board President Richard Rosen at 4:34 PM.

Mr. Rosen asked for approval of the January Board minutes | Motion by Hon. Shahinfar, Mr. Galin seconds| All approve.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Board Elections

Mr. Rosen noted there are four property owner positions to fill for the BID Board. Of the six Stakeholders nominated, three completed their Statement of Interest Forms. They are:

- Leola Edelin, General Manager at Renaissance Albany
- Mohammed Hamed, General Manager at Hampton Inn Albany
- Elizabeth Young, Redburn Development

Mr. Rosen noted they will all be great additions to the Board.

Ms. Steffens added that due to four positions being open, there is still the opportunity for people to petition to join the ballot, which may be one way the empty position is filled. Alternatively, the BID By-Laws state that the Board Chairperson may select an individual to fill any vacancies with approval by the Board.

Mr. Rosen asked for a motion to approve the three nominations | Motion by Mr. O'Connor, Ms. Metzger seconds| All approve.

Ms. Steffens noted that the candidates will be announced and then the petition process will begin and following the petition due date voting will commence. Mr. Rosen added that the new Board members will begin and will be introduced at the May 22 Annual Meeting.

Board Officers

Mr. Rosen noted that he and Mr. Aronowitz are rolling off the Board in May, and that their positions on the Executive Committee need to be filled. Upon speaking with the current Executive Committee members that are remaining on the Board, the recommended slate of officers are:

- Dan Fariello, Board President
- Pam Nichols, Vice President
- Frank O'Connor, Treasurer



- Seth Meltzer, Secretary

Mr. Rosen added he is excited for the new Officers and that they are comprised of a lot of experience in their respective fields and will bring new ideas to the Board.

Mr. Rosen asked for a motion to approve the slate of officers | Motion by Ms. Metzger, Hon. Shahinfar seconds| All approve.

Jim DiNapoli Award

Mr. Rosen noted that a potential initial recipient respectfully declined to receive the Award. The 2019 honoree has been confirmed and it is Dan Nolan, CEO of Hugh Johnson Advisors. He added that Mr. Nolan's passion for our Capital City is evident in his commitment to bringing Arena Football back to the TU, his significant donations to SUNY Albany, and many more.

Ms. Steffens noted that an official announcement hasn't been made, and that it was Mr. Rosen's idea to take a portion of the proceeds from the Annual Meeting each year and put those funds directly into the maintenance of Jim DiNapoli Park.

Mr. Rosen noted that the Award will be given out at the Annual Meeting on May 22 at the Renaissance Hotel, and asked Board members to keep potential sponsors in mind.

Staffing Changes

Mr. Rosen noted that Ms. Coye is no longer with the BID and Ms. Steffens is working on a staffing plan to fill that position so that the BID doesn't skip a beat.

TREASURER'S REPORT

PILOT Payments

Mr. Fariello noted that the BID received an almost full payment for last year's PILOT on 10 N Pearl Street; the amount received was \$11,296 – approximately \$880 less than the actual amount owed. He added that this was good news as no payment was expected, because the property is no longer on the tax rolls and therefore will not be making a payment moving forward.

Ms. Steffens noted that the payment was for 2018. She added that the BID was down to two properties that pay a Payment in Lieu of Taxes, which is an agreement that is part of a package of State-owned properties in Downtown including 10 N Pearl Street, 40 N Pearl Street, Hilton hotel and parking garage. Under the lease agreement they were obligated to pay any special assessments, and at one point all four of them paid the BID assessment. The Hilton Hotel was sold to a private owner and is now on the tax rolls however the State owns the parking garage and 40 N Pearl, Street. SUNY purchased 10 N Pearl Street which kept them off the tax rolls but also released the property from the PILOT obligation. The PILOT bills are sent out separately from the assessment bills, and the 2017 payment was received from 10 N Pearl however due to timing of the building being purchased and the PILOT bill being sent, the BID did not anticipate receiving a payment for that property. A PILOT payment is still billed and received by the Hilton parking garage.

Funding Requests

Mr. Fariello noted that there is one item for the Board to consider from the Special Initiatives funds. He discussed the Nipper statue sale exceeded the staff's highest expectations for success, and based on that success the staff is recommending another round of 12 Nippers. Two of the new statues will not be revenue generating, with Ms. Steffens noting that previously one statue had been stolen and that the BID worked with the artist about creating a piece in the next round, and the other one the BID committed to is for Harris Sanders' family. Mr. Sanders is the person who brought the large Nipper statue to the Broadway building, and he passed away shortly before the



auction. The Downtown BID is partnering with the Central Ave BID in commissioning a statue, and the family will be able to put the statue in a location of their choosing to honor Mr. Sanders.

Ms. Steffens noted the remaining 10 would be representative of retailers in Downtown that sign up to sponsor a Nipper – for example, having doughnuts but not Cider Belly specific statue, or British themed but not Olde English specific. The set up would be similar – the artist would be paid \$500 with 30% of the sale going back to the artist. Ms. Steffens added that the BID anticipates the cost to be approximately \$20,000.

A question was raised regarding the mold used for the statues. Ms. Steffens noted that in purchasing another round of the statues staff negotiated that the exclusivity with the mold would be extended, so no one else can have them made – others would have to go through the BID or wait until the exclusivity has ended.

Ms. Steffens added that there is still a lot of interest in the Nipper statues and there has been discussion on doing smaller desk-sized versions of the existing statues.

A question was raised regarding the auction price of the sold statues, and Ms. Steffens said the range was \$2,200 to almost \$6,000. She added that through the auction, \$63,000 was received and there were sponsorships for the statues as well, and that approximately \$40,000 was paid to local artists through 30% of auction sale and initial funds paid to them to paint the statues.

Ms. Metzger added that the program has been so well received, why not continue with it. Ms. Steffens added that the \$20,000 being requested is for marketing, the molds, and anything else related to the project.

Ms. Steffens added that at the January Board meeting, the Board voted to move a portion of the Operating Reserves, so the BID is starting with \$142,000 for Project Reserves, and to date roughly \$6,500 has been approved in spending, and the Nippers would be in addition to that.

Mr. Fariello requested a motion for \$20,000 for another round of Downtown is Pawsome | Motion by Ms. Metzger, Hon. Shahinfar seconds| All approve.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

DRI Update

Ms. Steffens noted that the DRI process is quickly coming to an end, and that there was another planning committee meeting recently, during which the committee scored projects on how transformative they thought they would be for the Clinton Square area. The consultant pulled together the community's response to the most recently community meeting, and included a column on how likely they thought the project would be to receive funding from the State.

Ms. Steffens added that there is roughly \$28-\$30 million in requests and only \$9.7 million to give out. In the other regions to receive this funding, \$12-\$15 million in requests have been sent to the State and various agencies vet the requests to then award the \$9.7 million. The Local Planning Committee is going through all proposals to trim down the project requests, and the first list of recommendations is due March 31. This summer the awards will be announced.

Ms. Steffens added that Wayfinding still appears to be a priority, but that Tricentennial Park may have fallen on the list. Ms. Metzger noted she is hopeful that Tricentennial Park will get funded through the DRI and added that there are exciting projects big and small in the process.

Ms. Steffens noted that any project not funded through the DRI receives priority through the CFA Regional Council process, so projects will not drop off but will be considered there as well. She added that there is a full list of projects



submitted to the DRI on the City's website. She also noted that these projects are shovel-ready, and that they are leveraging \$280 million of investment.

Events

Ms. Steffens noted that included in the Board packet are upcoming events that the BID is running or assisting with.

Ms. Steffens added that the BID's Resident Roundtable was last night, with 60 people RSVPing however the snow likely kept people from being able to attend, with roughly 30 people attending. She noted it was a very engaged audience which asked good questions.

Ms. Steffens noted she gave a short presentation and that questions were typical of what would come up at a neighborhood association meeting – parking, garbage, police. The BID, Albany Center Gallery, and the Planning Department had boards up for people to vote on where funds should be invested in seating, lighting, and other amenities, and special events. There were also post-it notes where people could leave ideas. She added that it was a great meeting and the BID is looking to hold similar events 3-4 times per year, and another one will be held soon as weather impacted people's ability to attend.

Mr. Galin added that it felt like a neighborhood association in that people were asking good questions. Ms. Steffens noted that Mr. Bonafide is typing up the notes from the meeting and that information will be shared with the Board.

A question was raised regarding who was attending, with Ms. Steffens noting that they were from different buildings and a variety of ages. Ms. Bonafide noted that there were people who volunteered to be ambassadors for their buildings, to help share information on Downtown.

Ms. Steffens added that attendees asked about having different organizations or departments there for each meeting, and that both APD Beat Officers attended and that making connections between the residents and the officers has been really beneficial.

A question was raised about inviting Common Council members who cover the District, and Ms. Steffens noted she will reach out to them.

A question was raised on Hudson Street and the duration of the project and addressing pedestrian traffic in that area while roadwork is being done. Ms. Steffens noted that Mr. Wilson has been visiting the site regularly and will provide updates to Stakeholders.

NEW BUSINESS

With no further business to be discussed, the meeting ended at 5:20 PM.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, April 18, 2019

4:30 PM

2nd Floor Conference Room