

Minutes of the
White Plains Downtown Management Association, Inc
(White Plains Business Improvement District)
Annual Meeting of the Membership

March 26, 2025, New York Power Authority, the Jaguar Room

Call to Order and Opening Remarks:

After networking, the meeting was called to order by Bonnie Silverman, Chairwoman of the Board of Directors, for the Downtown White Plains BID.

Mayor Thomas Roach and the newly appointed County Executive, Ken Jenkins, both welcomed the guests and provided a brief address as to the important role that downtown White Plains and the White Plains BID play. Justin Driscoll, CEO of New York Power Authority, also addressed the audience, welcoming them to the NYPA building and providing an overview of current New York Power Authority activities as well as reinforcing the agency's commitment to downtown White Plains, its corporate home base.

Presentation of the Finances:

Michael Traynor, the BID's Treasurer provided an overview of the finances, as follows:

- He reminded the membership that the BID's Fiscal Year runs from July 1 through June 30th and that the BID is audited annually by an external auditor, PFK O'Connor Davies, which completed the FY24 audit in December of 2024.
- The BID's audited financial statements are enclosed in the organization's annual report, which is available for download at wpbid.com in addition to being available at the Annual Meeting. (Jennifer Furioli can email a copy of the full financial statements with notes upon written request.) The BID's filed tax statements are also publicly available on guidestar.org.
- In FY2024 WPBID's new assessment of \$900,000 went through, the first assessment increase in five years, which was important as costs had risen considerably due to inflation and increased programming. Assessment dollars helped increase supplemental cleaning services downtown, as detailed in the Executive Director's report.

- The BID was also fortunate to raise more sponsorship dollars in FY24: raising \$354,610 in sponsorship funds. Much of the new sponsorship dollars were due to a new program the BID implemented, a summer-long concert series called Rock the Block.
- In total, the BID received 1,404,712 in revenue and had 1,298,146 in expenses. The surplus was larger than expected because the BID had budgeted for expanded sanitation hours that did not begin immediately as planned, but are now in full force. The surplus will be invested into the district in the immediate coming years.
- Further good news: The auditors noted that the BID has adequate liquidity and available financial assets to meet future obligations and once again the ratio of programming to administration is positive and shows that most money expended by the BID is spent on programming.

Membership Elections:

Next Bonnie Silverman, Chairwoman of the Board reviewed the results of membership voting for the three classes elected to the Board of Directors, which represent the Association:

- Class A Ballots were sent to all Class A members to vote for the addition of, and/or renewal of, the terms of Jeannie Minskoff Grant, Minskoff Grant Realty and Management Corp.; Gina Ann Perriello, Nicjo Realty Company; Manny Polloni, Poloni and Weiss Realty, Inc.; Michael Kessner, K5 Equities. 15 of 18 Class A ballots were received, approving the appointment. There were no votes for any other Class A members.
- Class B: Ballots were sent to all Class B members to vote for the addition of, and/or renewal of the terms of Stuart Levine, Levino Wine Merchants, Michael Traynor of Webster Bank, Michael Calano of Calano & Culhane, Brian Mahon of Hudson Grille and Lilly's and Lauren Morris of Loola Doola Boutique. 33 of 57 Class B Ballots approved the appointment of the aforementioned members to the Board.
- Class C: Lauren Rones-Payne was up for Class C (Resident) membership. The BID staff tallied 2 of 2 Class C ballots approving the appointment.
- Quorum for all class categories was met.

Programmatic Report by Staff:

Jennifer Furioli, Executive Director of the BID shared a programmatic overview for the last year:

- The BID issued a competitive RFP for a new supplemental sanitation provider, and selected StreetPlus, LLC, a company specifically specializing in cleaning downtown

business districts, for a three-year contract. The BID increased sanitation hours from its prior 8a.m. to 12 p.m. daily to 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. five days per week and 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. two days per week (Monday and Tuesday) schedule. More maintenance to make downtown shine will also occur moving forward—in the summer and fall, the BID painted much of the flaking/chipped street furniture downtown.

- The BID has strengthened its relationships with Public Safety and Lifting Up Westchester to address unhoused individuals or those in need of mental health services downtown. Jennifer introduced Lifting Up Westchester's new street outreach coordinator to the audience, as well as the police unit that supports these populations, and provided a contact sheet with information about both resources to the audience.

Beautification:

- The BID supported the City by paying for watering of their new hanging flower baskets in 2024, in addition to maintaining dozens of its own flower pots downtown. The BID also sponsored the garden on Renaissance Plaza in front of Starbucks, converting it with the help of the Beautification Foundation from a sparse pit into a flower-filled oasis.

Events and Promotions:

- The BID continued presenting its popular events which drive traffic downtown, such as Restaurant Month, March into Self Care, the Holiday Market, Jazz Fest, and Wing Walk (which sold out in 2024). Oktoberfest also sold out and was the largest yet. (Jennifer paused to show a video of Oktoberfest by local video marketing business Holst World to showcase both the event and the talent in Downtown White Plains).
- Jennifer addressed the BID's decision to convert its one-night large rock concert "Rock White Plains", into a four part dine-downtown block party-style concert instead in 2024. One (free-to-the-public) concert was provided per month, May through August, in partnership with the City's Recreation Department. Rock the Block was a huge success, bringing at least 2500 attendees to each concert and raising local business foot traffic significantly. Special thanks were given to DPW, Police, Parking, Recreation and the Mayor's Office for their support of the effort as well as sponsors who took a chance on the new format.
- New Events and Marketing Manager, Brian Reyes, was introduced. He is the replacement for Jennifer Tillerson, the former Events and Marketing Manager who moved home to Germany.

Social Media and Marketing

- The BID's newsletter now has nearly 10,000 subscribers (a gain of just over 1500 new subscribers in the last year) and a 41% open rate.
- The BID's social media presence continues to grow as well. 107% growth in Instagram followers from 6.7 to 14K followers in 2024 (and now 15K at the time of the Annual Meeting).
- BID launched two new social media campaigns in last year. Small Business Spotlight zeroed in on 10 local entrepreneurs during the holidays. Campaign achieved a 7.3% increase in social media engagement. "Working in White Plains", a short social media docu-series, features some of the upper floor, office and service businesses as well. One business gained 200 followers after her business was featured in Working in White Plains.
- Edrei Ramirez, the BID's former intern and now events and communications associate (and social media manager) was introduced to the audience and given credit for a lot of the social media achievements.

What's Next:

- The BID will continue cleaning, greening and marketing
- Plans to encourage a "Love Your Local" and strong community mindset as new residents join downtown and mingle with longstanding residents. The BID desires to launch a Downtown gift card that can be spent at any downtown businesses that sign up (no charge for businesses to participate). The BID would also like to partner with businesses to present some "newcomer" events for residents of the new buildings downtown.
- The City is a recipient of a 10 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative "DRI" grant. The BID has played a key role in disseminating information to the general public and downtown property owners and businesses about the grant and application eligibility and will continue to keep everyone informed.

Adjournment

- Jennifer Furioli concluded the meeting by acknowledging the Board of Directors and the City of White Plains and its Departments, sponsors and partners, and the Clean Team and BID staff.
- The meeting was adjourned.