

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

**Board of Directors Meeting
Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce
90 Fourth Street – 1st Floor Conference Room
Troy, NY 12180
Thursday, October 21, 2021 - 8:30 AM**

Present: Matt Callahan, Sarah Caciola, Marie Gavazzi, Monica Kurzejeski, Seamus Donnelly, Kate Manley, Dylan Turek. Via video conference on Zoom: Chris Nolin, Dave Gardell, Jeff Mirel, Genika Blandshaw, Kim Fredericks

Staff: Geoff Brault

Absent: Dan Yamin, Dan Frament, Kerry Fagan, Vito Ciccarelli

MINUTES

· Call to Order at 8:40am

Matt Callahan

Secretary's Report

Geoff Brault/Sarah Caciola

- Review of September meeting minutes. Motion to approve September minutes made first by Monica Kurzejeski and second by Kate Manley, those on Zoom approved in writing via the chat function and all others approved via verbal aye; none opposed

President's Report

Matt Callahan

- Nothing new to report; all new items to be discussed later in the meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Geoff Brault/Dave Gardell

- Net Income at 9/30/2021 is positive \$37,000; includes City Tax Assessment installment of \$52,531.95. No new purchases. Dave shared that the BID is "sitting strong financially."

Executive Director's Report

Geoff Brault

- Feedback from meetings - Geoff shared feedback from recent meetings with BID members; thanked everyone for their time. Geoff shared suggestions made to him during his meetings with members, as follows:
 - An independent parking study – this was discussed by the board and it was determined that parking within the City is not a BID issue, it is the City's responsibility. Suggestion made to provide parking information on the BID's website to include available parking lots and garages, along with fees, and information on free parking when/where available.
 - Create a searchable database of available commercial properties – discussed by the Board, with mention of the BID's annual "For Rent Event." Board agreed to encourage the sharing of information on available properties by developers and realtors through links on BID website; BID would not be responsible for maintenance and upkeep of the actual listings.
 - Partner in fundraising of community projects – board agreed; was discussed in more detail under Board Business and 2022 Budget planning below.
 - Administrate a downtown ambassador program and visibly place people in downtown areas to help visitors navigate the city on high traffic days – board agreed with this suggestion.
- Small Business Saturday and Holiday Shopping Plan
 - Tote Bag promotion – Pioneer Bank provided sponsorship worth \$2500 to purchase 360 tote bags from Troy Cloth & Paper; to be stuffed with inserts, discount flyers, calendars, etc and given to local retailers

to promote Small Business Saturday.

- Holiday Shopping Digital Marketing Plan – Digital marketing firm to be utilized for segmented emails, recipient retargeting; “geofences” to be used to market to specific locations (eg: RPI, Sage, and Sienna campuses) Marketing spend will be \$3,000-\$5,000, to be split possibly with the Chamber.
- CDTA Trolley – to be used to provide mobile gift wrapping; Honest Weight Food Co-op to sponsor the trolley, which will be parked in various places throughout the district.
- Holiday Shopping Kick-off Event – planned for Saturday, November 27th, will include ringing of the bells and ribbon cutting with the Chamber.
- Public Art Installation – in partnership with the Chamber and the Arts Center; a large-scale public art lighting structure will attract crowds to downtown Troy during holiday season. Special event permit was noted as being required for installation.
- Chromosome Video Series – continues through the end of the year as follows:
 - October – Health, Wellness, and Beauty
 - November – A Day of Shopping Small – using 2 band members from a local band, (1 male & 1 female) to do a walking tour of Troy to shop holiday gifts
 - December – The Importance of Shopping Small – to emphasize buying local

Board Business

- 2022 Budget Planning – Matt and Geoff will soon start the budget process. Board discussion of priorities and projects to keep in the budget:
 - Suggestion for BID to provide grants, or other funding, to local establishments. Board confirmed BID does not have grant-writing authority, but the Foundation might. Discussion moved to consider providing funding, not grants.
 - Suggestion to transition from funding one large event (eg. Rockin on the River) to, instead, fund several smaller events (ie. “Rock the Block” block parties) wherein the BID would provide funds directly to businesses to plan programming. Mention was made to downsize, or “right size” future BID events.
 - Suggestion to turn Troy Night Out into a weekend-long event; to promote Friday and Saturday night programming.
 - Discussion around emphasizing keeping things local; specifically mentioned bands brought in for Rockin’ on the River are not often local bands (eg. Queen tribute band) and Troy Pig Out BBQ competition brings in competitors from outside Troy area.
 - Suggestion to use marketing and/or beautification efforts to build and promote neighborhoods in downtown Troy. See reference to block parties above.
 - Idea to host a Monday Night Supper with guest chefs, providing outdoor pop-ups at mystery locations in the summer, to provide Monday night dining options when many restaurants are closed. Additional suggestion to hold community dinner events for up to 50 people utilizing vacant areas, or newly opened spaces to promote new businesses in the district.
 - Emphasize fundraising aspect of BID events; consider naming specific initiatives or organizations who will benefit from certain events (eg. “Proceeds from this event will help support (fill in the blank)”); Troy Redevelopment Foundation, who funds economic development, was mentioned as a potential resource or partnership. Chris Nolin named as a contact.

Standing / Special Committee Reports

Matt Callahan/Sarah Caciola

- Executive Committee – Executive Committee Meeting minutes were included with board documents
- Governance Committee - meeting set for next Thursday to look at open board positions: 2 Class A and 1 Class C open, suggestions have been provided. Request made for other names or suggestions to fill remaining open seats.

- Outreach Committee - met recently, working to move Ambassador program forward, more information to come soon.

Special Reports

Monica Kurzejeski

- Holiday Decorating – discussion around this year’s plans for holiday decorating throughout the City, deemed “a work in progress.” Supply chain issues noted as affecting holiday lights; City is considering trying to light existing trees in the park. BID to continue working with Pesha to order Kissing Balls; which will replace current hanging baskets. Geoff will meet with Pesha on Tuesday. Suggestion made to use M&L Landscaping in addition to Pesha; M&L previously provided hanging baskets for the BID and may be an additional resource; Geoff to call them.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:52am
BID Board Minutes 10/21/2021