

**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 20, 2016**

HBP President, Carla Cefalo Braswell, called the HBP regular public session of the Board of Directors to order at 7:32PM and read the public meeting notice. Roll call was taken with a quorum of 7 members being present.

Meeting Attendance: P = Present	A = Absent	
Carla Cefalo-Braswell - P		Jeanne DeYoung - P
Jay Cosgrove - A		Staci Gilchrist - A
Rafaella Lee - P		Ara Jamgochian - A
Kim Slate - A		Doug Lentz - A
Jack Bevins- A		Garrett Newcomb - A
Nancy Burton - P		Rosemary Ryan- P
Leo Cervantes - P		Carolyn Broullon (Council Liaison) - P
Larry Colby - A		Andrew Stockton – Planning Liaison - A

Also in attendance were Gert Sofman, Gert's Snacks & Spices, Nikki Berzinskis, Valley National Bank, Christian Lee, Beach House and Bill Iler, property owner.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Broullon to accept the minutes of the March 21, 2016 Annual meeting, and second by Carla Cefalo Braswell and Nancy Burton abstained. All were in favor and the motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer's report was presented. There is \$11,725.87 in the Valley National Bank checking account, less outstanding checks of \$4,198.88, leaving a balance of \$7,526.99. The Valley National Hope for Highlands account has a balance of \$25,902.04, less outstanding checks of \$32.10, leaving a balance of \$25,869.94. Rosemary Ryan made a motion to accept the HBP and HFH Treasurer's Reports. Second by Carla Cefalo Braswell, all were in favor, none were opposed and the motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee

2015 Audit was emailed to the board and filed with Highlands CFO and the Commissioner, Department of Community Affairs.

Marketing & Communications

NJ Travel & Tourism Grant – A grant application was submitted in Sage on May 16th. We applied for \$25,000 for Event calendar expansion and destination marketing. We will have an answer sometime in September or October.

Jeanne De Young gave a report on marketing and communications. To date, Monmouth County Tourism has placed ads in the State Travel Guide, Visit Monmouth Travel Guide, Great Vacation Getaways, which is an advertising campaign where we place ads, both digitally and in print, as far north at Toronto, west to Ohio and south to the Carolinas. The print ads ran on April 10th in all the newspapers, and we are reaping the benefits on all of the ads. To date Monmouth County Tourism has sent out over 4,825 packages of information on Monmouth County, which includes the Visit Monmouth Travel Guide. They get between 325 and 800 requests per week for information on Monmouth County. The County Tourism office has done 6 travel shows, NYC Boat Show, NJ RV Show, Montreal Hunting, Fishing & Camping Show, Great Outdoor Show in Harrisburg, the Philadelphia Flower Show, and

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the Pennsylvanian All-Outdoors Show in Oaks, PA. Monmouth County Tourism has had a presence at a number of festivals, where they have distributed information. Belmar Seafood Festival, Riverfest in Red Bank, Ocean Fest in Long Branch, Lobster Fest in Bradley Beach, Monmouth County Fair, The Haskell at Monmouth Park Race Track, Ocean Township Italian Festival and the Open Space Pace at Freehold Raceway. The Monmouth County Tourism website is undergoing a complete overhaul. There will an expansion for information and will be hopefully up and running by the end of the year.

Cayman Islands Sponsorship – Councilwoman D'Arrigo introduced Carla to the Cayman Islands Tourism representative Veronica Torra and we worked with her to sell a HBP Sponsorship package in exchange for an amazing trip for 9 days and 8 nights to the Cayman Islands. It includes airfare, hotel, transfer fees and attractions. It is the Explorers raffle that we sponsor annually. It is currently on sale and will be pulled by the sponsor on the last night of Clamfest. HBP will be working with the Cayman Island tourism office in NYC for an adopt-a-city program by which we promote each other. Details will follow as we progress.

New Business – Welcome Younique Yoga – A ribbon cutting/welcome ceremony was held on June 4th.

Events

Seaport Craft Show Wrap-Up– We had 53 vendors and after expenses our total income was \$3,031.00. We had phenomenal weather and Chris Morissy played acoustic music in the gazebo. Waterwitch Ave. was bustling with business.

Taste of Highlands Review – Taste of Highlands takes place this Saturday, June 25th. Tickets are on sale at all 19 participating establishments and online, we have 25 pre-registered. There will be 2 party limo buses available to shuttle the ticket holders to our restaurants. There will be a free beach concert on the Seastreak beach from 4-9PM, featuring the Moroccan Shepherders. There is also a Parade of Lights boat parade taking place at 9PM, so it will be a busy day in Highlands. A food critic who will be attending the Taste of Highlands contacted Carla.

Farmers Market Review- The farmers market returns on June 25th, with some farmers who have participated 22 years. There will be other specialty vendors offering nuts and pickles, Italian specialties, hot sauce, baked goods, soaps and crafters with unique merchandise. The market will run until November 5th, weather permitting.

Clamfest Review – 22nd Anniversary – We have secured Brian Kirk for Thursday night. Bands are booked a year in advance and we always have a waiting list. The Moroccan Shepherder will perform on Friday night, and we have some new bands that will be joining us on the weekend. We will be working with town officials to pull it together and will report progress as needed. As always it is growing rapidly. We are always looking for volunteers. Pre-sale ride bracelets are available for \$20.00. During Clamfest they will be \$30.00 on Thursday and Sunday. Carla stated we would be meeting with Brian Geoghegan, the new Borough Administrator as soon as possible.

Car Show Review – A car show will be held on September 10th with a rain date of September 18th, 4-8PM. We have the Central New Jersey Classic Car Association/Park Slope Creations organizing the event. This includes set-up and running the show, DJ/MC, registration, parking and advertisement. This will take place in the area surrounding Huddy Park and in the Skate Park lot.

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Economic/Community Development

Veterans Park Boardwalk Update - All work is completed with the exception of screwing down the boards in a certain manner so that we do not void the warranty. We need to schedule a few contractor/experienced volunteers to work with TriBar if anyone is interested, please call or email the office.

EDA Streetscape Project Update - Phase I is in final stages of completion. Phase II for the gap areas are out to bid and the contract should be awarded by July 20th. Carla asked Councilwoman Broullon if the bid would go to the same company and would they start immediately after Phase I is complete. Councilwoman Broullon said it would likely be the same company and that they would probably be able to start right away, unless they are backed up. Carla requested a stakeholders meeting, once the bid is awarded, to go over the project timeline.

VISUAL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

Wayfinding Signage – The signs were completed, however, six signs were stolen from the location under the bridge. We have filed a police report and are working on replacing them.

Miller Hill Mural – Mural project is near completion. Jim Kovic is working on the last section.

OLD BUSINESS

Abandoned Properties Ordinance and Progress Update – Councilwoman Broullon gave a report on the abandoned properties in town. Dave Mercado has been working with many absentee landlords and bank-owned properties. These efforts combined with having a more pro-active judge levying fines, has been effective in enhancing compliance. Councilwoman Broullan said they have done a lot with the DCA grant to get rid of properties, such as the one at Bay and Waterwitch and a couple of houses on Seadrift Ave. There is another grant that will enable them to get 6 more properties down.

NEW BUSINESS

Sandy Hook Bay Marina Ribbon Cutting – 165 Bay Ave. will be held on June 26th at 11:30AM.

Barks on Bay Ribbon Cutting – Bay Ave. will be held on July 24th at noon. We hope to see some members present to welcome them.

At this time Carla Cefalo asked if there were any comments from the public. Bill Iler, property owner, wanted to discuss curb cuts on a lot that is located on the corner of Miller and Bay. He has since sold the lot, but when he had got a notice that the curb-cut that was not approved by the county, he got it from the town along with 4 other citations, including lack of plans for his building. He wanted make it known that he had plans for his buildings, which are somehow missing from the towns files. When he got the citation for the curb-cuts on Miller and Bay that were not approved by the county, he also got one for the garage at his property, at 165 Bay Ave., and he pointed out the building official that he did not install those curb-cuts, but that they were in fact installed by the Streetscape program. He also pointed out that there were a number of other curb-cuts that were put in by the Streetscape program, most were in front houses that were raised that now have garages and driveways, and also one by the American Legion. He was told by Dale Leubner that if he thought there were others that have illegal curb-cuts to let him know and they will be given citations as well. Bill stated he filed an OPRA request for 8 addresses and discovered that not only did they not have county approval for curb-cuts, that some didn't have them on their building plans.

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He asked if we could please put on record that if we are going to discuss the property of the Miller and Bay lot, that you should also go after the other 8 people have no approval as well. He gave an example of the building next to Fresh. Bill stated that that property had no approval for a curb cut, but did not come to the attention of Mr. Stockton. As a business owner, instead of having a discussion with Mr. Stockton, he was served citations, which in his opinion is not very business friendly. He wanted to point out that there is a Federal Class of Lawsuit called Unequal Protection. When a borough takes action against one property owner and fails to take the same action against similar property owners, it creates a type of discrimination called Unequal Protection, Class of One, which there is substantial case law on that, which he has had an attorney look into. Bill said they are nearing the point where the borough will have a lawsuit filed against them if this continues. He also added that in November Yonique Yoga was told they had to shut down because they did not have a Certificate of Occupancy. Bill stated that he had the certificate in his car, which the owner of the studio got and produced, but was told it was only a temporary certificate. The certificate had the permanent box checked.

He made a suggestion regarding the Streetscape decorative streetlights, he thought they were a wonderful addition but could we possibly get rid of the snake style streetlights where they are located. It would be cost effective and would look much nicer. Carla said we could inquire about the areas that have the decorative streetlights, however Phase II would be without the decorative lighting and the snake lights would have to remain there. Bill said that JCPL could be shut off for 90 days as a trial. Councilwoman Broullon suggested that Mr. Iler contact the Borough Administrator, Brian Geoghegan regarding all the topics he has mentioned. Carla asked if he would be kind enough to email her the locations where he thought the snake lights could be removed.

HBP had a memorial ceremony in honor of Tara Ryan on May 21st. Tara was a loyal HBP volunteer since 2001. She was seen at all of our events working hard. We purchased two benches in her honor and two Lil Free Libraries one of which was donated by the company along with her name plaques. One is located in Veterans Park and the other is in front of the Community Center entrance. Henry Moyer and Nick DiBari, owners of Off the Hook donated a wonderful luncheon and former Councilman Kevin Redmond picked up the bar tab. We would like to acknowledge Councilwoman Broullon, Donica Basinger, Barbara Iannucci and Councilman Doug Card for assisting with the assembly, aesthetics and installation. Nina Flannery has volunteered to serve as the designated library steward and will maintain and replenish the libraries. Thank you to all. Tara's husband Joe, her family and friends attended the ceremony and luncheon. Ken Braswell donated and formatted hundreds of photos of Tara from over the years and placed them in a high-resolution digital picture frame as a gift to her husband Joe. It was truly a memorable occasion.

A motion was made to adjourn at 8:42PM by Councilwoman Broullon, second by Jeanne DeYoung; all were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 8:42PM.

Submitted by Diane Gunter