Downtown Westfield Corporation
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
March 16, 2022

Present:
- Patricia Hanigan, Chair
- Lew Kimble
- Roberta Loew
- Michael LaPlace
- Scott Katz, Council Liaison
- Les Trent
- Anthony DiTommaso
- Lillian Pien
- Burim Regjaj
- Amy Fixler
- Peg Lockwood, Design Committee
- Steven Rinn, Economic Vitality Chair

Absent:
- Jim Donofrio
- Erin Ben-Hayon, Promotions Chair

Also Present:
- Dawn Mackey, Council – ex officio for Mayor Shelley Brindle
- Craig Gibson, DPW, ex officio
- Bob Zuckerman - DWC
- Beth Brenner – DWC

Public:
- Remy Samuels – Westfield Patch
- Matt Kadosh – TAP Westfield
- Katie Mohm – Westfield Leader

Chair’s Report
- Roll call

Secretary’s Report: n/a as Jim Donofrio did not attend meeting
- Approval of minutes from February 16, 2022 by board passed unanimously (Motion by Scott Katz, seconded by Amy Fixler)

Financial Report – Anthony DiTommaso
- February 2022 Report
  - Budget not yet finalized by the Town of Westfield
    - Scott Katz reported that the Town introduces budget on March 22 and finalizes on April 26, 2022
  - Highlighted monthly expenses. Noted brochure expense for broker’s meeting and deposit for December Holiday Trolley
  - March Activation line item used for upcoming Downtown Westfield Women Business Owner’s event at Selfie Station
Approval of financials for February 2022 by board passed unanimously (Motion by Lew Kimble, seconded by Roberta Loew)

Executive Director’s Report – Bob Zuckerman

- Pizza Run Coming back and went through major changes of day, pizza coupons, and
  - Met with Robert Barwick who said to expect 500 runners because of COVID
  - Changed date to Monday because of business interference to businesses on Wednesday
  - Michael LaPlace asked why the Board did not meet to discuss even having the Race. He was surprised as he thought that was the plan
  - Patricia said it was the 20th race and we put down a deposit with the Race Director then canceled in 2020 because of COVID. Explained a few changes that were made in Race
  - Dawn interjected that 2020 Pizza Run planning was begun in 2019, we could not have it due to Covid and again last year, so we are having it now
  - Michael asked again if the DWC would not make a deposit to the Race Director for 2023 before having a Board discussion about the event benefit to the businesses. Patricia said whoever is on the Board can have that discussion and then make that decision.

- Downtown Parking
  - Some merchants and public questioning still having 15 minute parking downtown
  - A few spots will be kept on Prospect, one on Westfield Ave, 2 spots on E Broad and 8 spots on North side of Quimby
  - Return other spots downtown to 2 hour parking on around April 15 or so
  - We lose the loading zone in front of Ferraro’s so will ask Town of Westfield for loading zone on opposite side of street

- Webinar on Plastic Bag Ban March 10
  - Similar to the webinar the Chamber had A month or so earlier
  - Guest from State of NJ will present at the webinar
  - Thanks to Nancy Albanese of Westfield Green Team for helping get the word out

- Zoning Update
  - Proactively exploring zoning changes to allow for greater number of uses downtown
  - Drafting ordinance with goal to be passed to allow for more permitted uses in time for the Summer

- Brokers Meeting Update
  - 25 commercial brokers attended
  - Presentations by Dawn Mackey and Richard Heapes
  - We gave brokers a brochure and list of vacancies
  - Les Trent asked if there was any discussion of why Westfield has trouble with vacancies compared to neighboring Towns
  - Bob explained about MJB working with Downtown Westfield
  - Dawn said Westfield is not doing badly compared to other downtowns and it is not unique to Westfield
  - Lew said MJB explained that vacancy rate is not higher that Summit but you cannot make apples to apples comparison
  - Michael asked if brokers mentioned any issues they had about Westfield even if it was just a perception
    - Brokers discussed the perception of a parking problem
    - Brokers are wondering what plans Streetworks has and how it will it affect downtown Westfield
Dawn discussed how misperception of people leaving Westfield in mass is incorrect
South Ave Commuter Parking lot may change due to redevelopment and commuters returning to work.

- Main Street NJ Grant Update
  - We have not heard yet. Neither have any other towns.
- Social media promotion for women owned businesses. Giving away 4 $250 Gift baskets
- Business Openings and Closings
  - Golden Bee Retiring
  - Evelyn Dunn Gallery opening annex in conjunction with Ricardo Roig Collection on South Ave W
  - Ribbon Cuttings on Saturday at Dentologen at 210 South Ave W and Westfield Pharmacy on Quimby
  - Next month there will be big news about new businesses downtown

**Design Committee Report** – Peg Lockwood
- Beginning work with vendor on vinyl flowers and banners
- Talked to vendor about PNC plaza tree lighting
- Meeting with several downtown business owners to change store front colors

**Promotions & Events** – Bob Zuckerman
- Spring Fling – business putting out tables if they want
- Girls’ Night Out is on Thursday, May 5 from 5 until 9pm
  - 2 bands
- Sweet Sounds Downtown Music Festival

**Economic Vitality Committee Report** – Steven Rinn
- MJB Consulting in Stage 3
- New members of committee and some new ideas for MEET UPS for merchants
- Working on Downtown App that will help for real time parking
- Burim asked if there were any zoning problems with bringing in seasonal popups. The answer is no

**Mayor Report** – ex Officio Councilwoman Dawn Mackey
- Redevelopment talks are ongoing and there will be a public facing interaction coming by end of summer

**Liaison Reports**
- Councilman Scott Katz
  - Working on an ordinance designating certain outdoor areas to be able to have alcohol per the Governor’s Executive Order
  - 2022 Tour de Westfield is being planned
- DPW Supervisor Craig Gibson
  - April 15 is start date for parklets to be reinstalled
  - They will begin with the restaurant parklets then set up Quimby St
  - It will take at least 2 weeks
- GWACC Director Gene Jannotti
  - March 23 Professional Women’s Event at Echo Lake
  - New Jersey Workshop for the Arts Grand Opening on March 23 at noon
  - May 1 - Spring Fling: approved and invitations sent to vendors
  - State Organization will provide some reusable bags to give out on May 1
Public Comments

- No residents in attendance

Patricia Hanigan made motion to adjourn

Next meeting – April 20, 2022 at 7:30 pm