

**Keyport Bayfront Business Cooperative  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, May 14, 2025 at 7:00pm  
70 West Front Street, Keyport NJ 07735**

**Call to order:** 7:01 pm  
**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Sunshine Law notice** read by Attorney Joseph Manfredi

**Roll Call Attendance:**

**Present:**

Mayor Rose Araneo, President  
Council Member Joseph "JoJo" Merla, Vice President  
Elena Burke, Treasurer  
Council Member Stephen Gross (Zoom)  
Jason Faltings (Zoom)  
Yulia Kravchin  
Jetmir Kacaj  
Chris Matey  
Joe Pesce  
Al Litwak

**Absent:**

Genevieve Andrews-Kelly, Secretary  
Jaqueline Machado

**Also in Attendance:**

Joseph Manfredi, KBBC Attorney  
Jack Straub, KBBC Administrator

Mayor Araneo stated the board would be going into executive session. Attorney Joseph Manfredi asked for the opportunity to go into closed session to discuss matters of attorney client privilege.

MOTION by Council Member Merla to enter closed session, second, voice all approved.

MOTION by Council Member Merla to return to open session, second Elena Burke, voice vote all approved.

MOTION by Al Litwak to approve April minutes, second Jason Faltings, voice vote all approved.

### **President's Report - Mayor Araneo**

Mayor has just formed a committee for the 250th Semiquincentennial, KBBC will be important in this. Tom Gallo from the Keyport Historical Society recommended not doing anything on the actual July 4 date since there will be many other things going on. I Love Keyport Day was a success, not as many people as last year but that may have been because it was Mothers Day weekend.

### **Treasurer's Report - Jack Straub**

Jack Straub stated the KBBC tax return filing date is tomorrow May 15, asked Mr. Manfredi if an extension had been applied for. He stated an extension was filed by the auditor Mr. Polcari confirmed to Mr. Manfredi today, May 14. Mayor Araneo asked about the accounting firm Geltrude, Jack Straub stated they had been doing bank reconciliations but he is now doing them. Geltrude also handled the filing of 2024 1099s, but there were many problems and they were not completed until well after the deadline. Mayor Araneo was aware of the issues.

Jack Straub reviewed payment of bills.

MOTION by Elena Burke to approve payment of bills, second Jetmir Kacaj, roll call all approved.

Mayor Araneo stated before Administrative, we have two speakers to discuss the St Patrick's Parade. Hank Young talked about the parade which he had run for many years. The Keyport Fire Department will no longer be doing the parade, he offered to run it if the KBBC would sponsor. Trophies are paid for, needs help to pay for bands. Approximate band cost total \$5,000. Date is Saturday, March 21, 2026.

MOTION to approve sponsorship of 2026 St. Patrick's Parade. Expenditure up to \$6,000. Motion by Joseph Merla, second Chris Matey, roll call all approved.

## **Administrative - Jack Straub**

Reviewed Taste of Keyport / I Love Keyport day. Total 114 presale, plus 67 walk up customers. Walk ups paid \$30 each, total \$2,010 which was deposited in Valley Bank. Trolley should be revisited for next year, we may not want to use it again. It just takes too long to make the circuit, and it can only make a few loops. In addition, the trolley costs \$2,000. Mike Tedesco and his wife were a big help as volunteers at the table and on the trolley, we also had several other non board member volunteers. Good weather obviously helped but there was a lot of activity in Keyport all day.

Farmers Market - Hauser Hill Farms will be starting the first Thursday in June (June 5). For other vendors board had decided \$250 for first half of season, \$250 for second half, \$500 if paying upfront for whole season.

MOTION for any Keyport food businesses which pays into the BID to be no charge for the Farmers Market. Motion by Elena Burke, second Jetmir Kacaj, roll call all approved except abstain by Yulia, Joseph Merla and Jetmir (may participate).

## **Social Media - Jack Straub**

Michael Carelli was only going to be able to participate on Zoom for a short period, so Jack Straub will report. Michael now has access to facebook and Instagram and has been posting regularly. Business Spotlights are being posted. Jack Straub stated the facebook account access is still blocked because Larry Vecchio had put it in his name when he was KBBC President, and he cannot find his login information. Both Jack and Michael have worked with Larry to try to retrieve access but nothing has been successful. Jack Straub is trying to recover our visitkeyport.org domain, which has also been locked. Mike Tedesco at JSMT is also trying to help recover.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Events - Genevieve, Yulia, Jackie, Elena**

Mayor Araneo asked if we would be using the new KBBC logo (used on KBBC t shirts) on events flyers, Jack Straub stated the board had not yet voted to make it the new logo.

MOTION to approve the new KBBC logo. Motion by Mayor Araneo, second Al Litwak, voice vote all approved.

Keyport Classic Car Show - Thursday June 5. Chris Matey recommended at least 8 to 10 trophies, will get a list to Jack.

MOTION to approve up to \$500 for car show trophies. Motion by Elena Burke, second Jetmir Kacaj, roll call all approved.

Woofstock - Yulia said Debra had called her asking if Keyport Cash would be given out. Jack Straub stated Debra had contacted him requesting Keyport Cash to give out for prizes, up to \$250.

MOTION for \$250 in Keyport Cash to use as prizes at Woofstock. Motion by Al Litwak, second Chris Matey, roll call all approved.

Keyport Garden Walk - Keyport Cash will be given out by KBBC at the event, not by the Keyport Garden Club. Distribution was already approved by board.

Brief discussion by the board about possible additional bands for open dates. Mayor Araneo asked board members with suggestions to send information to Jack Straub.

### **Visual Improvements** - JoJo, Chris, Joe P.

Council Member Merla stated John Merla will go over during public comment session. Council Member Merla had spoken with BA Kim Humphrey, leases for the 2 KBBC signs will be signed on Friday. DPW will most likely install.

### **Marketing** - Yulia, Stephen, Joe P.

Yulia - no update.

### **Bylaws** -

Al - no update.

### **New Business**

NJEDA Main Street Grant - handout provided by Jack Straub. BA had given it to Council Member Merla. Jack Straub described basics of the grant, to assist in closing costs in the purchase of commercial property.

Ribbon Cuttings - we have a few new businesses ready for ribbon cuttings, Mayor Araneo asked if we could do some the day of the Garden Walk. Jack Straub will contact the businesses and see who is available.

Jack Straub also asked Attorney Manfredi if he had heard back from the BA regarding our proposed bylaws change. Board discussed last meeting to turn vacant Environmental Commission seat to a commercial property owner seat. Mr. Manfredi said he would follow up with BA.

Mayor Araneo stated board would have a discussion regarding Jack Straub's employment. Attorney Manfredi stated Mr. Straub was served with a Rice notice, he is asserting his right to have the discussion in open session. Mayor Araneo stated the board discussion will be first, he will have an opportunity to respond.

Discussion regarding interaction between Jack Straub and Gourmet Italian Delights prior to Taste of Keyport event, he responded to the statements made.

Attorney Manfredi asked Mayor Araneo if this matter was closed, she responded yes.

MOTION to enter all statements into personnel file. Motion by Elena Burke, second Al Litwak, voice vote all approved.

Attorney asked the board for authority to issue an RFP to perform the 2024 audit.

MOTION to issue RFP by Joe Pesce, second Al Litwak, voice vote all approved.

Jack Straub stated Borough audit is currently in progress, that firm may be interested in responding to the RFP.

## **Public Session**

MOTION to open to the public by Council Member Merla, second Al Litwak, voice vote all approved.

Donna Purcell, 396 Maple Place. Ms. Purcell took offense to being cursed at earlier by a board member. Events committee has not taken care of business in a timely manner,

leading to rushing at the last minute by the employee. Farmers Market information has not been provided by people who said they had potential vendors. Was a letter sent to two candidates who were not hired for the social media position. Are we a government entity or not? Attorney Manfredi stated all BIDs are a hybrid. Who actually owns the flower pots. Answer by several people was they were originally provided by NPP early 2010s, term was five years, maintenance has been done by the borough. Every pot is on private property. Attorney Manfredi will inquire to BA.

John Merla - for Visual Improvements, John gave measurements for potential Welcome to Keyport signs by KBBC to Borough Administrator. John also recommended possibly obtaining new uniform trash cans for the business district. Also mentioned state of trash on sidewalks in business district. Mayor mentioned trash in plastic bags on sidewalk, it has been brought up with BA and property maintenance and will be brought up again. John also mentioned the the KBBC sign on Valley Bank property, also stated his son-in-law has been cutting and maintaining the grass there, no one gets a bill. John and Joe met and by the next meeting they will have all the locations for the proposed new signs throughout Keyport, with a map, photos and size of the signs.

John Merla questioned Jack Straub's hours, stating that is what he is saying. (Jack Straub had mentioned earlier he worked 40 hours the week of Taste of Keyport). Jack Straub stated there is a sign up sheet in the office which he logs every time he is in or out. Council Member Merla also questioned whether his hours were legitimate. Mayor Araneo confirmed there is a sign in sheet in the KBBC office.

MOTION to close public session by Elena Burke, second Al Litwak, voice vote all approved. MOTION to close meeting, voice vote all approved.

MOTION to close public session.

Motion by Stephen Gross, second Jason Faltings. Voice vote, all approved.

MOTION to adjourn to closed session.

Motion by Chris Matey, second Jason Faltings, voice vote all approved.

MOTION to hire Polcari and Company to perform KBBC audit for 2024.

MOTION by Joseph Merla, second Jason Faltings, roll call all approved.

MOTION to open to the public.

MOTION to close to the public.

Motion by Joseph Merla, second Jason Faltings, voice vote all approved.

MOTION to adjourn.

Motion by Joseph Merla, second Jason Faltings, voice vote all approved.

Next meeting Wednesday, July 9, 2025.