

**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Hoboken Business Alliance, Inc.**  
**February 4, 2020**  
**Hoboken Business Center-4:30pm**

**Call to order/Roll Call Announcements- 4:50pm**

**Present:** Hany Ahmed, Greg Dell' Aquilla, Edyta Espasa, Dian Fini, Councilwoman Tiffanie Fisher, Eugene Flinn, Donna Garban, Meghan Lukin, Stephen Marks, Chris Mazzola, Carol Swift

**Absent:** Armando Luis

**Also Present:** Natalie Chape', Stuart Koperweis, J. Getz (JGSC Marketing Group)

**Adoption of January 7, 2020 Minutes**

**MOTION: to accept January 7, 2019 Minutes –G. Aquilla, Second by – E. Espasa**

**Presidents Report**

**EDS Agreement:** **E. Flinn** informed the Board that the contract for **Economic Development Strategist (S. Koperweis)** has been finalized and both parties have signed.

**Update Credit Line/Bank Account:** **E. Flinn** has reported he has opened bank account and deposited \$1 into account.

**S. Koperweis** asked **S. Marks** if **HBA** can get an advance on the funds that have already been received. **E. Flinn** also asked **S. Marks** if we can also get a schedule of when we should receive future funds. **S. Marks** will check with the Tax Collector tomorrow and get back to us.

**Priorities:** **E. Flinn** has informed the Board that we have interviewed 4 Marketing Firms. Information on all interviews are on the Marketing Firm Interview Minutes that have been sent.

**Social Media:** Question was asked about Social Media and if HBA should have one person on the board dedicated to this. Conversation was had. **G. Dell'Aquila** believes that the Social Media should be handled by the marketing firm. **M. Lukin** agreed, however, was wondering how the more immediate posts such as a beautiful rainbow over Hoboken, etc, or anything with immediacy will be handled. Chances are the firm will not post things like that, unless they are in area all the time; which all agreed are an important part of capturing an audience in IG. **N. Chape'** told the board that an option can be that someone on the Board or herself can have access to the IG for the sole purpose of posting things like that in the moment.

**E. Flinn** reported we need to start showing the City some Visual/Capital Improvement.

**Retail Market Analysis Presentation by JGSC Group**

**Joe Getz** introduced himself and gave a brief summary of what his firm has been doing for 20+ years. They work with communities, improvement districts and shopping centers to help grow their local economies.

Three things they will look at to get started are:

- Physical Property Inventory
- Economics of Town – Supply/Demand spending
- Talk to Consumers, Stakeholders, Council Members and Visitors

They will ascertain from this what the economy will support and how those conditions can be created for support. They will create a variety of things to get consumer input: like downtown sweepstakes, online surveys. He noted, that only 405 responses are required in order for it to be statistically valid; however he stated they normally get between 1000-2000 responses.

Once they have all the surveys, the inventory and the supply/demand data they will determine what the best approach is to create a strategy for implementation; along with an analysis. The survey that is sent out is usually about 30-35 questions which included questions like, “what best describes you”, “Age range”, “How many children”, etc. (whatever information we want from them). They will measure supply/demand leakage regarding how much people are spending and on what. **J. Getz** passed around samples of his work for the Board to look at; he then answered all questions that were asked.

Board thanked **Joe** for his presentation and will look over the proposal and get back to him with any other questions, prior to making a decision.

## **Treasures Report**

N/A

## **Committee Reports**

**Marketing:** **C. Mazzola** informed the board that members of the Committee interviewed 4 firms 2 weeks ago (minutes available). He sent out an email requesting all members who were present to send a short list (3) of pros and cons for each firm. We have two more firms to interview this coming Thursday at 1:30pm and 3:00pm in **D. Fini’s** office. We will follow same process. **C. Mazzola** reported Committee will hopefully make a decision by the end of next week, 2.15.20.

**D. Fini** mentioned she prefers the firms have physical locations. **S. Koperweis** informed Board that these two firms we will be interviewing are online based and do not have typical physical locations.

**E. Flinn** thanked **C. Mazzola** and **N. Chape’** and rest of committee for being there for interviews a couple weeks ago, as it was a very long day.

Question was asked if the board will vote on firm or is that something Committee will handle. **C. Mazzola** believes the committee should make a decision and deliver the decision to the Board for full approval. **C. Mazzola** will work with **S. Koperweis** regarding the negotiation process. We will send email to board for a vote to speed up process.

**Visual:** **C. Swift** reported back on Visual Committee meeting; minutes of meeting were sent to all for review. We will reach out to the City regarding the plantings they have scheduled and what is their annual program? We are looking into setting up cleaning services, plantings, lights and banners and utility wraps as priorities. **H. Ahmed** feels beautification should be all throughout Washington St. **S. Koperweis** will reach out to **Jennifer Gonzalez**, Chief Sustainability Office in the City of Hoboken and set up a meeting to discuss.

Conversation was had on how many poles we should put flowers on. How will we maintain them? Is it in our budget? We need to figure out logistics. **T. Fisher** thinks it will be good to have them from 14<sup>th</sup>-1<sup>st</sup>. **S. Koperweis** will contact companies for quotes for (2) hanging planters and for full boat to compare the two.

## **Old Business**

*Hardship Policy:* There are quite a few people who have requested a meeting. **S. Koperweis** suggested we set up a Hardship Committee so that when they formally request we are set to hear. **E. Flinn** and **C. Swift** have volunteered to be on committee, along with **S. Koperweis**.

*Assessment Policy-Review of Cell Towers:* There have been several calls regarding assessments for cell towers on top of building. **S. Koperweis** reached out to Jersey City, and they do not include them. There is a state policy regarding the towers. He suggested we eliminate the cell towers from assessment moving forward; and either refund or credit accounts.

**MOTION: to remove Cell Towers from Assessment –D. Fini, Second by – H. Ahmed**

*Parking:* **T. Fisher** mentioned there have been parking related calls regarding increasing the parking meter rates from \$ 1 to \$2. **G. Dell' Aquilla** was on a call with her and Chamber. **E. Flinn** stated the businesses are always the first ones to get parking tickets; and noted that the City should also raise residential parking rates as well. **T. Fisher** suggested the SID put a parking sub-committee together and they can brainstorm about program changes. The following have volunteered to be on the parking sub-committee: **E. Flinn, H. Ahmed, and D. Fini**

*Events:* **S. Koperweis** reported he had a meeting with **Gerri Fallo** to try and find out what the HBA can do to assist in supporting our businesses with her existing events. She is happy to work with us. The next big event we can collaborate on is the *Music and Arts Festival in May*. The businesses in town do now really participate and they have the issue that their stores are blocked by outside street vendors.

**S. Koperweis** suggested we go to the businesses and have them set up a tent in front of their store inviting people in. He suggested the **HBA** pay their discounted rate if they want to participate. Discussion was had on this topic. Talk about having a bigger band and paying for the difference as well. **H. Ahmed** suggested extending the festival to Pier A. After a lot of suggestions of different ways the HBA can assist in helping businesses participate in this specific event. The Board suggested the first 50 businesses to sign up will get the discounted rate and have the space in front of their store guaranteed for them, however they will have to pay.

*Retail Market Analysis:* Discussion on presentation.

**MOTION: to put E-Vote out to board if they would like to hire JGSC Group–H. Ahmed, Second by – C. Swift**

**MOTION: to close meeting–H. Ahmed, Second by – T. Fisher**

**Adjourned: 7:25pm**

**Next Meeting March 3, 2020**