

**Keyport Bayfront Business Cooperative
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 17, 2025**

Call to order: 7:03 pm

Sunshine Law notice read by Attorney Joseph Manfredi

Roll Call Attendance:

Present:

Mayor Rose Araneo, President (MRA)
Council Member Joseph Merla, Vice President (CJM)
Elena Burke, Treasurer (EB)
Council Member Stephen Gross (CSG) - via Zoom
Jason Faltings (JF)
Yulia Kravchin (YK)
Chris Matey (CM)
Jetmir Kacaj (JK)
Al Litwak (AL)

Absent:

Jaqueline Machado (JM)
Joe Pesce (JP)

Also in Attendance:

Jack Straub, KBBC Administrator (JS)
Joseph Manfredi, KBBC Attorney (AJM)
Michael Carelli, Social Media Coordinator (MC) - via Zoom

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes for November, 2025

MOTION by CJM to approve October 2025 minutes, second JF, voice vote approved.

Results of 2025 KBBC Election

Attorney Joseph Manfredi reported the results of the 2025 KBBC election.

On October 29 ballots were mailed to all business owners and property owners within the Keyport Business Improvement District. The mailer advised recipients there were six nominated candidates for seven vacant seats. It also included the eligibility requirements for voting. Following the voting deadline of November 27, KBBC President Rose Araneo reviewed all ballots, opened and reviewed in the presence of Denise Nellis.

We hereby certify the following to be the true results of the 2025 election to the KBBC Board of Directors:

Jay Kacaj received 11 votes and is elected to a term expiring December 31, 2028.

Joe Pesce received 10 votes and is elected to a term expiring December 31, 2028.

Alaa Hady received 10 votes and is elected to a term expiring December 31, 2028.

Al Litwak received 9 votes and is elected to a term expiring December 31, 2027.

Yulia Kravchin received 9 votes and is elected to a term expiring December 31, 2027.

Elena Burke received 8 votes and is elected to a term expiring December 31, 2026.

President's Report - Mayor Araneo

No report for this meeting.

Treasurer's Report - Jack Straub

The fourth quarter assessment income was deposited in November but did not hit the bank statement until December 2, and will be reflected in next month's financials.

Reviewed payment of bills for December. MRA stated we had approved Yes We Do Windows for \$25,000, but it came in at \$27,000. EB explained why there was an overrun, more windows were done than originally anticipated. In total 108 windows were done this year. Several businesses which had originally declined changed their minds once they saw the windows being painted. CJM mentioned some businesses which had declined had their windows painted anyway. JS stated in 2024 there were

approximately 65 windows painted at an average of \$100 per window, this year was 108 windows for \$250 per window. EB also stated we did not start this year until mid October, next year we will start much earlier. MRA suggested we should withhold a portion of the payment until all painting is removed after the holidays.

MOTION to approve financials including payment of bills. Windows invoice payment will withhold \$5,000 until all painting is removed. Motion by CJM, second JF, roll call all approved.

Administrative Updates - Jack Straub

JS asked the board if they would like to keep the same meeting schedule for 2026, the second Wednesday of each month. Board all agreed.

Social Media Updates

Michael Carelli reported things are progressing very nicely, we are still very active in Instagram, averaging 6,000 to 7,000 views per post. We had a very successful Bewitched campaign. MC had a graphic designer produce a poster for Winter Wonderland, which also was supported by paid boosts. Businesses have gotten into a regular routine of sharing information to post, MC is making sure all businesses are receiving recognition. New facebook page is progressing nicely, mirroring posts by Jack from the old facebook page. Will work with Jack to develop a schedule for boosting events in 2026.

MRA mentioned the borough has approved replacing the motion sign on Route 36 in front of IHOP with a static sign. There are also plans for a digital sign near Valley Bank, which will allow the borough to have seven seconds per minute for promotions. It will be a 20 year contract.

St Patrick's Parade Update - Hank Young

We currently have five bands signed up, trophies are done and Public Works and Police Chief have been updated. Talking with McDonoughs for Grand Marshall banners. Gary from Buhler is the Grand Marshall and Susan Montanti is Deputy Grand Marshall. Both were previously chosen but parades were cancelled due to weather. Will need KBBC

letterhead, JS said he would provide. Parade date is Saturday March 21, there is no rain date. Same parade route as recent years. Staging area is now Maple Place near Highway 35. Former judges will again judge the bands this year. Parade starts 1:00pm, try to finish everything by 3:00pm. JS suggested KBBC could have a float or walk along in the parade with a banner.

Committee Reports

Events - Yulia would like to set up a meeting for next year's events. MRA mentioned Jackie will no longer be on the board, need to reappoint committees.

Visual Improvements - CJM stated there was no meeting but John Merla may give an update during public session.

Marketing - No updates.

Bylaws - MRA mentioned Jay Faltings has accepted a job with the borough Recreation Department, which will require him giving up his resident seat on the KBBC board. The Mayor will be appointing Jay to the borough Environmental Commission, which will enable her to appoint him back to the KBBC board in that spot. Board discussed possible options moving forward to remove the burden of proving paid taxes and C.O. from the commercial property owners.

New Business - MRA stated we have received only one bid for the attorney solicitation and it was from Mr. Manfredi, for the same rate of \$185 per hour and a term of one year. MOTION to retain Manfredi & Pellechio for 2026, motion by CJM, second JF, roll call all approved.

CJM stated Celebration Station (43 Main Street) received their C.O., they will be opening and have a date for when they would like a ribbon cutting. There is also a new hair salon on East Front Street. CJM also mentioned KBBC website needs to be updated to reflect Al Litwak as business owner. Jason Faltings stated he is on Recreation now, they would like to coordinate more things with KBBC. Jason also mentioned a conversation he had with a resident about a possible wrestling event on the waterfront.

Public Session - MOTION by CJM to open to public, second JF, all approved.

Mike Tedesco, JSMT Media, West Front Street. He thanked Joe Merla for speaking on the phone earlier in the day. He asked that board members take the time to go through the KBBC bylaws and review them. For example, the requirements discussed earlier regarding requiring property owners to prove paid taxes and C.O., would like to see that requirement removed.

Vinny Kyne, West Front Street. He agrees with Mike about simplifying the voting process. He would like to see more outreach from KBBC, or you run the risk being called an insider group.

John Merla - 34 Broad Street. Suggested once again trying to have a summit as was done at Town & Country years ago. Could have a morning session and an evening session, make it available for as many property owners as possible to attend. He also announced the date for the 2026 Italian Festival by Sons and Daughters of Italy Keyport Chapter, which will be Saturday September 26.

CJM mentioned at last night's Harbor Commission meeting the suggestion was made to possibly have Recreation become more involved with staging the Snapper Contest.

Mayor Araneo stated it has been her pleasure serving as President of KBBC, a new President will be elected in January. All members thanked her.

MOTION to close public session by CJM, second JF, voice vote all approved.

MOTION to enter executive session AJM stated for attorney client matters, not pending litigation, no action will be taken.

Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn, motion by CJM, second AL, voice vote all approved.

Next meeting Wednesday, January 14, 2026.