

BUSINESS COMMITTEE 2019

20 February 2019 / 10:00 AM / City Manager's Conference Room

ATTENDEES

Bianca Freda, (Co-Chair) Kathy Kelly, (Co-Chair) Amy Quinn, (Deputy Mayor) Michael Capabianco, (City Manager); Austin Leopold, Marilyn Schlossbach, Russell Lewis, Jenn Hampton, Jacki Sharpe, Adam Nelson, Sylvia Sylvia-Cioffi, Regine Flimlin, Sonia Spina, Phyllis Maffucci

ABSENT: Isaac Jones, Larry Dembrun

GUESTS: Daniele Fioni, Laraina Bell-Durant - Speaker,

AGENDA

January minutes approved.

1. **Guest Speaker** - Laraina Bell Durant of **Durant Tax Service** talked about a new tax deduction, Section 199A, which is part of the tax reform legislation introduced in 2018. The Qualified Business Income Deduction, (QBID) allows for taxpayers to deduct up to an additional 20% of qualified business income from their total taxable income. The new deduction helps to reduce taxable income, which in many cases, will reduce tax liability.

For questions or more information contact **Laraina Bell Durant @ 732.807.5499**. For guidance on how this new tax law may affect your business, you can visit: www.irs.gov.

2. **Redefine & Reorganization of Business Committee** - The new committee Co-Chairs reviewed questions previously presented to the group along with suggested sub-committees. The questions were to reflect on the committee's past successes and failures and to select from a list of sub-committees to participate on.

- a. Successes - The strengths of the committee are the people who serve on the committee and one of the successes mentioned was the “How to conduct business in Asbury Park” brochure.
- b. Failures - The committee would be more effective and result-based if there were action-oriented sub-committees where members could recruit other non-members to assist with the tasks. Four specified sub-committees were suggested for members to choose from.

3. **Sub-Committee discussion** - The four suggested committees are:

- a. Street level
- b. Quality of Life / Environmental
- c. Events / Parking
- d. Communications / marketing

Comments:

It was requested that our Mission Statement be read so the committee could re-visit the goal of the committee. **“An alliance to help support strategies that assist in the establishment and sustainability of all aspects of Asbury Park Commerce.”**

The Mission Statement is very broad. However, It is not believed that we were intended to be an action-oriented committee, but more of an advisory committee that lifts up the business community and addresses the community as a whole.

Sylvia discussed “data & Analytics collecting that is helpful to show new business growth. It can provide information to existing business owners or people considering Asbury Park as a place to open a business by showing things like; the winters are not as slow as people may think. It could also provide information for business owners to know what the best hours of operation should be. Some of the places this data could be collected from would be credit-card data, parking meters, (via the City) the bike-share program, hotel data regarding guests stay habits.”

“This information could also be helpful for social media marketing for businesses to know where people are coming from and target those areas in their paid promotions.”

A suggestion was made for there to be a data collection committee where data could be collected from different industries, such as real estate
“What is the median home price in Asbury Park. Or where are the gaps in events within the city, what time of year are events not happening.”
“The analytics will determine the committee.”

“Once the data has been collected a brochure could be created and be handed out to current business owners and people considering Asbury Park to open a business.”

Additional Comments:

“Business owners in the downtown are angry about the pop-up shops that are becoming commonplace in restaurants throughout town.”

“We should be finding a way to incorporate all the businesses together, to work together.”

“Some of the pop-ups aren’t legal. They are not accessory uses.

“Should they be?”

“The pop-ups have an unfair advantage.”

“Some of the restaurant owners are good neighbors. We’re not looking to hurt them.”

“What are the restrictions on liquor licenses regarding shopping?”

“It’s not illegal because it’s situational.”

“The culture is changing in Asbury Park. Things are moving toward pop-ups and Asbury Park wants to be, should be, ahead of the curve.”

“Retail is a hard business to maintain, especially with people looking for an experience when they shop. It needs to be experienced based.”

“The good thing is it brings more people into town and businesses can catch the overflow.”

Questions / additional comments:

Did we form a holiday retail committee last month? (This question was not asked, but I have it written in my notes.)

“Perhaps we can develop and grow existing events, rather than creating new ones.”

“Can we find out what events are coming up that are already approved?”

“Some of the suggested committees already exist, perhaps members could be a liaison to an already existing committee.”

“We should include all the businesses in the community and it’s important to know the entire community.”

“Is there any information about marijuana dispensaries?”

Answer: “It’s dead in the water. Asbury Park is too small of a community and there are too many restricted areas, (school zones, etc) and land use restrictions. It won’t approve.” - Russell Lewis, zoning board.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Request by Chairs for members to each come up with 4 sub-committee categories by March 1st and send to Co-Chairs.
2. Sonia will send a list of existing committees so there is no overlap.
3. Sonia will send a list of approved events.
4. Phyllis will add Daniele Fioni to the email list.

PUBLIC PORTION

- None

Meeting Adjourned @ 11:05 am

Next Meeting Date March 20, 2019 @ 10 am