



Borough of Manville
NEW JERSEY

**Economic Development Committee
August 22, 2023 Meeting Minutes
6:30 PM, Manville Public Library**

Present:

Sue Asher
Matt Brown
Council Liaison: Joe DeVito
John Holloway
Mayor Richard Onderko
Diana Sieberg
Secretary: Nanette Peterson

Absent:

Sharon Lukac
Caitlin Cunningham

Guests:

Gayle Skirkanish

Matt Brown called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

Review and acceptance of July 2023 Minutes

Sue Asher moved to accept the July 2023 minutes as distributed. Diana Sieberg seconded the motion and it carried.

Municipal update

Mayor Onderko: The Borough's newly implemented notification process to learn about businesses opening in Manville is working. He announced that *Ready To Jump Party Rentals* moved to town. The mayor was invited to speak about happenings in Manville at the next Somerset County Business Partnership legislative committee meeting, and asked if there was anything to report. Each month, a different cohort of mayors make presentations. Matt will draft a few ideas and submit them.

Councilman DeVito: Letters were sent out to building owners about their compliance with ordinances. A recent Finance Committee meeting focused primarily on the roll back of the Homeowner Assistance and Recovery Program (HARP) with regard to elevating a home. This will affect the ratables if people move rather than improve.

Joe would like to create a video about the EDC, our mission, and our activities to date. Any photos we have of past events would be helpful.

Joe also reported that he has a line item in next year's municipal budget for the EDC. He asked if there should be a separate line item for EDC community events as well, to which all agreed.

Old Business

Matt should have the business database updated within the next few weeks. He will merge the various sheets we worked into a reformatted spreadsheet. We will use this to export data to our business directory

on the MyManville app. We are most interested in a personal email address for the business owners – one that will not be made public – so we can inform them about business opportunities and grants.

New Business

Ready to Jump Party Rentals at 40 S. Main will open soon. They rent bounce houses and wedding tents for commercial and personal events. They cannot legally open until their inspections are complete. A question arose as to the amount of merchandise displayed in the window, and whether it is in compliance with our ordinance.

BIZFEST 2023 – Somerset County Business & Wellness Expo is September 15, 2023 from 3-5 pm at Patriot's Stadium in Bridgewater. It is sponsored by the Somerset County Business Partnership. This is a no-cost opportunity for businesses to network. The Mayor will send notification of this event out through the app. He will also forward information to our email distribution list. Matt suggested we send it to Laura Landau to promote through the schools as she has arranged a wellness event in the past.

American Water Open House Discussion

The sale of Manville's wastewater collection system to NJ American Water will be put forth as a popular referendum in November 2023. Matt presented a slide show of information supplied by NJ American Water. NJ American Water would like to hold an Open House so that they may field questions from the public. Matt believes our role, as a committee, is to educate and provide information to the public. He also feels this is a watershed moment for us to let residents of the Borough know the EDC exists. He called for a vote to hold an open house on this topic at our October 24, 2023 EDC meeting, and it passed unanimously.

We need a moderator to ensure that the audience is respectful as our guests will be here in a professional capacity. A time limit per individual was suggested as well. There was consensus that NJ American Water should create a comparison chart as a prerequisite to the open house that illustrates the difference between the current usage base system versus the volumetric system that will replace it should the referendum pass. Billing will move from quarterly to monthly. Van Cleef, the Borough engineers, completed a report that will be posted on the Borough website. NJ American Water has launched a website, voteyesmanville.com, to promote the sale.

The committee revisited the idea of a short promotional video about the EDC. It would essentially be an infomercial on why we were established, our mission and our goals. We might feature storefronts and success stories from businesses who have been in Manville the longest. We might ask why they choose Manville and what could (or should) be done to help other businesses thrive. Joe suggested we include FX Visual, a new business in town, in the process. Matt will get visual assets together so Joe can create a storyboard.

Diana and Sue will contact members of the now-defunct MBPA and ask them to attend our September meeting.

John asked about the feasibility of Zoom meetings for business owners who can't attend meetings. Matt will look into a one-way communication mode to stream out future meetings.

Next meeting confirmation - Tuesday, September 26, 2023

Matt moved to close the meeting. It was seconded and the meeting adjourned at 7:32 pm.