



DOWNTOWN ALBANY
Business Improvement District

**Downtown Albany Business Improvement District
Board of Directors' Meeting
June 16, 2021
Zoom**

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Georgette Steffens
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Daniel Fariello
PRESIDENT

Frank O'Connor, III
VICE-PRESIDENT

Elizabeth Young Jojo
TREASURER

David Sarraf
SECRETARY

ATTENDANCE:
Daniel Fariello
Frank O'Connor, III
Elizabeth Young Jojo
David Sarraf
Riley Ackley
Leola Edelin
Lisa Reddy Farrell
Lena Hart
Angelo Maddox
Tracy Metzger
Hon. Darius Shahinfar
Frank Zeoli

ABSENT:
Mohamed Hemmid
Pamela Nichols
Chris Pratt
Lucas Rogers
Tyler Wrightson

STAFF PRESENT:
Georgette Steffens
Kate Medhus
Rebecca Hughes
Jason Bonafide
Don Wilson

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES:
Steve Flynn, Placer.ai

The meeting was called to order by Board President Daniel Fariello at 3:04 PM.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Fariello noted that earlier today Ms. Medhus sent out a link to Dropbox with the complete Board packet documents included in it. This will be how the staff will provide Board meeting materials moving forward. Board members will be able to access the most current meeting documentation all in one place instead of having to search through potentially multiple emails and attachments. The thought is that, like the Consent Agenda, this will be a more efficient way to run the Board meeting. In Dropbox you will find the Consent Agenda packet, as well as a draft Consent Agenda policy for the Board to review. Ms. Steffens will review the policy with the Board. Any suggested changes will be discussed, and a motion will be called for in order to approve the agenda.

Ms. Steffens outlined what the Consent Agenda will include:

- The majority of items included in the Consent Agenda will be ones that don't require a vote.
- They will be mostly updates that don't necessarily need to be covered in the meeting, but that are good for the Board to be informed about (i.e. Committee updates, Committee reports, new businesses that have opened, etc.).
- The Consent Agenda will be sent out no less than 4 days prior to the Board meeting, (by Friday before the meeting), so that the Board has time to review all the documents before the meeting.
- If there are any questions or concerns about the contents of the Consent Agenda, Board members can send those to either Ms. Steffens or the Board President in advance or bring them up in the Board meeting before approval of the Agenda so they can be removed from the Consent Agenda and discussed at the Board meeting.

Mr. Fariello called for a motion to approve the use of the Consent Agenda going forward | Ms. Metzger motions | Mr. Maddox seconds | All approve.

Mr. Fariello called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda for this month | Ms. Farrell motions | Mr. Shahinfar seconds | All approve.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Financial Requests

Ms. Jojo noted that Staff had received several responses to an RFP for a demographic study right before COVID hit. Staff put that on hold to address the immediate needs of our Stakeholders and would now like to bring that initiative back to the forefront, but with a slightly new direction.

Ms. Steffens added that Staff wants to understand who is Downtown when and what their buying power is, as well as continue to attract new retail, residential, activity, etc. into Downtown. In lieu of a demographic study, cell phone data can be used to track activity and economic impact. Placer.ai is a software used by other BIDs to collect such data. They have the ability to geofence an area or an event and can obtain data on a smaller level – by property, street or area, not just by zip code or county like the majority of the original proposals we received. Real time data, (from within 3 days), is collected and broken down by the software. Ms. Steffens introduced Steve Flynn from Placer.ai to present the details about their software.

Mr. Flynn explained the concept and functionality of Placer.ai:

- It's a mobile location and analytics location company that can manage mobile location data.
- The data is anonymized and grouped according to the client's preference.
- We can learn about any physical place in the country. Events, public venues, parks, etc. can all be geofenced and reported on.
- The data can show us the economic impact of an event as well as the people who come in and out of a place, what businesses they frequent, their demographics, their lifestyles, where they like to shop, their preferences for retail, their spending patterns, and the workforce data such as salaries being paid, or rents being paid.
- This data helps demonstrate the value of public events and drive economic development.
- The data can go back as early as January 1, 2017 and can be as recent as 3 days prior to today.
- Reports can be filtered to display whatever specific data you want to see at whatever level you are interested in.

After a brief discussion on the Placer.ai software, Mr. Flynn left the meeting at 3:42 PM.

Ms. Steffens added that Staff will be doing a demo with another company tomorrow and will get a second price quote from them. Placer.ai quoted us \$14,500 for a one-year subscription. The demographic study we looked at previously would cost between \$18,000 and \$25,000 so the software is less expensive and more precise. It is something we could look at having every other year or every three years as opposed to every year. Staff is asking the Board to approve the cost of \$14,500 for a one-year subscription with Placer.ai and if the second company has comparable services at a better price, Staff will choose them.

Mr. Fariello calls for a motion to approve the purchase of mobile analytics and location data at a cost not to exceed \$14,500 | Ms. Jojo motions | Ms. Hart seconds | All approve.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Split the Bill NY

Ms. Steffens noted that Staff would like to run a second round of the Split the Bill NY program:

- Albany had the second highest numbers in both the number of restaurants who participated and in the amount of money spent.
- We reimbursed about \$23,000 and about \$64,000 was spent by customers.
- The restaurants who did the best were the ones who offered both lunch and dinner.
- Cobblestone said it was the best day they've had since they opened.

- dp and Yono's said it was the best weeknight dinner service they've ever had.
- Wizard Burger sold out from pre-orders and hour before they even opened for the day.
- The biggest challenge is that businesses may not have enough staff to be able to handle all of the customers.
- The BID paid \$6,000 to the Sidgmore Family Foundation to administer the program.
- \$62,500 was raised and \$29,000 was spent so there is \$33,500 remaining for another round.
- We're looking at July 28th as a potential date for the second round.
- If the cost of reimbursement goes over the amount we have remaining, the BID will need to cover any additional expenses. Staff is asking for up to \$5,000 to cover any additional expenses that may arise.

Mr. Fariello calls for a motion to approve up to \$5,000 for a second round of Split the Bill NY | Ms. Edelin motions | Ms. Metzger seconds | Mr. O'Connor abstains | All others approve.

Downtown Albany Gift Card

Ms. Steffens gave an update on the Downtown Albany Gift Card program:

- Staff has run two different rounds of the bonus gift card program. Both times the BID put in \$20,000 to be used on the Buy One, Get One bonus dollars promotion. In the second round we only allowed 1 bonus card per purchaser.
- The second round of bonus gift cards sold out in 15 days.
- As of June 9, 2021, over \$80,396 and 1,658 gift cards have been purchased. This includes bonus gift cards.
- 771 gift cards have been redeemed, infusing \$34,825 into the Downtown economy.
- 9 new participants signed up for the program before the second round of bonus dollars launched for a total of 44 participating businesses.
- The top redeemers of the gift cards are:
 - McGreevy ProLab at \$5,418
 - River Garden Studio at \$3,608
 - dp/Yono's at \$3,267
 - 677 Prime at \$2,497
 - The Hollow Bar + Kitchen at \$2,213

Other Business

Ms. Steffens noted that ten Seward Johnson bronze sculptures are being brought back to Downtown for September and October as our placemaking project for this year. There has been good feedback on them in the past and we are looking forward to putting them out again.

Ms. Steffens added that after our last meeting she sent the new website proposal to the entire Board and an official vote is needed for entering into a contract with Upside Collective for a new website at a price not to exceed \$35,800.

Mr. Fariello calls for a motion | Ms. Metzger motions | Mr. O'Connor seconds | All Approve.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Associate Membership

Mr. Fariello noted that a draft Associate Membership document was sent out with the Board packet last week. The Associate Membership would:

- allow for properties and businesses just outside the BID District to pay a membership fee to participate in many of the services the BID offers.

- It would not include Clean and Safe or Visual Improvements which are more difficult to provide outside of the District because the properties are not contiguous to the District. A full list of what would be included can be found in the document in the packet.
- In order to be eligible, a property or business owner would need to be located within an Associate Membership zone area. It's important to have the zone be BID adjacent for ease of providing services. A map of the outlined area is included in the document.

Ms. Steffens added that:

- The boundaries can be discussed and agreed upon.
- Associate Members would not have any voting rights. They would pay the full assessment value and be entitled to ribbon cuttings, marketing, events and promotions.
- Associate Members would not receive services such as the clean team, flowers, banners, decorations, or trash cans. We can discuss possibly charging them for those services if they are wanted.
- This could be a good start to see if expanding the BID boundaries makes sense for both the BID and the property owners within the Associate Membership Zones.

Staff is looking for feedback and input from the Board to finalize this offering so please send that to Ms. Steffens or Mr. O'Connor. Ms. Steffens will fine-tune the draft associate membership guidelines and have a new boundary map made.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Board Elections

Mr. O'Connor update the Board on the ongoing elections:

- One nomination was received for 3 open Class A Property Owner positions on the Board. The Governance Committee is recommending Neil McGreevy, owner of McGreevy ProLab and the two buildings the business is in on lower Broadway for one of the open Class A positions.
- If more Property Owners are identified throughout the year, the Board President can appoint them to the Board and then they would go up for election the next year to start their 3-year term.
- Three nominations were received for two Class B Commercial Tenant positions. The Governance Committee interviewed all three nominees and is recommending to place Ken Counterme, Senior Vice President at Community Bank and Leyla Kiosse for the Yard and Boozy Moo! on the ballot.
- The third Class B nominee had great energy and positivity so we will ask her to serve on our Welcome Back Committee that will be working on a party in the fall for daytime employees as well as to serve on the Good Life Committee. Ms. Steffens anticipates reconvening all of our committees in the fall.
- Staff will announce the nominations this evening in a Stakeholder e-mail. Anyone interested in petitioning to be added to the ballot must do so by June 25th.
- Elections will begin on June 29th.
- Results will be announced on July 19th.
- New members' terms will begin August 1st.

Mr. O'Connor calls for a motion to approve the Governance Committees recommendations for the election ballot | Ms. Jojo motions | Mr. Maddox seconds | All approve.

A brief discussion was held regarding the start time of our Board meetings and the Board agreed that 4:00 PM is a better start time going forward.

With no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 4:48PM.



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**Next Meeting
Tuesday, September 14, 2021 at 4:00 PM.
Zoom**