

Highlands Business Partnership  
 Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors  
 Seafarer, Highlands, NJ 07732  
 September 21, 2020

Meeting Attendance: P = Present A = Absent	
Carla Cefalo - P	Nikki Berzinskis - P
Jay Cosgrove - P	Staci Gilchrist - A
Rafaella Lee - A	Doug Lentz - P
Kim Slate - P	Garrett Newcomb - A
Jack Bevins- A	Kat Walsh - A
Dave Baker - P	Anna Little – A
Leo Cervantes - P	Gloria Miller - P

Also, in attendance were Nancy Burton, In The Garden, Donica Basinger, Feed & Seed, Mayor Broullon, Councilman Ken Braswell, Geoffrey Pierini and Barbara Gold from Captain's Cove Marina.

Meeting was called to order at 4:17, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was taken with a quorum of 8 members.

Moment of Silence for former HBP member & dear friend - Larry Colby – HBP will adopt a bench for South Bay in his honor.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

Approval of Minutes - Review of November, 26, 2019 Meeting Minutes

- Kim Slate made a motion to approve the 11/26/20 meeting minutes, second by Jay Cosgrove, all in favor, motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report – Kim Slate**

\$39,439.35 less outstanding checks of \$42.48, leaving a balance of \$39,396.87. The Prof Loss Statement with YTD was included in the packet dated January 1 - September 21, 2020.

- Gloria Miller made a motion to Approve Treasurer Report, second by Dave Baker, all in favor, motion carried.

**Restructure – Mission Statement & Approved By-Laws**

- New By-laws filed in Binders.
- Executive Board positions carried over since the March meeting was cancelled.
- A motion to elect Jay Cosgrove as President for a three-year term, ending December 2023, was made by Gloria Miller and second by Dave Baker, all in favor the motion carried.
- A motion was made to elect Doug Lentz as Vice President for a two-year term ending December 2022 by Mayor Broullon and second by Kim Slate, all in favor, motion carried.
- A motion was made to elect Kim Slate as Treasurer for a three-year term ending January 2023, by Carla Cefalo and second by Nikki Berzinskis, all in favor and the motion carried.
- Mayor Broullon made a motion to table the Secretary, Gloria second, all in favor and the motion carried.

**Executive Report:**

- Covid Resources including grant opportunities for NJ businesses monitored & distributed
- Covid Resources updated on website as needed.
- January 2020 BOD meeting was cancelled due to a medical emergency.
- March Annual Meeting was cancelled due to Covid 19 Pandemic
- May 28<sup>th</sup> – A Special Meeting was held at Seastreak Beach – Minutes on file.
- June 7<sup>th</sup> – A Special Meeting was at 12 Miller – Minutes on file
- June Meeting was cancelled due to Covid 19 Pandemic.
- St. Pat' Parade, Seaport Craft, Clam Fest, Twin Lights Ride and Oktoberfest have all been cancelled. Taste of Highlands was moved from June to July 25<sup>th</sup>. We sold approximately 220 tickets for a total income of \$9930. The total expenses were \$1,196. Proceeds were substantially lower than prior years however good in light of the pandemic. We had a contact tracing form and people were very comfortable. All businesses did a great job maintaining the guidelines. Thanks to Valley Bank for sponsoring the Taste of Highlands Masks. We were also able to put them in for reimbursement for the CARES Act grant. We are planning a second Taste for October 17<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to all of those who participated.

- The Farmers Market - We used the Rutgers Farmers Market Manual to maintain State guidelines. Thank you to all of those that support the market. Jen Perkel has done a great job serving as our Farmers Market Manager.

### **Special Charitable Programs due to Pandemic:**

- Mayor Broullon expressed a need at the local food pantries. We created the Curbside Kindness Program in April to raise food for the local foodbanks. Bins were placed at local businesses and restaurants for people to leave food. Bin Manager Volunteers picked up the food weekly and brought it to OLPH & AH Methodist Church from April to present. Special thanks to the bin managers who volunteer to make this happen.

### **Mayor's Report: Carolyn Broullon**

- Mayor Broullon explained the background of Borough's audit of HBP and how it came about. The administrator, Kim Gonzales reported that since the sunset of HBP, an audit was required to close the books and former Mayor O'Neil said it was necessary for our assets. Ms. Gonzales demanded all of HBP's records. Mayor Broullon also spoke with DCA to confirm that if the HBP retains our 501C3 corporation, that our assets belong to us, and only if we were to disband our non-profit corporation, then we would have to donate or divide our assets, therefore no audit was necessary. Mayor Broullon instructed the auditor that they are not to share our records with anyone at the borough including her. They were solely for the purpose to perform the audit.
- Carla added that she also checked with the Borough's CFO, and that he said the audit was not mandatory or necessary for the Borough to close their books. However, since Ms. Gonzales went as far as telling this falsehood to the Two River Times, the Board wanted to have the HBP's name cleared and asked the Mayor to go through with the audit, since a resolution was already passed for the Borough to pay for it.
- Kim Slate, Treasurer stated that the Borough's Auditor came to the office and met with Jay, Carla and Kim Slate and conducted the audit in early September. He was going on vacation so we have not received the report yet. We will send to the Board, when available.
- Mayor Broullon informed the businesses about outdoor heater regulations and to get in touch with Dave Parker, Fire Official if they planned on installing them.
- Cliff Moore is no longer the Borough of Highlands, Economic Development Officer.

### **Highway Sign Update:**

- Doug Lentz asked Mayor Broullon to explain what the story was with the Highways sign, as he heard stories. Mayor Broullon explained the background of the Highway Sign as she knows it. Carla noticed the sign was down and pulled over with Ken to assess the situation. It supposedly blew down during the August windstorm. Carla phoned Mayor Broullon to advise the sign was down so she came up to the site. Carla phoned the sign company to advise what happened and they requested pictures prior to them coming to pick it up. The Chief happened to be driving by on the highway and Carla flagged him down. He told us to leave the sign there and let the sign company pick it up from the site as it was too large a piece to move without breaking further. When it came time for Sign-A-Lize to pick up the sign, it was gone. Carla phoned Mayor Broullon to ask where the sign went, Mayor contacted administrator, Kim Gonzales who told her the property owner contacted her to pick it up. The Mayor spoke with the property owner who confirmed that he did not know the sign was down or did not make such a request and that he learned about it when Kim Gonzales text him and told him and said the guys were in the neighborhood and they would pick it up. Mayor Broullon advised us that the sign was in the Borough yard. Jay text with Kim Gonzales to have the sign delivered to Moby's so the sign company can pick it up there. Kim Gonzales told Jay that HBP already picked up the sign which was false. Carla also emailed Kim Gonzales and asked who picked up the sign? There was no reply and we tried to get our sign back for a couple of weeks. Mayor Broullon had a picture of the sign leaning up against the fence in the borough yard. Jay decided to send someone with a truck to pick up the sign. It was no longer in the borough yard. It was crushed in tiny pieces in the garbage truck. Carla filed a police report as DPW went on private property, took private property and brought it to the Borough property and then later destroyed it. The Chief contacted the Prosecutors Office after the police report and investigation and it was determined that restitution should be made. Doug Lentz asked if this was prosecutable and that he thought they should be responsible for full replacement. Everyone agreed that they should pay for the replacement. Carla explained that the sign was installed in 2008 for a total HBP investment of \$ 19,500. The gold Twin Lights was a valuable piece and was still intact for the repair.
- Leo expressed concern that we are being targeting by certain council people and paid professionals. He expressed great concern and said that something must be done. He asked if we needed to take action for the sign. Carla made

a motion to petition the borough for total replacement cost of the Highway Welcome sign, second by Leo Cervantes, all in favor and the motion carried.

- Mayor Broullon noticed that another HBP sign was stolen from Veterans Park on the Memoria Sign during her walk to Bahrs to meet with Jay. Carla had added that to the report but we did not have the date/time etc.

#### **Visual Improvement Update:**

- Nancy gave an overview of the street planters and how the Borough made a commitment to water the spring/summer flowers and it did not happen. They drive around with our watering tank but said they did not have time to do it after Council President Ryan made the commitment to In the Garden. Nancy suggested an Adopt-A Planter program for others to commit to watering. Doug expressed that residents do not know that HBP does so much for the community. Mayor Broullon stated that there are many new residents in town and they have no idea. Doug Lentz & Nancy Burton suggested a stencil "Courtesy of HBP" or something like that be put on the planters and other improvements. We will look into getting something made.
- We discussed selling the Christmas Tree again since it is too costly to have the company install and store it as we discussed in the past. Geoffrey Pierini said that he has the equipment, crew and storage to put it up and take it down and he would be happy to help if he is a business in town. We will send an email to Kim Gonzales to get permission if he is still willing in November.
- HBP owns the decorations that go on the Bay Avenue lampposts. In the past, Eileen and Nancy, In the Garden have installed them as part of their Barter Contract. Nancy said that they will not be putting them up. Jay would like the planters to look full for the Holidays. Nancy said they should be approximately \$1,000 for Holiday Planters. HBP will proceed with the Holiday Planters.

#### **New Business:**

- Geoffrey Pierini gave an overview of the problems he is having with the Administration at Captain's Cove Marina. He explained some of the improprieties found in 1700 pages of emails that he discovered in OPRA requests. Mainly, that Kim Gonzales was lobbying Trenton with a developer to fill in the marina. There was a great deal of discussion amongst the businesses about these ongoing problems.

#### **Old Business:**

- Doug Lentz questioned the process for the easement that just failed at the last Council Meeting for the end of Cornwall. Mayor Broullon explained that this request was made 30 years ago by Inlet Café and was approved unanimously but the Clerk at that time never filed the paper with the County. Inlet has maintained the property there since and Doug stated he has received summonses for doing so. Recently, Inlet & Proving Ground asked for the easement again as they jointly maintain the area. There was substantial investment made by the Borough, Inlet & Proving Ground to proceed with the process for the easement and three Council Member voted no. Doug stated that Kim Gonzales told him three years ago, she can get it done in one meeting. Doug was inquiring as to what can be done and Mayor Broullon will reach out to him separately as some members have to leave the meeting.

Jay Cosgrove made a motion to adjourn at 6:19 PM, second by Dave Baker, all in favor, meeting adjourned at 6:20PM

Submitted by Carla Cefalo