

**Highlands Business Partnership
District Management Corporation
Highlands Business Improvement District
PO Box 375, 140 Bay Ave, Highlands, NJ 07732
732-291-4713 F/732-872-1031 www.highlandsnj.com**

Regular Meeting – September 17, 2018

HBP President, Carla Cefalo-Braswell, called the HBP regular public session of the Board of Directors to order at 7:41 PM and read the public meeting notice. Roll call was taken with a quorum of 10 members being present.

Meeting Attendance: P = Present	A = Absent	
		Jeanne DeYoung - A
Carla Cefalo-Braswell - P		Staci Gilchrist - P
Jay Cosgrove - P		Nikki Berzinskis - P
Rafaella Lee - P		Doug Lentz - A
Kim Slate - P		Garrett Newcomb – P
Jack Bevins - A		Sue Kinsella- A
Nancy Burton - A		Anna Little - Advisory Board- P
Leo Cervantes - A		Councilwoman Carolyn Broullon (Council Liaison) - P
Craig Bahrs - P		Andrew Stockton – Planning Liaison - A

Also in attendance were Donica Basinger, Feed & Seed, Gert Sofman, Gert's Snacks & Spices, Christian Lee, Beach House Apartments, Bill Iler, Summerhouse, Councilman Ken Braswell, ShoreGrafx, and Patty K., resident. Carla introduced Anna Little and congratulated her on being appointed a federal Judgeship. She welcomed her to the HBP Advisory Board.

A motion was made by Staci Gilchrist to accept the minutes of March 19, 2018, and second by Kim Slate. Jay Cosgrove and Kim Slate abstained. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Rafaella Lee, Treasurer, presented the Treasurer's report. There is \$14,330.41 in the Valley National Bank checking account, less outstanding checks of \$2,294.71, leaving a balance of \$12,035.70. The Valley National Hope for Highlands account has a balance of \$359.41. Kim Slate made a motion to accept the HBP and HFH Treasurer's Reports. Second by Staci Gilchrist, all were in favor and the motion carried.

Executive Committee:

The 2017 Annual report was completed and submitted to the Department of Community Affairs, along with our annual audit, as required in the statute. All of our Annual Reports are up to date and are available on our website. Our 990's have been sent to Borough Hall and are also available online on www.guidestar.org.

The HBP shed is completed and our supplies have been moved from the storage unit to the shed, and the unit has been picked up. Total expense for the shed was approximately \$15,000.

Our next Networking Breakfast is scheduled for October 4th. Carla asked if anyone had any suggestions for presentations for the meeting. She added she received an email from Melanie Willoughby, the new Executive Director from the Business Action Center, reached out and are willing to come and do a presentation to let us know what programs are available. The Networking event may be postponed depending on the State's calendar.

Marketing & Communications:

Carla tabled the Monmouth County Tourism Report since Jeanne DeYoung was not present and said that Jeanne will be retiring in December.

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HBP submitted a grant application for 2019 to NJ Travel & Tourism Marketing for \$25,000. HBP Member, Christian Lee of Beach House Apartments, gave a marketing report as to the progress with the current 2018 NJ Marketing Grant initiatives. The report highlighted the digital marketing strategy uses Google AdWords, which is a paid advertising platform. We have 6 ad groups running that target different interests. To date this year, our ads have been displayed 96,139 times and clicked 3,605 times. We have also received 22 verified phone calls. We have completed various website optimizations including the implementation of enhanced analytics to track our performance and we have recently transitioned to a secure site to improve search engine ranking and provide a better user experience. Analytics show that our website has received 38,055 visitors this year, 57,773 sessions, and 103,000 page views. We had our single largest day during the Clam Fest with 1,933 visitors on Saturday August 4. Events drive traffic to the website, if you are a business and have a promotion, during an event period is a very good time to do that.

We will continue our grant-funded marketing campaigns through the end of the year. An application has been submitted to continue and expand these efforts for 2019. We're also working on continuing our social media presence and we have just begun some additional efforts to increase Highlands' digital presence and we'll be presenting more on that in the future. We are reaching out to businesses in town that do not have a website and are setting up a pilot program which will enable them to have free or low cost mini website that will be linked to our highlandsnj.com.

Our intern Erika Mikulski was not able to return this semester as she has a very heavy workload. Highlands resident, Kevin Rooney was hired as an intern as a digital technician specialist. He is keeping the database current and social media accounts. He is also making the free mini websites that Christian mentioned for businesses that do not have their own website so that they can also be included in our digital marketing plan. We are also going to offer a free I-frame, (Inline **Frame**) is an HTML document embedded inside another HTML document on a website. The **IFrame** HTML element is often used to insert content from another source, such as an advertisement, into a Web page. The IFrame will be designed to look like the original website, and can be used to post menus, entertainment and other specials.

Events

Car Show, we had 53 cars and Rave On performed and the weather was great, but low turnout.

The Farmers Market will continue through the end of October, possibly longer, weather permitting.

Twins Light Ride will take place on September 30th. we expect upwards of 3,000 people. We had a Borough event meeting and have discussed all the events with the Borough Administrator and Chief Burton.

Oktoberfest will take place October 6, and 7th is the rain date.

We have added a new event, the Howl-O-Ween Dog Costume Contest that will take place on October 20th at Feed & Seed, immediately following the Zombie Parade. There will be light refreshments and prizes for best costumes. On October 21st, we will be sponsoring the 3rd Annual Lions Club Pancake Breakfast; HBP buys the supplies and assist the Lions with the event and they get the ticket sales proceeds on the day of event.

Economic/Community Development

We have implemented our Economic Development \$1,000 grant program. We have awarded 4 grants, 3 are pending and we have applications that are not complete. In doing this program the current code regarding awnings is very antiquated and only allowed one word on the awning. We will be working with Councilwoman Broullon on trying to update that as quickly as possible.

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Visual Improvement

This Saturday, members of the Sandy Foot Society are volunteering to put up the fall decorations on Bay Ave and the parks to get ready for Fall Into Highlands. We will follow up with the Borough for the banner brackets designed specifically for the decorative light posts so that we can order banners. Councilman Braswell said that he provided the information to the Administrator Kim Gonzales and she is working on the funding for them.

OLD BUSINESS

Carla asked if the duplicate lighting was being addressed and Councilwoman Broullon stated that Kim Gonzales has addressed it and that all of the lights that are duplicated from Miller St. to South St. will be turned off for a period of time to see if any issues arise. No date was provided.

NEW BUSINESS

Ribbon cutting for Scuba & the Beast will take place September 28th. Hinlickity's would like to wait for his sign to be approved before scheduling his ribbon cutting. His sign was not approved because of the size and we discussed updating the ordinance.

We have been asked to meet with the Borough Administrator and Garrett Newcomb regarding a bike share program that wants Highlands to participate, along with Sea Bright and Atlantic Highlands. Garrett was initially approached to be contracted to do the maintenance on the bikes used in the program. Garrett explained that this would have a drastic effect on his business as he rents bikes here in Highlands. Sea Bright would have the contract with the company and Highlands and Atlantic Highlands would be in a shared service agreement. When this was discussed in other business at a council meeting, Councilwoman Broullon stated that she didn't think that it should be the business of the Borough of Highlands to put our local independent businesses out of business. She has asked her fellow council people to reach out to towns that are currently participating in this type program, such as Keyport and other shore towns. The other shore towns that are participating are much larger than Highlands. Garrett Newcomb did extensive research, and found this type of program works wonderfully in large cities such as Manhattan, to reduce traffic, and is not something necessary in Highlands. Carla's concern is that other towns may be interested in the fact we have a ferry, and people would use the bike share to travel to the other participating towns instead of spurring the local economy in Highlands.

The next meeting will be held on November 19th. A motion was made to adjourn at 8:25PM by Carla Cefalo, second by Kim Slate; all were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 8:25PM.

Submitted by Diane McIlwaine