



VILLAGE CHAT - HASTINGS, MARCH 11, 2024

10:00am Zoom

In attendance:

Mayor Nicola Armacost (Mayor), Village Trustee Morgan Fleisig, Village Manager MaryBeth Murphy, Ellen Sledge (Village Rep/Penny Lick Ice Cream Company), Danielle Centofani-Davidson (Chamber President/Main Street Business Strategies, LLC), Michelle Adams (Chamber Immediate Past President/Saint George Bistro), Gal Yaguri - Balaboste

Meeting Notes:

- Hastings lost a few businesses since January 1, 2024, in contrast to 2020 and 2021 during covid, when they lost none. Downtown Advocate is good at finding new businesses to rent space.
- Chamber Updates from Danielle: First Member Appreciation Event on 4/3 at Look Dine-in Cinema; Classroom Chamber Series for members only, which will be held monthly with topics to focus on business development (i.e. AI on April 5th). Community Events: Women's Social on 4/18, Taste Local will be moving to Spring/Summer - Date TBD, Golf Open Planning ongoing, Ellen has some recommendations she will share with Danielle for Chamber Classroom Series hosts.
- Hastings Village Updates (from Mayor and Village Manager):
 - Commended the Chamber for its work and impact on businesses in the Rivertowns; Barb has done a great job in her capacity as Downtown Advocate
 - New Businesses: Makers Hive, Ted & Nune's Studio & Gallery, Kaza Orca, Caitlin K Photography, and River's Edge Theater. Sterling Bank building still empty. Nothing new at 55 Warburton, but they have a new owner
 - Village received grant money to keep upgrading sidewalks. County receives the funding to give to the municipality. Last year there was an issue so the project didn't move forward, so they're hoping to move forward with 2 sets of projects this year.
 - Events: Posted on Destination Hastings and posted on Village website and social media platforms; Purpl reopened with new events
 - Ellen mentioned complaints about pay stations not always working properly. Mayor acknowledged various other complaints received about parking, i.e. signage, bags over the meters is causing confusion, business owners have paid customer parking tickets to prevent losing customers
 - Marybeth - Meters have been removed and poles cut down. Marybeth will make sure phone number is posted at pay stations for any problems drivers may face (for those that don't use the app)
 - Free wifi in the downtown to be live this spring

- \$175,000 grant from county to help with wifi in public spaces, etc
 - Train station repairs. Marybeth to follow up on when work is scheduled to start. Was supposed to be Spring 2024
 - Budget season is now, so Chamber should inform the village of any funding that they're hoping to get, i.e. trolley
 - Zoning approved for Electric Owl Studio Project. Will now go before the Planning Board. Large business that may be a new member of the Chamber
- Gal of Balaboste is also Chairwoman of Hastings Zero Waste Advisory Task Force and runs the Take It or Leave it Garage
 - Broadway Training Center (Ellen on Board)- expanding into new property, won a few grants recently, and looks forward to expanding, including building out a new black box theater in the future
 - Rivertowns Rotary (Ellen is a member) - Working on providing scholarships in all 4 rivertowns high schools; Fundraising for JCK Foundation in Irvington which focuses on mental health for kids and teens. Fundraiser aims to support schools that need financial assistance for their JCF Foundation services, i.e. schools in Yonkers. Dine out fundraiser will be listed on the rotary website.
 - Michelle provided Dobbs Ferry Info: Harpers will remain open in Dobbs Ferry, but under new management, Dobbs Ferry now has a downtown advocate, and received DIG grant
 - Ellen said Mamaroneck Chamber interested in touching base with Hastings Mayor, Downtown Advocate and Rivertowns Chamber President - they're trying to revamp their own Chamber
 - Discussion took place about parking issues in Hastings Downtown
 - Textile pick up will be discussed with County
 - Food Waste Study Grant - will look to include restaurants, in addition to residential and schools.