

Board Meeting of the Trustees
Fort Lee Improvement District Corporation
DBA: Business District Alliance (BDA) of Fort Lee
2/10/16

Call to Order: 6:08 pm

Present: Michael Beyer, Robert Durando, Denis Glennon, Kathy Lee, James Liu, Frank Patti, Councilman Harvey Sohmer, Romina Starace, Ashley Yook, Denise Sokolich

Absent: Luciano Bruni, Councilman Joseph Cervieri, Victor Cividini, Anthony Clores, Janice Friedman, Gloria Gallo, Mayor Mark Sokolich

Also Present: Rene Moore and Lori Donnelly – Direct Development, Hope Rothenberg – Fort Lee Chamber of Commerce

The Governance Process form was handed out to be filled out by board members, will send to those not present.

Adoption of 1.13.16 Minutes

MOTION: R. Durando, Second by J. Liu — APPROVED

Treasurer's Report

M. Beyer reported that have not yet opened a CD as were calculating the proper amount which will be \$50,000. Also, the next assessment installment should be received by the end of the month.

President's Report

R. Starace reported that some board members have missed 4 or more consecutive meeting. **S. Koperweis** will draft a letter from **R. Starace** to send to those members as a reminder with the clause that states:

Any person, who, without good cause or satisfactory explanation, shall miss three (3) consecutive scheduled meetings of the Board; or during any fiscal year miss fifty (50%) percent of the scheduled Board meetings; or fail to participate in committees, committee assignments or corporate projects, may be subject to suspension or removal from the Board.

R. Starace also reported that **Janice Friedman** has raised a concern that she cannot attend a lot of meetings and is not sure if she should remain on the board. She could still be a valuable asset, even if not on the board. **J. Friedman** said that since she cannot make the commitment she would like the board to decide. An option would be to have her as a consultant or on the Marketing Committee if she has the time. **S. Koperweis** noted this could also be an opportunity to involve other people. He also noted that the by-laws are currently be reviewed so the future board members will have staggered terms. **The By-Law Committee** will review and make recommendations.

Committee Reports

Visual/Capital Improvements Committee

Valentine's Day – D. Sokolich and H. Levine handed out heart decorations to the businesses to hang in the windows.

Marketing/Events Committee

Mid-Winter Madness – the program will run from February 15th – March 31st. The objective is to draw consumers (visitors and residents) into town. There will be media support, both print and social, behind the promotion. This program is an alternative to Valentine's Day promo, because it was determined that asking retailer/restaurants to offer a discount on a big profit day could have produced a negative results. We will need to get this program into 200 plus stores. We will have the program flyers translated to give to the store owners. We will divide among the board member to distribute, H. Levine will provide the list of businesses. The e-mails that we already have will get a blast.

Mother's/Father's Day – as with Valentine's Day, we will not request discounts; but will support the merchants/retailer efforts with social media.

Arts & Music Festival – Currently in a state of flux. Appears to be obstacles in terms of expanding onto Main Street. One of the concerns is of losing traffic from the main event on Lemoine. However, this is not the intent nor do we believe will be the case, as we want to broaden the event to include Main Street business at their locations. It has been suggest to set up in the passive park but that would not be ideal since that location is not the core of the BDA. S. Koperweis will meet with Al Restaino to see what can be worked out and see other options.

Rising Rewards – currently compiling of list of participating stores. A program flyer has been created and is also in the process of being translated.

Video Shoot – in the process of determining how to productively apply footage. Direct Development has put together a voice over that will help Synergy Productions edit. All were reminded that this is an ongoing process. The footage was not to be used as an end product of itself, but part of the bigger picture of Fort Lee Rising.

Sponsorships – S. Koperweis and D. Glennon will me with the High School administration. Will need to have them write a review of the events for us to consider. Have also agreed to sponsor the Fort Lee Film Commission Art Walk for \$250.

Media Plan – everybody received and reviewed. NorthJersey.com is the primary focal points and NJ.com will be additional for larger events.

Taste Fort Lee – Opportunity to sample wares of restaurants and attract significant traffic, create retention and repurchasing devices. The social media currently using for Valentine’s Day will also be applied. Working with Direct Development and will meet with the Marketing Committee.

R. Starace reviewed the Del Ray, FL version. The one event is Tastemakers of Delray Beach. They sell a passbook which is good for 1 month prior and past the event. The passbooks have coupons to the participating stores. They sell for \$30 each, \$29 goes to the participating stores and \$1 goes to a local charity. Last year they sold 2000 passbooks. The other event is Savor the Restaurants. About 20 restaurants participate. The main street is closed for about 5-6 blocks and about 50 tables are lined up farmhouse style. The tables are decorated by the different restaurants and there is a decorating contest. Everything is sold by the restaurants, including reservations. The restaurants that are not in the main area have movable kitchens.

PBS – The original cut was not ideal – it was edited for entertainment value vs. informational value. The big concern was that they may not have enough footage. However they do have footage and will shoot again and capture more. Direct Development has also put together a montage of still pictures to be incorporated. We have asked to see multiple rounds of rough cuts so it can be fine-tuned; to ensure it answer’s the question: “What else is there to do in Fort Lee?” The special should air in the late spring.

Old Business

Budget: The 2016 will be presented at the hearing on February 11th; all board members are welcome to attend.

DOT: Have confirmed that DOT is planning on fixing the signage on Rt. 1 & 9 (46). S. Koperweis will continue to follow up.

Public Session

Motion to Open – J. Liu, Second by R. Durando

H. Rothenberg was wondering if we have information on Hudson Lights and why there has not been any advertising, and also noted that calls are not returned. She has been told the realtors are rude. **R. Starace** has also heard that the National retail image of Fort Lee is that it has a large population of Asians and therefore businesses are not interested in participating. This is a serious issue and **will need to investigate and address. Will need to look to see if there was a national study done.**

Motion to Close – J. Liu, Second by R. Durando

MOTION to adjourn at 7:26 pm: J. Liu, Second by R. Durando– APPROVED

*Next BDA Meeting is scheduled for 3/9/16