



**Downtown Westfield Corporation**  
**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
March 16, 2022

**Present:**

- Patricia Hanigan, Chair
- Lew Kimble
- Roberta Loew
- Michael LaPlace
- Scott Katz, Council Liaison
- Les Trent
- Anthony DiTommaso
- Lillian Pien
- Burim Regjaj
- Amy Fixler
- Peg Lockwood, Design Committee
- Steven Rinn, Economic Vitality Chair

**Absent:**

- Jim Donofrio
- Erin Ben-Hayon, Promotions Chair

**Also Present:**

- Dawn Mackey, Council – ex officio for Mayor Shelley Brindle
- Craig Gibson, DPW, ex officio
- Bob Zuckerman - DWC
- Beth Brenner – DWC

**Public:**

- Remy Samuels – Westfield Patch
- Matt Kadosh – TAP Westfield
- Katie Mohm – Westfield Leader

**Chair's Report**

- Roll call

**Secretary's Report:** n/a as Jim Donofrio did not attend meeting

- Approval of minutes from February 16, 2022 by board passed unanimously (Motion by Scott Katz, seconded by Amy Fixler)

**Financial Report – Anthony DiTommaso**

- February 2022 Report
  - Budget not yet finalized by the Town of Westfield
    - Scott Katz reported that the Town introduces budget on March 22 and finalizes on April 26, 2022
  - Highlighted monthly expenses. Noted brochure expense for broker's meeting and deposit for December Holiday Trolley
  - March Activation line item used for upcoming Downtown Westfield Women Business Owner's event at Selfie Station

- Approval of financials for February 2022 by board passed unanimously ( Motion by Lew Kimble, seconded by Roberta Loew)

**Executive Director's Report – Bob Zuckerman**

- Pizza Run Coming back and went through major changes of day, pizza coupons, and
  - Met with Robert Barwick who said to expect 500 runners because of COVID
  - Changed date to Monday because of business interference to businesses on Wednesday
  - Michael LaPlace asked why the Board did not meet to discuss even having the Race. He was surprised as he thought that was the plan
  - Patricia said it was the 20<sup>th</sup> race and we put down a deposit with the Race Director then canceled in 2020 because of COVID. Explained a few changes that were made in Race
  - Dawn interjected that 2020 Pizza Run planning was begun in 2019, we could not have it due to Covid and again last year, so we are having it now
  - Michael asked again if the DWC would not make a deposit to the Race Director for 2023 before having a Board discussion about the event benefit to the businesses. Patricia said whoever is on the Board can have that discussion and then make that decision.
- Downtown Parking
  - Some merchants and public questioning still having 15 minute parking downtown
  - A few spots will be kept on Prospect, one on Westfield Ave, 2 spots on E Broad and 8 spots on North side of Quimby
  - Return other spots downtown to 2 hour parking on around April 15 or so
  - We lose the loading zone in front of Ferraro's so will ask Town of Westfield for loading zone on opposite side of street
- Webinar on Plastic Bag Ban March 10
  - Similar to the webinar the Chamber had A month or so earlier
  - Guest from State of NJ will present at the webinar
  - Thanks to Nancy Albanese of Westfield Green Team for helping get the word out
- Zoning Update
  - Proactively exploring zoning changes to allow for greater number of uses downtown
  - Drafting ordinance with goal to be passed to allow for more permitted uses in time for the Summer
- Brokers Meeting Update
  - 25 commercial brokers attended
  - Presentations by Dawn Mackey and Richard Heapes
  - We gave brokers a brochure and list of vacancies
  - Les Trent asked if there was any discussion of why Westfield has trouble with vacancies compared to neighboring Towns
  - Bob explained about MJB working with Downtown Westfield
  - Dawn said Westfield is not doing badly compared to other downtowns and it is not unique to Westfield
  - Lew said MJB explained that vacancy rate is not higher than Summit but you cannot make apples to apples comparison
  - Michael asked if brokers mentioned any issues they had about Westfield even if it was just a perception
    - Brokers discussed the perception of a parking problem
    - Brokers are wondering what plans Streetworks has and how it will affect downtown Westfield

- Dawn discussed how misperception of people leaving Westfield in mass is incorrect
- South Ave Commuter Parking lot may change due to redevelopment and commuters returning to work.
- Main Street NJ Grant Update
  - We have not heard yet. Neither have any other towns.
- Social media promotion for women owned businesses. Giving away 4 \$250 Gift baskets
- Business Openings and Closings
  - Golden Bee Retiring
  - Evelyn Dunn Gallery opening annex in conjunction with Ricardo Roig Collection on South Ave W
  - Ribbon Cuttings on Saturday at Dentologen at 210 South Ave W and Westfield Pharmacy on Quimby
  - Next month there will be big news about new businesses downtown

**Design Committee Report – Peg Lockwood**

- Beginning work with vendor on vinyl flowers and banners
- Talked to vendor about PNC plaza tree lighting
- Meeting with several downtown business owners to change store front colors

**Promotions & Events – Bob Zuckerman**

- Spring Fling – business putting out tables if they want
- Girls’ Night Out is on Thursday, May 5 from 5 until 9pm
  - 2 bands
- Sweet Sounds Downtown Music Festival

**Economic Vitality Committee Report – Steven Rinn**

- MJB Consulting in Stage 3
- New members of committee and some new ideas for MEET UPS for merchants
- Working on Downtown App that will help for real time parking
- Burim asked if there were any zoning problems with bringing in seasonal popups. The answer is no

**Mayor Report – ex Officio Councilwoman Dawn Mackey**

- Redevelopment talks are ongoing and there will be a public facing interaction coming by end of summer

**Liaison Reports**

- Councilman Scott Katz
  - Working on an ordinance designating certain outdoor areas to be able to have alcohol per the Governor’s Executive Order
  - 2022 Tour de Westfield is being planned
- DPW Supervisor Craig Gibson
  - April 15 is start date for parklets to be reinstalled
  - They will begin with the restaurant parklets then set up Quimby St
  - It will take at least 2 weeks
- GWACC Director Gene Jannotti
  - March 23 Professional Women’s Event at Echo Lake
  - New Jersey Workshop for the Arts Grand Opening on March 23 at noon
  - May 1 - Spring Fling: approved and invitations sent to vendors
  - State Organization will provide some reusable bags to give out on May 1

**Public Comments**

- No residents in attendance

Patricia Hanigan made motion to adjourn

Next meeting – April 20, 2022 at 7:30 pm