

**Keyport Bayfront Business Cooperative
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 8, 2025 at 7:00pm
70 West Front Street, Keyport NJ 07735**

Call to order: 7:05 pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Introduction of new board member - Elena Burke

Sunshine Law notice read by Attorney Joseph Manfredi

Roll Call Attendance:

Present:

Mayor Rose Araneo, President
Genevieve Andrews-Kelly, Secretary (Zoom)
Council Member Stephen Gross
Joseph "JoJo" Merla
Chris Matey
Doug Weider
Jetmir Kacaj
Jason Faltings
Joe Pesce
Elena Burke

Absent:

Susan Montanti, Vice President
Yulia Kravchin
Jaqueline Machado

Also in Attendance:

Joseph Manfredi, KBBC Attorney
Jack Straub, KBBC Administrative Coordinator

Approval of Minutes for December 11, 2024

Motion: Jason Faltings

Second: Joe Merla

Roll call, all approved, Elena Burke abstained

Legal Representation contract for 2025

Mayor Araneo stated that since Borough Administrator Kim Humphrey is serving as the Qualified Purchasing Agent (QPA) for KBBC, the BA has made a resolution authorizing a professional services contract for Mr. Manfredi for 2025. A copy was distributed to board members.

Motion to approve by Joe Merla, seconded Jason Faltings.

Roll call (by Mayor Araneo) all approved.

President's Report - Mayor Araneo

The old Valley Bank account has officially been closed. Mayor Araneo stated moving forward we should keep a monthly accounting of fees waiting for reimbursement from Valley for the fraudulent activity, which could take up to a year to recover. She would also like to keep a monthly accounting of potential IRS fees for which KBBC may be liable. Jack Straub stated he does not have the IRS numbers and would need to have those provided to him.

We still need the gross amount from the GoFundMe account in order to issue checks to the four affected businesses, Mr. Manfredi stated he would provide that information.

Treasurer's Report - Jack Straub

All of the bank issues have been resolved, as President Araneo stated the outstanding fraudulent charges may take up to a year to be recovered. The old outstanding Keyport Cash checks have all been reissued and will no longer be carried over on the bank reconciliation. The holding account on the balance sheet was established by the accountant to reflect the potential recovered funds from the fraudulent bank transactions. A discussion was held regarding placing a majority of KBBC funds in a more secure account, and leaving enough funds in the checking account to cover

monthly bills, making transfers as needed. President Araneo said she would meet with Valley Bank for their recommendation on what type of account to establish.

Motion by Jason Faltings to establish an additional account at Valley, seconded Joe Merla. Roll call, all approved.

Motion by Joe Merla to approve financial statements balance sheet, P&L, payment of bills. Seconded Jason Faltings. Roll call, all approved.

Election of Officers 2025

Joe Merla nominated Rose Araneo for President, if elected this will be her third and final year as President. Seconded by Jason Faltings, roll call all approved.

Rose Araneo nominated Joseph Merla for Vice President, seconded by Jason Faltings. Roll call all approved.

Joe Merla nominated Genevieve Andrews-Kelly for Secretary, seconded by Jason Faltings. Roll call all approved.

Joe Merla nominated Elena Burke for Treasurer, seconded by Jason Faltings. Roll call all approved.

Administrative - Jack Straub

KBBC meeting schedule was approved at the December meeting, a copy of the schedule was distributed to the board. The schedule was submitted for publication to the official newspapers.

A discussion was held in December regarding purchasing a dedicated laptop and smartphone for KBBC use. After researching available options, Jack Straub recommended purchasing a Macbook and iPhone, which would total less than \$3,000 excluding monthly cell service plans.

Motion by Joe Merla to authorize up to \$3000 for purchase of laptop and smartphone, seconded by Jason Faltings. Roll call all approved.

2025 KBBC Budget

Jack Straub presented the budget which was distributed to the board as a draft in the December meeting. If approved tonight, the budget will be placed on the agenda for the next Borough Council meeting for introduction.

Brief discussion was held regarding how the assessment is established. Jack Straub indicated there is no increase in 2025, but we are anticipating requesting an assessment increase in 2026.

Motion by Joe Merla to approve 2025 KBBC budget, seconded by Jason Faltings.

Roll call vote, all approved.

Social Media - Susan Montanti, Genevieve Andrews-Kelly, Yulia Kravchin, Jackie Machado.

Mayor Araneo stated the board needs to move forward in deciding how social media will be handled, either hiring another person or combining with another position. Joe Pesce mentioned he does a lot of social media for his business, he recommends hiring a dedicated person for the job. President Araneo recommended hiring someone on a contract basis, not as a KBBC employee. She also recommended establishing an interviewing committee. Committee will be Yulia, Joe Pesce, Elena, and Genevieve. Mr. Manfredi stated a scope of service should be established.

Events - Since we are late on events, Mayor Araneo said she will jump in to make some recommendations and get the process moving forward. Jack Straub mentioned if the calendar is approved and printed by the end of February, it can be inserted in the March water bill mailed out to residents.

Visual Improvements - Joseph Merla, Susan Montanti, Chris Matey

Mayor Araneo said Donna Purcell and John Merla can participate as volunteers, and Jay will be added to the committee as a board member.

Marketing - Yulia Kravchin, Stephen Gross, Susan Montanti

They have not yet held a meeting.

Bylaws - Doug Weider

Mr. Manfredi stated the Borough Council approved the latest changes.

New Business

Hometown Hero banners - Mayor Araneo stated Borough Council is moving forward to establish the program in the business district. They would like to ask KBBC to participate by paying for the flagpoles. Families would pay for the banners on a one year basis. Jack Straub stated the cost of the flagpoles are \$130 each in black, for approximately 20 poles.

Motion by Mayor Araneo for KBBC to pay for flagpoles through Visual Improvements up to \$3000, seconded by Joe Merla. Roll call all approved.

Joe Merla asked if there had been any feedback on the request to change some parking spaces in the Broad Street lot adjacent to Old Glory to 20 minute parking. Mayor Araneo stated Chief Ferm would like to research further.

Joe Merla inquired about any progress on the Boathouse, and the request by KBBC to make it a visitor center. Mayor Araneo stated she had spoken with the Borough Administrator, and the vendor who used the Boathouse last summer has a five year contract. The BA is continuing discussions with the vendor regarding future use of the Boathouse.

Motion to open to public by Joe Merla, second Jason Faltings, voice vote all approved.

Donna Purcell - Suggested possibly renegotiating the lease with the vendor.

John Merla - Stated vendor violated the contract last year based on opening and closing dates. Also believes the lease needs Green Acres approval. Mayor Araneo asked Mr. Manfredi to follow up with Borough Administrator regarding lease.

Motion to close to public by Joe Merla, second Jason Faltings, voice vote all approved.

Joe Merla stated the Boathouse and parking were the only two issues for the Visual Improvements committee.

Public Session

Motion to open public session by Joe Merla, second Jason Faltings, voice vote all approved.

John Merla, 34 Broad Street - Asked where the social media job will be posted. Mr. Manfredi stated it can be posted anywhere, Mayor Araneo said once posted it can be shared to the Borough website. John asked Joe Pesce to speak about holiday window decorating he had done in New York City. Joe stated his company has a contract with a clothing brand there, and they did window decorating for the holidays last year. It is a vinyl wrap product which goes on and off easily. Mayor Araneo asked if he could provide photos to the board.

John also asked to allow a presentation at the next meeting by the owner of the billboard at the corner of Hwy 36 and South Main Street adjacent to Valley Bank. The proposal would involve providing a digital sign on the site. Mayor Araneo agreed to have him speak at the February meeting.

John also mentioned the sign at the recycling center needs replacing. Jack Straub mentioned there are additional funds this year in the KBBC budget for visual improvements.

Carl Pena, Arts Society of Keyport - ASK now has four officers on its board. ASK would like to work with KBBC on some events during the year. They would like to combine their biggest fundraising event, Art by the Bay, with the KBBC I Love Keyport day. Mayor Araneo asked that they make a proposal to KBBC to include details of the event. Mike Kline of ASK also mentioned they will be doing a fundraiser at Urban Air on February 27.

Joe Merla suggested if KBBC will be involved in the St. Patrick's Parade in 2026, the planning needs to start now. Mayor Araneo said the Borough Administrator has suggested a joint effort by the Borough, Recreation, and KBBC.

MOTION to close public session by Joe Merla, second Jason Faltings.
Voice vote, all approved.

MOTION to adjourn meeting by Joe Merla, second Jason Faltings.
Voice vote, all approved.

Next meeting Wednesday, March 12, 2025.