

# **Hoboken Business Alliance, Inc.**

## **Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

### **Video Conference – May 2, 2023 4:30pm**

**Present:** James Runkle, Edyta Espasa, Pratik Patel, Mario Fini, Catherine Willhoit, Councilman Phil Cohen, Director Jennifer Gonazlez, and Jenny Davis

**Absent:** Pratik Patel, Dave Jacey, Chris Mazzola, and Anthony Pino

**Also Present:** Roxanne Earley, Larissa Szilagyi, and Erin Bush

#### **1. Call to Order: 4:39pm**

**R. Earley** welcomed everyone and asked **L. Szilagyi** to read the Open Public Meetings Act statement. **L. Szilagyi** read the statement of compliance with Chapter 231 of the Open Public Meetings Act noting that adequate meeting notice was provided.

The minutes from March 7, 2023 were reviewed.

**Motion to approve the minutes from March 7, 2023. Motion: E. Espasa Second: P. Cohen**

#### **2. Treasurers Report**

**In P. Pratik's absence, L. Szilagyi** provided the financial report and reported that the Statement of Financial Position shows Current Bank Assets on 5/1 of \$857,861.73, which accounts for uncleared transactions of \$30,139.79. The Reconciliation Report shows an April Bank Statement ending balance of \$918,001.52 which corresponds to the uncleared transactions in the Statement of Financial Position. Finally, the Activity Statement shows revenue to date of \$1,410,880.31 and expenditures of \$1,542,783.35.

**Motion to approve the May Treasurer's report? Motion: P. Cohen. Second: J. Runkle.**

#### **3. Updates:**

##### **Capitol/Visual**

**MOLA Ironworks Tree Pit Upgrade Proposal:** **R. Earley** circulated a proposal within the board packet, which was put forth by the Capital Visual Committee.

**Motion to approve the proposed tree pit upgrade plan for a cost of \$45k? Motion: E. Espasa Second: M. Fini**

**Rodent Abatement Program:** **R. Earley** circulated a memo which requested funding of \$82,653, which will fund rodent mitigation in 89 catch basins on Washington Street and 1<sup>st</sup> street as well as 103 catch basins on 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Gateway South, Gateway North, Waterfront North, and South Waterfront & Terminal. Moreover, this funding will cover follow up services of 2x a month for both FY23 and FY24. The Capital/Visual Committee recommended the board approves this rodent mitigation plan.

During discussion, **C. Willhoit** noted a concern about HBA's responsibility over pest control and communication with the City regarding the effectiveness of the program. **M. Fini** also echoed concern about measuring the effectiveness of the program. **R. Earley** noted the City will be providing data to the HBA about the effectiveness of the abatement. While rat abatement is a property owner concern, **J. Gonzalez** and **P. Cohen** noted that the City is hoping to target the hotspots before it becomes an issue for property owners.

**Motion to approve the Rodent Abatement Proposal for a cost not to exceed \$82,625 through June 30, 2024? Motion: C. Willhoit. Second: H. Ahmed. All approved, motion passes.**

**FY24 CDS Contract:** **R. Earley** shared a memo with the board regarding the FY24 CDS Contract, which, for an annual contract of \$474,699.12 or \$39,558.26 per month, will include increases shifts from 8 to 15 hours a day, a placemaking budget for support at 25 events, F-250 Operations vehicle for trash pickup, and an onsite equipment manager for 5 days a week, four hours a day. The Capital/Visual Committee recommended the board approve CDS' FY24 contract.

Several concerns were raised by board members during this discussion. **H. Ahmed** was concerned by not only this contract taking 15% of the HBA budget, but also the price of the F-250 truck. **M. Fini** was concerned about increasing the hours of the cleaning team and asked for the team to split up their time between the morning and the evening to cover the commuter periods. **J. Davis** requested CDS to begin earlier, but **R. Earley** informed the board that CDS cannot start earlier than 7am. **E. Espasa** noted that, although she was concerned about the truck, it is important for extra sanitation to be conducted, especially if Hoboken were to combat rat activity. The board requested to have CDS clarify several items before approving the contract in its entirety.

**Motion to approve the budget to not exceed the amount of \$474,699.12 and obtain clarification regarding the clean team schedule and the F-250 Operations vehicle? Motion: P. Cohen. Second: E. Espasa. Opposed: H. Ahmed. 11 approved, 1 opposed. Motion passes.**

**CitiBin Pilot Program Expansion Proposal:** **R. Earley** circulated a memo requesting the board approve \$35,000 to expand the CitiBin program. During its pilot program, CitiBin has prevented businesses from being fined for garbage pickup, reduced rodent activity, provided more storage space for businesses, and enhanced the beauty of Hoboken by keeping trash off the sidewalks. While this pilot experienced several challenges, like needed repairs and vandalism, business owners who participated in the program were extremely happy with this pilot. This funding

would allow for 6 more locations to have CitiBins. The Capital/Visual Committee recommended the board approve the funding request to expand HBA's CitiBin program.

**M. Fini** requested that the bins be secured so individuals stop dumping items in the bins as well as there be signage indicating the bins are a part of the HBA. **L. Szilagy**i noted that the bins are in the process of being ziptied and will inquire with CitiBin about branding.

**Motion to approve the expansion of the CitiBin program? Motion: C. Willhoit. Second: M. Fini. All approved, motion passes.**

**Administrative:**

**Vote to form an ad hoc committee to review Market Economic Analysis RFP responses:**

**R. Earley** noted that on April 18<sup>th</sup> the HBA released an RFP for market economic analysis to review the business landscape in Hoboken including market conditions, trends, and policy analysis. **R. Earley** recommended the board form an ad hoc committee to review qualified responses and make a recommendation to the board at our July 11 meeting. Given their deep interest in the topic, **R. Earley** recommended Mario and Hany be appointed to this committee along with James.

**Motion to appoint James, Mario, and Hany to an ad hoc committee to review the Market Economic Analysis RFP responses and select a finalist to bring to the July 11 meeting for approval? Motion: J. Gonzalez Second: J. Runkle, All approved, motion passes.**

**Vote to appoint members to nominations committee to develop nominations process:**

**R. Earley** recommended that the board should develop a process for identifying and nominating members to the board of trustees. The next board build session will focus on board development, and per our bylaws we have 6 directors whose terms expire this year. **R. Earley** recommended that HBA appoint directors temporarily to the nominations committee to do a deep dive and develop a process for review and discussion at the July 11 board meeting. This committee will also, by virtue of that work, be reviewing proposed changes to the bylaws in advance of the July 11 board meeting. **R. Earley** recommended James, Edyta, and Catherine be appointed, and if there is another director interested in serving that would be great.

**Motion to appoint James, Catherine, and Edyta to the nominations committee to develop a nominations process for board review? Motion: M. Fini Second: J. Davis. All approved, motion passes.**

**Vote to approve GLM contract extension through June 30, 2023:**

**R. Earley** noted that the contract with HBA's current marketing provider ended April 30 and HBA is currently working on a month-to-month basis with GLM. **R. Earley** requested the board approve a formal extension of the contract through the end of the fiscal year for a total of \$16,000, which is the current rate of \$8,000 per month. **R. Earley** noted this would provide staff with time to update the scope of work and request proposals from other firms for competitive pricing. **J. Runkle** noted that, when HBA originally started services with GLM and created a RFP, they were a new organization and now we need new types of services.

**Motion to extend the current marketing contract through the end of the fiscal year for a cost of \$16,000? Motion: J. Runkle. Second: H. Ahmed. All approved, motion passes.**

**Vote to form ad hoc marketing committee to review marketing proposals for FY 24:**

**Motion to appoint James and Catherine to an ad hoc marketing committee to review responses to a new marketing search and make recommendations to the board at the July 11 meeting? Motion: H. Ahmed. Second: M. Fini. All approved, motion passes.**

**6. Old Business**

**No old business was addressed.**

**8. New Business**

**No new business proposed**

**9. Public Session**

**R. Markle** was concerned about items regarding sidewalks, like the tree pit expansion plan. **R. Earley** assured **R. Markle** that HBA will work with the city for curbspace management. **R. Markle** believes parklets add a major contribution to the rat problem in Hoboken and should add turf to mitigate the rodent activity. Lastly, **R. Markle** requested the City sanitation budget from **J. Gonzalez** to understand if HBA was supplementing their budget. **J. Gonzalez** stated she would need to do calculations.

**10. Next Meeting: *July 11, 2023***

**11. Adjournment: Motion: J. Runkle. Second: H. Ahmed 5:51pm**