



**MINUTES FOR THE MILLBURN SHORT HILLS BUSINESS ORGANIZATION, INC.**

Special Improvement District Board of Trustees Meeting  
Thursday, May 13, 2021 – 7:00 P.M.

The meeting at Millburn Town Hall, 375 Millburn Avenue, Millburn, New Jersey will be held both in person with possible occupancy limitation and also electronically beginning at 7:00 p.m. via zoom at the following link:

<https://zoom.us/j/97896106862?pwd=ajJubFB3WEhsbGt6MVNYYWpTUWNuUT09>

Passcode: 258286

**A. SUNSHINE COMPLIANCE STATEMENT - *Michael Parlavecchio, Chairman***

Meeting called to order at 7:04 p.m.

Notice of the time, date, location, and agenda of this meeting, to the extent known, was provided at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the commencement of this meeting in the following manner pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, et seq. (The Open Public Meetings Act).

1. By posting such notice in Town Hall and the Township's website,
2. By notification to newspapers on December 23, 2020 of the schedule for 2021 and
3. By providing notice to the Township Clerk

**B. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

**C. ROLL CALL - *Tracy Katz Levine, Secretary***

Attendees in-person at Town Hall: Jumana Culligan (arrived late) Tracy Katz Levine, Jackie Benjamin Lieberberg, Alex McDonald, Nadege Nicoll, Michael Parlavecchio, Richard Wasserman, Stephen Winer, Executive Director Steven Grillo

Via Zoom: Andrew Morgan

**D. MISSION STATEMENT**

*Michael Parlavecchio, Chairman*

The purpose of a Special Improvement District (SID) is to promote, grow and support local businesses, property owners, residents, and visitors. Millburn Township's SID ordinance designates a new District Management Corporation (DMC) whose mission is to encourage the economic, cultural, and social vitality of Millburn Township through increased marketing and visibility, improved and renewed infrastructure and local business development and

engagement.

**E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – *Michael Parlavecchio, Chairman*

Minutes from April 8, 2021 (open meeting)

Motion by Richard Wasserman, second by Stephen Winer

Unanimous approval by voice vote

**F. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

When invited to speak, please come to the lectern, clearly state your name and address, and speak into the podium microphone so that your comments can be understood by all and properly recorded. Whenever an audience or Committee member reads from a prepared statement, please give or email a copy to the Millburn Short Hills SID at [tracy@exploremillburnshorthills.org](mailto:tracy@exploremillburnshorthills.org). To help facilitate an orderly meeting and to permit all to be heard, speakers are asked to limit their comments to 3 minutes. Members of the public who wish to participate in the meetings may do so in person with possible occupancy limitation or electronically by phone or computer via ZOOM. Individuals calling in will be able to fully participate in the meeting during the appropriate public comment periods.

**Vicky Powell**, 358 Millburn Ave, Shala's:

- Great FAME event, though it rained; glad for live music coming up.
- Would like to see Marketing/Social Media ramp up further to promote all the five districts. Recommend getting an intern to do videos and ads, and awaiting launch of website.
- Requesting support of SID to help merchants if flex parking construction happens.
- Would like to see support/promotion of June/July sidewalk sales to merchants and community.
- Also requesting status re: community gift card and fall events.

**Jeffrey Feld**, 11 Alexander Lane:

- No legal opinion received from any attorney about the validity of the SID entity and Executive Director contract.
- Expressed frustration that he and others could not speak at last meeting about the new Executive Director's contract, and that contract not yet provided. Cited the right of people to speak before official actions. Questioned increase of salary by \$20,000 vs. prior ED and if budget law requires notice/budget change because more than 10% increase.
- Asked if new civil rights policy has been distributed and the status of Financial Disclosure Forms.
- No feasibility study. Noted that Chair is municipal attorney for Bloomfield, which also has a SID.

**Nancy Stone**, 266 Essex Street, Millburn – Business in town almost 30 years.

- Was Treasurer of DMDA that dissolved – noted that [Mayor] Tara [Prupis] was outraged by DMDA salary of \$70,000. Questioned whether [Steve Grillo] is aware of what's going on in town regarding SID and whether he did his due diligence.
- Noted the DMDA had Greenbaum Rowe representing them to find out about buy-in. Questioning no buy-in or feasibility study, and proposed budget after first SID was dissolved.
- Questioned use of taxpayer dollars to fund this during pandemic.
- Noted that Mr. Heller bought the Charlie Brown's building, had nothing to do with the SID.
- Questioned to Mayor Prupis how she could support the organization, with 50% of budget toward administrative expenses which is what she previously was again.

### **Jean Pasternak**

- Sent an email on May 5 to Executive Director Steve Grillo asking about the FAME event including non-profits and other organizations; cited Happy Millburn and asked if other community facebook groups could be included.
- Reply was that the Community Zone will include community and non-profit groups focused on the positive and collaborative growth of Millburn. The groups who have signed on are participating to advance this goal. She was confused about who was welcome to participate.
- Questioned how a public entity decides what community and non-profit groups advocate this mission, and if this is constitutionally prohibiting free speech, content discrimination.
- Steve Grillo referred questions to attorney, given nature of questions; she suggested that Steve also ask about the validity of the SID and his retention agreement under state laws.
- Steve Grillo conveyed on May 7 that he spoke with Ryan Cooper about these items, response was: The questions regarding the FAME event is hypothetical since no requested groups were turned away and the planning is complete. Regarding the validity of SID and Steve Grillo's contract, not aware of any written opinion.
- Questioned the SID deciding on participation in SID events – she feels everyone should be welcome. Mr. Parlavecchio asked if anyone was turned away – not that she was aware of.
- She thinks SID should take a pause.
- Inquired whether there an elected or appointed SID board in Bloomfield.
- Requested copies of the Financial Disclosure Statements.

### **G. GENERAL UPDATES - Michael Parlavecchio, Chairman**

Michael Parlavecchio referenced what the relevance was of items noted from his CV.

Mentioned that Tour de Millburn is scheduled for the morning September 12 (various times/routes), will be traveling through various districts; would like to have SID involved – such as coffee trucks/bakery carts or other events to promote – refer to Planning & Events committee.

#### **i. Proposed board meeting schedule updates:**

- Change start time for future board meetings to 6:30 p.m.; change date of June meeting to June 17. Agreement to try new time for June – will notice accordingly. Agreed on date change to June 17.

#### **ii. Updates from Township Committee Meeting (Richard Wasserman)**

- SID budget was unanimously passed by Township Committee with full support.
- Richard Wasserman and Steve Grillo meeting with Millburn High School regarding potential student interns.
- Sponsoring Ordinance 2577-21 to update zoning/permitted uses in many districts, to lower barriers for allowing different businesses to do business in Township. Also raises standards for ensure businesses are good neighbors – lighting, garbage, noise. There are FAQs on the website. Hopeful it will pass by June 1.
- Flex Parking – TC looking at long term viability – potentially a decision at next meeting. Need project manager, great communication, coordination with local businesses – shares concerns and will communicate clearly and advocate for detailed plan. Alex McDonald clarified first there will be an initial decision to go forward or not; if it is decided to pursue the work, then the next step would be soliciting bids. The scope is just to remove flex parking and put in traditional curbed, parallel parking – to line of bollards.

It was mentioned by an attendee that Perri Urso was unable to get on the zoom for the public comment and has a statement.

## **H. SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES**

### **i. Planning and Events**

*Jumana Culligan, Nadege Nicoll, Jackie Benjamin Lieberberg*

- **FAME Festival report** (Steve Grillo) –Thanks to committee and to businesses: free exercise classes offered by Kika Stretch, Bhakti Barn, Short Hill Club Pilates, Pure Barre. ArteVino offered 3 Mother’s Day art classes. Programs were well attended. Over a dozen non-profit and community groups were indoors at Bauer Center due to rain – thanks to Recreation department and DPW. Family entertainment. Foot traffic lower than hoped – over 150 folks individually touched at welcome tent, classes etc.. Majority had not previously interacted with Explore MSH. Marketing and social media was strong and positive. 17 businesses did promotions during the event, and prizes were awarded. Engagement very robust. Live music moved to next weekend.
- **Live music updates** (Jackie Benjamin Lieberberg) – Due to rain, move to next weekend: Friday 5/14, Poet Section 6-8pm at Main Street Closure; Saturday “Music palooza”: 4-5:30 Big Romance (Main + Millburn Ave), 5:30-7:30 Last Exit (Lot 1 – across from Fiamma – Cara Mia), Midnight Sun 7:30-9 (Millburn Ave). May 21, 6-8pm Mrs. Eller and the Feller at Boxcar; June 4, 6:30-10pm Red Light Band; June 12 Last Exit at Boxcar. Pursuing program on Upper Millburn Ave for 6/25 or 7/9 and checking for locations in that area. Encouraged community to attend and follow on social media for latest.
- **CEDA event** (Jackie Benjamin Lieberberg) – Cultural Engagement, Diversity and Arts (recognized township group) with Paper Mill – Paper Mill in the Park. Kick-off of CEDA Sundays using Rec bandshell on June 27, 1-2:30pm. Explore MSH will help spread the word. Paper Mill restarting events.

### **ii. Marketing**

*Tracy Levine, Jumana Culligan*

- Website development update – Tracy Levine reported that a lot of work on website has occurred, design is final, all content has been provided, and quality photos from throughout town are in progress to showcase all districts. Looking at other SID and destination websites to determine best format for directory, which is a key aspect of website. Reach residents and visitors. Targeting a June launch.
- Social media ramping up a lot – highlighting businesses, Steve working on expanded marketing plan including social media.
- Reconvening Marketing Sub-Committee.
- Community newsletters going out to 700+ community members (list is growing).

### **iii. Business Development and Advocacy - Jackie Benjamin Lieberberg and Richard Wasserman**

- Community focus groups (Jackie Benjamin Lieberberg) – Residents Deb Fox and Alan Steinberg are helping coordinate focus groups with merchants and landlords, notably in districts outside of downtown; targeting mid-June.
- Business Success Kit (Steve Grillo) – finalizing as a resource for prospective as well as existing businesses. Steve is finalizing and will share with marketing team to review.
- US SBA Restaurant Revitalization Fund (Steve Grillo) – New program through Federal funding for restaurants, bars, bakeries etc. – Steve created a fact sheet with contact info, distributing in person to restaurant owners (met with 38/42 eligible businesses face-to-

face); sent email and posted on social media. Very tight timing. \$28.6 billion fund; received 265,000 applications in first week representing \$65B dollars – so it is important for businesses to apply ASAP.

- Solar trees (Richard Wasserman) – The township will be pursuing this project, thought SID might want to participate, thus brought it to the group. Will be reworking lighting and there is branding opportunity on the base of the trees. Reaching out for feedback in terms of SID role. Township is planning to issue RFP by next Thursday. Tracy Katz Levine expressed interest in getting more input about what's most important to the businesses and from Steve to assess what is best way to focus the budget – this idea vs. other ideas. Stephen Winer raised idea of plaques.
- Steve Grillo noted for streetscaping budget there is capital budget and also maintenance. Developing branding program/color coding. Will be easier to assess opportunities like this once that is established, which will be soon.
- Michael Parlavecchio summarized: good idea, will check in with businesses, further assess, and re-evaluate in the future.

iv. Finance - *Stephen Winer*

- Expense review – as previously noted, budget was approved. \$8,255.60 total expenses – supporting activities and events, Itzkin Marketing, office supplies. \$30,505.76 was checking account balance as of May 10. Awaiting infusion from rest of budget.

**I. BOARD COMMENTS**

*Michael Parlavecchio, Chairman*

Jackie Benjamin Lieberberg expressed gratitude to Mr. Grillo for jumping in so quickly, looking forward to his leadership; and to Marla Itzkin for her hard work.

Reiterated by Richard Wasserman. Surpassed initial expectations, has been out of the office, meeting merchants, sharing info re: SBA grants. Welcome to new attorneys who have been very helpful.

Stephen Winer noted that the contract for the gift card program is being reviewed.

Jumana Culligan expressed excitement that Steve Grillo hit the ground running and has been out on the streets.

Michael Parlavecchio recognized Steve's depth of experience and vision, and the hard work by the entire team (including on Saturday in the rainy weather), and appreciate of the attorneys.

Andrew Morgan expressed overall thanks, noted Tracy Levine a lot of hard work behind the scenes, and looking forward to working with Steve.

***Adjournment 8:15 p.m.***

*Michael Parlavecchio, Chairman*

*Second by Stephen Winer*

*Approved unanimously*