



Downtown Westfield Corporation
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2022

Present:

- Patricia Hanigan, Chair
- Dawn Mackey, ex officio
- Jim Donofrio
- Jerry Eicke
- Lew Kimble
- Roberta Loew
- Michael LaPlace
- Scott Katz, Council Liaison
- Anthony Di Tomasso
- Lillian Pien
- Burim Regjaj – NEW (Business Owner)
- Amy Fixler NEW (Property Owner)
- Peg Lockwood, Design Committee
- Erin Ben-Hayon, Promotions Chair
- Steven Rinn, Economic Vitality Chair

Absent:

- Bob Conway

Also Present:

- Mayor Shelley Brindle - Mayor
- Craig Gibson, DPW, ex officio
- Bob Zuckerman - DWC
- Beth Brenner – DWC
- Gene Janotti, GWACC

Public:

- Katie – The Leader
- Matt Kadosh – The Patch

Chair's Report

- Roll call

Secretary's Report: N/A

- Approval of minutes from November 17, 2021 by board unanimously

Chair Highlighted 2021 Accomplishments:

- 13 new businesses
- 11 ribbon cuttings
- Conducted town's 1st job fair in partnership with GWACC
- Hired new social media company to assist in driving promotion downtown
- Introduced new gift card to support small businesses
- Brought light-up seesaws to downtown as part of a temporary installation

- Re-launched the downtown holiday center and hosted several events

Financial Report – Lew Kimble

- November & December 2021 Report
 - Budget wise looks good and expenses are consistent
 - Maintained healthy financial status
 - Expenses consistent with focus on holiday
 - Spent \$434K against \$463K
 - Surplus will be carried into 2022 and earmarked for projects that could not be completed due to supply-chain issues
 - Motion passes to approve financials

2021 meeting adjourned with close out including 2021 board members

2022 Nomination of new board member officers

- Patricia Hanigan: Chair
- Lew Kimble: Vice Chair
- Jim Donofrio: Secretary
- Anthony Di Tommaso: Treasurer
- **Board voted and approved DWC board member officers**
- Councilman Scott Katz to join board as council liaison
- Councilwoman Dawn Mackey will serve as ex officio member

Round table introduction of DWC members, committee heads, business owners, etc. to each other

- Members delivered short bio and background
- Recognized high levels of talent and experience

Review of 2022 calendar

- Motion to approve meeting calendar
- Approved unanimously

Executive Director's Report – Bob Zuckerman

- Brokers Meeting
 - Planning to host informational session in March for commercial brokers from around the state to bring industry up to speed on Westfield's growth strategy
 - This is a result of meeting with Newmark Associates (Morris County)
 - Hearing negative feedback and perception from commercial brokers that "Westfield not ready yet." Key factors include commercial broker rates and respective commissions, parking solution and challenges with landlords at existing open commercial space
 - Goal of session to educate commercial brokers on current and long-term benefits of Westfield
- Zoning Update
 - Meeting completed to explore more uses throughout downtown
 - Next steps: reviewing current use in surrounding towns
 - Street Works will be assisting
- Main Street NJ Grant
 - New grant opportunity for funding (up to \$75K)
 - Needs to be completed within nine months of being granted

- Grant date: 2/11/22
- Motion passed to pursue grant submission around Rialto
- New Businesses/Vacancies
 - Closing:
 - Savory Spice closing end of January
 - Openings:
 - Surreal Creamery
 - Westfield Pharmacy
 - Green Room (CBD products)
 - Chutzpah Kitchen (Middle Eastern)

Design Committee Report – Peg Lockwood

- Activity on sign requests
- Snow cling-on being installed into vacant buildings
- Exploring new street pole banners

Promotions & Events –Erin Ben-Hayon

- Meeting completed to summarize 2021 events and discussed plans for 2022
- Upcoming meeting to focus on holiday 2022
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- Focus on the holidays
 - Tree lighting & 1st night of Hanukah
 - Ice carving sculptures
 - Caroling
 - TBD chorus group singing
 - Snap with Santa
 - Including sleigh with reindeer (1)
 - Miracle on Elm Street mailbox
 - Elf on the Shelf in different stores

Economic Vitality Committee Report – Steven Rinn

- MJB to be presenting at February meeting
- Street Works: collaborating and will be meeting on a monthly basis. SW to be Opening office downtown
- Beyond Main: continuing program in 2022. Will include new merchant education meetings
- Considering for 2022:
 - Business Employment Portal – help merchants with hiring
 - Downtown App – focused on visitors outside of Westfield

- **Mayor Report – ex Officio Councilwoman Dawn Mackey**
 - Hosted coffee kiosk ribbon cutting (Boxcar & Boxwoods)
 - Vision to provide multiple services for Westfield businesses

Liaison Reports

- **Councilman Katz**
 - **No report at this stage**
- DPW Supervisor Craig Gibson

- Public Library excited to add book pickup at South Station kiosk
- Replacing directional signage
- Adding town flags
- Municipal property cleanup
- Planter boxes being collected downtown
- GWACC Director Gene Janotti
 - Relocating town-wide Spring Fling; will be moving from East Broad to Central Ave including use of Post Office parking lot. Scheduled for May 1, 2022.

Public Comments

- No residents in attendance

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm for Executive Session.

Patricia Hanigan made motion to adjourn.

Next meeting – February 16, 2022

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Donofrio
Secretary