

**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 – June 26, 2013**

HBP President, Carla Cefalo Braswell, called the June 26, 2013, public session of the Board of Directors to order at 7:31pm. The meeting was held at Off the Hook, 1 Navesink Ave., Highlands, NJ. HBP President, Carla Cefalo-Braswell read the meeting notice. There was a quorum with the following in attendance.

Meeting Attendance: P = Present	A = Absent	
		Kevin Redmond – Planning Liaison – A
Ara Jamgochian – P		Larry Colby - P
Carla Cefalo-Braswell – P		Leo Cervantes – A
Douglas Lentz – A		AJ Solomon - A
Jay Cosgrove – A		Nancy Burton – P
James Filip - P		Rebecca Kane (Council Liaison) – P
William Weber - A		Rafaella Lee – P

Also in attendance were Stacie Mesuda, Hurricane Sandy Liaison, NJ Governors Office, Rachel Stockton, Rick Korn, Joe Burke and Sarah Thoma.

A motion was made by Ara Jamgochian to approve the minutes of the March 2013 Annual Meeting and second by Rebecca Kane. All were in favor and the motion carried.

The Treasurer's report and Profit and Loss was presented. In the Valley National Bank regular account there is a balance of \$9,975.36, less outstanding checks of \$4,348.97, with a balance of \$5,626.39. The voucher has been submitted for the next installment of \$12,500.00 from our assessment dollars. A profit and loss statement was presented.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS – Cefalo-Braswell, Cosgrove, Lee, Weber.

Adopt-A-Bench Program Update – Diane Keaveny Nine benches were ordered and received 3 weeks before Hurricane Sandy hit. They were assembled but thankfully did not get placed and were safe in the DPW facility. They were placed in their requested locations two weeks ago, 1 in Gertrude Ederle Park, 5 in Veterans Park and 3 in Huddy Park. Two of the benches placed in Huddy Park were moved in the gazebo and were vandalized with graffiti immediately. A police report has been filed. We have new orders for benches but will wait till we receive a few more before placing the order.

HBP Audit – Rafaella Lee and Carla Cefalo met with The Curchin Group auditor and everything was in very good order considering all records were lost due to the hurricane. They also reviewed how the Hope For Highlands account was handled. An extension was filed, due to the lost records. All of the journal entries were prepared for 2012 and we are waiting for the final audit to be submitted to the Department of Community Affairs with our Annual Report and to the CFO.

Hope for Highlands Update – Rachel Stockton Rachel furnished the HFH Treasury Report as follows; there is currently \$140,835.01 in the Hope for Highlands account. That does not include the remaining \$100,000.00 due to us from the Robin Hood Foundation. There are outstanding checks in the amount of \$2,065.00 and the balance is \$142,900.01. The online Pay Pal donations are \$11,026.00, which is not included in the total. There has been \$138,341.77 in Material Grants distributed to 145 residents and \$28,705.17 distributed to 31 businesses. Not all residents and businesses submitted receipts for \$1,000.00, thus amounts vary. Five non-profits, consisting of military, churches and schools received \$1,000.00 grants as well. There are currently 41 applications on the waiting list, of which one is a business, 3 are complete and approved and 37 have deficiencies.

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The committee has contacted the applicants to rectify. As of June 26th, 2013 all applicants are on a waiting list pending new donations.

Robin Hood Grant Update – Sarah Thoma In May Sarah met with 32 people at the World Renew Assessment Program at PTAK, 9 of which have applied for the Robin Hood Grant, with 1 denial. As of June there are 25 applicants with 3 denied because of income level. She has interviewed 3 contractors, and scopes of work have been done at 10 sites and are ready for bids. If a resident does not qualify for a grant she refers them to the Monmouth County Long Term Recovery Program. The Robin Hood Foundation arranged a mandatory site visit by Deloitte and Touche, an independent company that audits their programs for the funds they've given to non-profit organizations. They met with Diane Keaveny, Sarah Thoma and Borough Administrator Tim Hill for 5 hours, and were very impressed with the fact that we used the DCA guidelines for the housing rehab grants. There are 25 approved applications that are ready to start construction and it's imperative to get the flow of work started and to begin spending the grant money in order to receive the second installment or \$100,000.00. A financial report must be submitted before they release the second installment. Brian Boms is providing services to complete the scope of work for each home. We have a list of local contractors with valid licenses. Three contractors go to the home and each submits proposals to the homeowner. The homeowner picks the contractor and contract is drawn up between the contractor and the homeowner.

Sandy Ground Project Update – Joe Burke from the NJFMBA The Highlands Sandy Ground Project Playground will be dedicated to Daniel Barden. There is \$19,000.00 earmarked for the Highlands playground, \$10,000.00 donated by the HBP, \$6,500.00 donated by Save the Jersey Shore, \$2,500.00 donated by Little Johns Construction here in Highlands and \$1,500.00 donated by the Rumson St. Patrick's Parade. A portion of the proceeds of Taste of Highlands will be donated as well. Nancy Burton added that the school where her sister works is donating \$1,000.00 to be earmarked for the Highlands playground. Larry Colby offered to house the Barden family when the playground dedication takes place.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS – Cefalo/Cosgrove

HBP has applied for the NJ Travel & Tourism Grant for \$25,000.00 to be used for marketing and advertising. The announcement will be made in October 2013.

Stronger than the Storm - We are promoting all events and photos on Facebook with the Stronger Than the Storm hash tag #STTS. By adding this hash tag to our posts on Facebook links it directly to the Stronger Than the Storm website. It can also be used on Twitter and Instagram.

Ribbon Cuttings - We continue to have ribbon cutting ceremonies as businesses open or reopen. Most all of the businesses opened have had a ceremony. Rick Korn has been interviewing businesses that have reopened and is in the process of writing an article that will be used for the Ribbon Cuttings on the web.

Monmouth County Tourism Council – Carla Cefalo serves on the Monmouth County Tourism Council. Each town has a representative to promote their community on a county level. HBP remains active in serving as a partner with the County Tourism office. We have an opportunity to report on all activities and programs.

Social Media – The Highlands Business Partnership attempts to make posts daily and if there are any businesses that would like us to share anything on our page please email us the information or link you would like us to share. We ask that the businesses please share our page as well to increase our likes. A marketing investment will be made to increase awareness to our page.

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EVENTS COMMITTEE – Cefalo/Cosgrove

Craft Show & Taste of Highlands Wrap-Up – The show took place on May 26th. Our vendor attendance was down slightly from last year; we had 25 vendors this year as compared to 30 in 2012. All craft vendors had handmade items. We received excellent feedback from the vendors who will definitely return next year.

Taste of Highlands tickets sales were down this year. The restaurants did not sell as many as they did in 2012. The PBA sold 21 tickets. There was press coverage in the Two River Times, Asbury Park Press, NJ.com, and the Star Ledger. They covered the event during and featured a story afterwards as well. We advertised in the APP datebook and the free event listing area, as well as the Patch, Eventful, NJ Tourism website, Monmouth County Website and the Jersey Shore Convention and Visitors website and blog. An event page was created on Facebook, and Windansea and the Inlet Café both eblasted the event.

Clamfest Review – Clamfest will take place Aug 1-4th. The entertainment is booked and all the equipment and services have been reserved. Raffle applications and the Social Affairs permit have been prepared and submitted to the Borough. Campy's Amusements will be returning this year; they were hesitant to come back as they lost money at last year's event due to the heat the duration of the event and rain on the last day. We have a request from the Better Show to attend and cover the event. They would like to do a segment with a local restaurant that is participating as a vendor.

ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY DEVELOPEMENT – Liaisons - Rick Korn

Update – ED Status Report – Rick Korn – HBP has recommended the DBIZ program for the flood mitigation plan that will solve the common bi-monthly flooding here in Highlands. The Borough is applying for \$500,000.00 at 0% interest for 15 years. Highlands is still waiting to hear from FEMA regarding 4 million dollars, which is the total cost of the flooding and drainage mitigation plan. A meeting was held with Congressman Pallone as to our status for the funding. He also wrote a letter supporting our D Biz loan application.

HBP has recommended the Transit Village Program to the Mayor & Council. This would be the first ferry based transit village in NJ. This would make Highlands eligible for more state and federal dollars we desperately need. We will be meeting with the NJDOT on Aug. 2 for a pre-application meeting.

Rick stated that he is working on several grants and would like to focus on getting the boardwalk replaced. He is in the process of planning a benefit concert that will benefit the boardwalk, playground and first aid squad. He would like the local restaurants to sell food with a portion of proceeds donated to Hope for Highlands.

Rick has been working with Interstate Hotels; they are interested in building a hotel in the Seastreak parking lot. This would be a joint venture between Seastreak and Interstate Hotels, which is the world's largest hotel management and Development Company.

Dan Klores Communications is still helping with public relations.

Upcoming Projects – Council Members Rebecca Kane – Rebecca began by saying the Council supports every endeavor that the HBP is working on. It is very important to move forward with the flood mitigation plan, to keep the streets clean and dry to attract new businesses and to protect the existing businesses and residents. Council is working diligently to determine what the next step is in regards to rebuilding new municipal facilities. They are waiting to get news from FEMA and also what will be available to them from the state.

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The Fire Department would like to host the 9/11 Ceremony at Veterans Park this year. Carla Cefalo commended Councilwoman Kane's efforts in supporting the flood mitigation plan.

The Solution Center will be closed as of July 22nd. The Borough has applied for a 2nd grant to fund the hiring of employees to help the Construction and Engineering office with paperwork and getting permits processed.

The Distribution Center is also going to be phased out in the near future. The Borough has advertised to hire property maintenance employee and have received 25 resumes.

VISUAL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE - Nancy Burton

Miller Hill Phase III - Nancy Burton did not have a report for the Miller Hill Phase III project at this time. Larry Colby asked if the mural on Miller Hill would be completed. Nancy said that Sandy impacted the artist's home and business and it has been very overwhelming for so many of us. Nancy was not sure she of the status of the mural project as the artist was still in the process of getting her house repaired but would speak with her. Larry Colby suggested forming a committee and partnering with the Highlands Historical Society to complete the project and find an artist to paint a mural using historic postcards as a theme. Larry offered to help fund the paint.

Bay Avenue Maintenance Program Update – Carla – The Bay Avenue Maintenance Program has resumed with Frank Rahm Landscaping and will run through the end of October. The program started late as we were waiting on the street sweeper issue to be resolved. Rebecca Kane added that they are in the process of getting prices from the County for a new street sweeper and also included a sweeper in their bid the County Improvement Program.

Wayfinding Sign Update – Diane - The Wayfinding signs that were damaged by the Hurricane have been replaced. We replaced 57 signs at \$3,250.00 and a discounted installation fee of \$800.00.

OLD BUSINESS

9/11 Memoria Sponsor Sign – A new Memoria Project sign will installed in the fall, donated by Sign-A-Lize in South Amboy.

Water leak Repaired – Waterwitch Ave. – The water leak on Waterwitch Ave. has been repaired, and the dirt pile on the Borough lot next to Valley National Bank has been removed.

NEW BUSINESS

Girls Café- We would like to welcome Girl's Café, formerly Laura's Pancakes. We had a ribbon cutting for them and we are very glad to have them back in town.

Special Presentation – Resources for Businesses – Stacie Mesuda – Stacie Mesuda, Hurricane Sandy liaison from the NJ Governors Office was present to talk about the States Business Grant Program. The state has not received many grant applications from businesses and they would like to spread the word to our businesses. She offered to reach out to our businesses and give them one-on-one assistance to get applications submitted.

The applications are lengthy and she wants our businesses to be aware that a business manager is assigned to each applicant to help them through the process. Stacie suggested that interns from the state could come and meet with business owners to get them started in the process. Carla Cefalo suggested that we could coordinate appointments on a Monday for businesses to meet with the advocates.

A motion was made to close the public portion at 9:19 by Larry Colby and second by Jim Filip. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 9:19 PM.

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Submitted By Diane Keaveny