

**Media Business Authority
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
February 10, 2009**

In attendance: Monika Rehoric, Peter Bendistis, Christopher Dougherty, Anthony Cavaliere, Tom Hibberd, Drew Arata, Lynne Green, Dan Brodeur, Rachel Benari, Kathleen McGeehan, John Vizzarri, Candice Caprice, Ed Lawlor, Kevin Schramm, Harry Havnoonian, Bobbie Dallas, Amy Bullock, Frank Daly (as acting Borough Liaison), Zubair Khan

Absent: Bill Gross, Roger Ricker, Warren Kuo

Guests: Paul Patchel, Doug Ferrell, Jean Leone, Bruce Middleman, Mayor Robert McMahan, Andrea Linvill

Meeting called to order at 6:37 PM.

I. Approval of Minutes from January Meeting:

It was noted that changes requested were not made so approval of Minutes was deferred to March meeting. It was suggested that the Minutes be approved as is and defer final approval until March. Motion to approve January minutes before changes was made by John Vizzarri, Seconded by Ed Lawlor.
So approved.

II. Public Comments:

1. Mayor McMahan was in attendance to speak about the state of the economy with a desire to find ways to help each other through this difficult time. The Mayor spoke of his desire to hear about any businesses that might be having trouble staying in business before it is too late to find a way to help them. He opened the floor to thoughts.

Board members noted:

- One business in town hadn't seen a new customer in the store in two weeks.
- It was felt that efforts need to be defined and done quickly to make the improvements needed to secure our business district.
- The business owners need to be unified and need to refer customers from store to store.
- Communication channels and database collections need to be improved within the MBA and within the Borough and most importantly between the two.
- It is critical that we find a way to differentiate ourselves (Media).

- It is necessary that we hire a publicist to keep that town in the news and in the consumers mind. Our current efforts are not getting the desired results and it is imperative to hire someone who does this specifically and has connections with the press that can keep Media in the public's eye. A concern for affording the steep costs involved with hiring a publicist was raised and the thoughts were that we can use monies budgeted for other things and prioritize this before it's too late.
- High rents seem to preclude stores from affording being in business.

The Mayor was questioned about what the Borough was doing to help the businesses. He spoke of personally working with the State to ensure that if funds become available for distribution, Media is on the list. Admittedly, he was doubtful that these funds would be made available but was trying. He spoke to our elected officials at the State level to encourage their help as well. Mr. McMahon also reassured the group that this is a priority for him and he felt that the elected officials he spoke with also shared his concern.

It was also brought to the Mayor's attention that the Media Theater continues to be under utilized in terms of bringing people to Media. While they do have a following for the musical theater programs, wouldn't it make more sense to broaden the scope of potential customers? Wouldn't the revenues of more popular musical acts in addition to the current program increase the revenues in Media across the board? The Mayor acknowledged these thoughts.

The Mayor suggested the possibility of having a town meeting to further gather information from a broader scope. He reiterated that he was attending this meeting as a fact gathering tool and will continue to work on this problem diligently.

A guest (business owner) suggested being creative in terms of raising money for the town like adding a nominal surcharge to ticket sales at the Theater. Money is needed to take the necessary steps to safeguard the town.

Another guest pointed out that many of the business owners sitting in this room hadn't even stepped foot in her store. She pointed out that from her perspective "our town doesn't support our town."

It was noted that as we look forward to funding our current events that have a very successful track record like the Music Series and the Food Festival, we will be in a position of grass roots fundraising. While Music Series has successfully pursued grants, this alone will not cover the costs involved. It was noted that these three events do carry much of the weight of the marketing events. It was also noted that as a Board, it is critical that we utilize our contacts to fund raise.

The Mayor thanked everyone for their time and suggestions.

2. Jean Leone of One or Two of a Kind attended the meeting to express her enthusiastic reception of Media merchandise that she has had to sell in her store. At customer's requests, she arranged to have MBA Media merchandise for sale. The few items she offered were well received but she did have requests for more items such as shot glasses, mugs, Christmas ornaments, shirts and bags. She asked for more items for her store and for the Board to look at expanding the merchandising. She noted that she saw Media, PA items at the Rite Aid for sale but couldn't find them on State Street or the greater business district. It was noted that these items at Rite Aid do not include our logo but are general items.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT

- A. John Vizzarri presented the January report. (See Attached) Motion to approve made by Kathy McGehean, Seconded by Rachel BenAri. So approved.
- B. The final budget for 2009 was presented. Motion to approve made by Rachel BenAri. Seconded by Peter Bendistis. So approved.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

1. Zubair noted that committee minutes should be forwarded to the MBA office in a timely manner for inclusion in the Board Meeting packets.
2. There is a preliminary committee list in the packets. If there are any changes needed, please let the MBA office know. Zubair questioned the way that the committees are now set up and asked about how the information as well as minutes will be communicated. He wondered about how the committees were set up and if there was to be a point person assigned to each umbrella group to gather information or if the committees will function as before. It was noted that it would be most helpful if committees would set up a regular schedule for their meetings to increase the availability of more participation.
3. Zubair brought a concern about advertising. He received a letter from a business owner who was unhappy about not being included in some recent paid advertising of the town. The ad included a calendar of events and an event that he sponsors was not included. Zubair explained that while broader events are included on the Calendar of Events that is distributed by store to customers, this advertisement was paid and Board instructed him to include only the MBA sponsored events. As this business owner was not happy, Zubair asked for written policy on this matter that is very clear so that he can avoid a situation like this. Drew Arata crafted a paragraph that states the MBA policy.

V. BOROUGH LIAISON REPORT

No report given.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Zubair reported about Holiday decorations. The wreaths that are used to decorate along Baltimore Pike are currently on sale and we are short four. This last year, Zubair took some of the smaller wreaths, designated for use on State Street, to fill in. Additionally, there is a need to purchase replacement bulbs. Since there is a sale, Zubair asked for permission to purchase. After discussion, it was decided that bulb purchase would be prudent because they are used more than just at the holidays but given the tough economic times, we should hold off on the wreaths.
2. Kevin Schramm requested that our meetings be more efficient in terms of making decisions rather than putting them off. It was suggested that a workshop meeting be held to discuss hiring a publicist, the website and additional merchandise. A workshop meeting was scheduled for February 19th at 6:30 in the Borough Hall.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

No report given.

Motion to adjourn by Peter Bendistis; seconded by Rachel BenAri.

So moved.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:28 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrea Linvill
Administrative Assistant