



# CALLICOON BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

## 2023 Member Board Meeting | 3.28.23 MINUTES

Meeting date | time 3/28/2023 | 5:30 pm | Meeting location The Callicoon Brewery

|                    |                                    |               |                                   |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| Meeting called by: | <b>Nicole Vallance</b> , President | Timekeeper:   | <b>n/a</b>                        |
| Facilitator:       | <b>Nicole Vallance</b> , President | Call to Order | <b>5:39 pm</b> by Nicole Vallance |
| Note taker:        | <b>Lily Smith</b> , co-Secretary   | Adjourned     | <b>6:46 pm</b> by Nicole Vallance |

**Attendance: Officers:** Nicole Vallance, *President*; Zack Scheitlin, *Vice President*; Tom Dent, *Treasurer*, Lily Smith & Roy Harris, *Co-Secretaries*; Executive Board Members: Rachel Littman, Rosie DeCristofaro, TK Keokham **Guests:** Mike Levine, Tanya Vannatta, Alex Gardner, Patti Moorhead, Irene Nicolai, Genia Brodyn, Patti Zins, Lillian Peditto, Monica Weir, **Via Zoom:** Rebecca Tharp, Krissy Smith

### Agenda topic President's Report | Presenter Nicole Vallance

- Welcome + Introduction to the New 2023 Executive Board
- Congrats to the Winners of River Reporter's 'the BEST 2022 for 2023' Awards
- CBA Spring Meet up - Thursday, March 30 at the Seminary Hill.

### Agenda topic Secretary's Report | Presenter Lily Smith

- CBA is working on implementing new operating and marketing systems to facilitate member engagement. We'll be sending out a revised (i.e. much shorter) version of last year's member survey. Please look out for it within the next month and share your feedback.
- **Motion to approve February's minutes (Roy) 2<sup>nd</sup> (TK). All approved.**

### Agenda topic Treasurer's Report | Presenter Tom Dent

- Dues came in from community and business. Tom migrated data from Quickbooks to online version of Quickbooks. A few things got lost in the process and working to restore. There's an entry in the balance sheet that shows an open accounts payable, but it was paid. Bottom line: bank statement balance is \$7,763 and there's still \$365 in Venmo payments to be processed; that brings the total balance to \$8,100. By next month all will be settled and all bills paid. Dues payments are coming in very slowly. Please send a copy of the dues letter directly to Tom.
- **Motion to accept treasurer's report (Zach) 2<sup>nd</sup> (Roy). All approved**

### Agenda topic Social Media / Marketing Committee | Presenter Zach Scheitlin

- The CBA has retained Francine Dominguez, who will be managing social media for the Association. Franny has been working on getting a social media program off the ground. Some businesses have been accommodating, some not as much.
- Members are reminded that if you want Social Media coverage, please tag @visitcallicoon / #visitcallicoon. If this is done, please know can't chasing down your content. We have more than 50 businesses – it's burdensome to chase down information that can easily be shared by each individual business. If you collect money, you're in business – and you will get coverage. We're rolling out a process to help with that. Once the process is off the ground we'll organize a zoom to walk everyone through how to do this. Franny just came on and recently launched the program. We ask your patience for her to come up to speed with things.
- Regarding to CBA's absence in FB (VisitCallicoon) marketing: We don't have Admin access to FB account. So, we've primarily been focusing on Instagram, while we don't have access to FB. A lot of businesses work with Instagram and that automatically goes to FB. [Note accounts can't be connected to auto-post without the admin]
- Irene: the website is out of date, too

- Lily: The website on our agenda for updating. I'm working on creating Etsy-type pages to be added to the website to give members control of their own content, which will solve much of bottleneck we're experiencing.
- Zach: The marketing committee meets Monthly 5:30 every 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday. Volunteers and active community members are welcome.
- Rosie: why are we locked out of FB?
  - Z: working on figuring out who has admin rights
- Irene: in terms of Instagram page, the Western has tagging for months and posts have not been shared. And, the CBA SM person is editing content without approval. (?) The Western is a hotel in the middle of town; the busiest season is starting and nothing has been shared. We told Franny to share two weeks ago and nothing has not been shared to date. There are others that are being shared, but the Western is not. Has Franny's background and social media experience been vetted by the board?
  - Z: we're testing our process
    - Irene: it's been three months
    - Z: I'll look into it.
    - [UPDATE: Irene was still listed as Facebook @VisitCallicoon Admin. As of 3.28.23 it had not been reassigned to the Association. The Western was notified Jan 23' that after months of requests to reassign the account, we had no other recourse but to 'pause' on posting until they could help us recover it. Irene removed herself as admin on 04.24.23, but no other admin has been assigned. (this may be because she removed herself before the admin was requested to another person but no notices were received – it is unclear) We are working to have an account Admin restored this. Nicole does still has Editor permissions, but we cant use higher function or connect the accounts without Admin rights.]
- Irene: There should be a marketing or social media plan. Can you share this with businesses?
  - Z: if you're very passionate and like to lead SM for CBA you're welcome. Currently we have a radio ad planned to promote upcoming events. When it's ready we'll share it. You're also more than welcome to spearhead SM effort.
    - Irene: are we paying this person to do SM?
      - Z: Yes. Today she's sent an exhaustive explanation of what she's able to do. As a result, we'll roll out a marketing and SM, which will be shared. In terms of how it's communicated, we've built out a plan to put it out on the CBA calendar. There will be a cadence to what is done to make it easy to follow.
    - Irene: do you have her professional acumen – do you have others that have responded with interest for the position?
      - Lily: the position was posted and shared on member minutes, Franny fees were the most reasonable and the only one who stepped up after volunteering for a while.
- Roy: As member of and very involved with the Sullivan Catskills Visitor s Association Marking Council, I think Isabel is someone we want to work with regards to any SM stuff.
  - Z: we do leverage them. She's involved with TikTok
  - NV: We've talked to Isabel and working to do a workshop to teach members how to work with SM

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**Agenda topic** Beautification Committee | **Presenter** Zach & Nicole

- The CBA submitted a Sullivan 180 Beautification Grant on March 1<sup>st</sup> – we asked for \$2,500, which is the maximum without being a municipality. Given past records, we're optimistic we'll be approved. Approvals will be announced 2<sup>nd</sup> week in April. (copy of Beautification Grant passed around)
- Rosie has volunteered to be the Beautification Chair. (for budgets) We're still looking for additional volunteers. TK will talk to the Job Corps about getting the gardening Club.

- Last year Kiwanis Club pitched in to take this over, but they are not able to do so this year. CBA is taking it back on. Sullivan 180's target is to get as many youth involved as possible. The top grant is \$2500 with a 25% match.
- We'll be sending out the Spring newsletter, which will announce 2023 event dates and call for volunteers for beautification and other committees.
- Rosie submitted pre-order for Geraniums and hanging baskets.
- Looking for Callicoon leaders and are reaching out to Western Sullivan Library, Job Corps, local Girls Scout group, and the garden planning group at the Delaware Youth Center.
- We've contacted the DYC about rebooting the kids summer program's veggie garden. We'd like to donate veggies and help them set the garden up. We've not received a response as of yet.
- The Library will work with us on kids workshops.
- We've submitted an application for interns.
  - Lily: Gavin would like to come back.
- (NV) We're working on plans to beautify the generator on Main Street. Rosie has found a solution and has a budget for that. Tom Freda offered a plan, too. All this will be discussed at our next Beautification committee meeting.
  - Mike Levine: re: planting by generator – it's a focal point. Put a lattice around with vines, also landscaped with tall grass, May Rondell, and with cutout of Callicoon turkey.
  - NV & Rosie will bring it up to Tess to see if town has interest in improving the property.
- Krissy: who is head of beautification?
  - NV: Rosie will hopefully stay on for writing budgets, otherwise Zach and NV. Looking for a designated Chair. We're working with a variety youth organizations for youth inclusion. We're in the process of taking stock of the scope of work to split it up and share duties. That includes dividing and conquering among businesses. We also have gotten a generous promise of donated materials from Matthew Hoefler of Hoefler Log & Lumber to help us with mulch, wood, chips and ties. (thank you!) While we have a grant, \$2,500 only covers so much with 9 gardens. Community members volunteering and seeking out donations is important in order to stretch our dollars.
- Mike L: the railroad tracks are a mess. I know you're looking into grants, but maybe you can get people to cut and thin out stuff. It would look much better. Have you looked into landscaping?
  - NV: That is on private land and would require a lot of heavy lifting. It would require much planning and additional capacity and is not in our scope at the moment. Also, it's the railroad's property, so we're not sure what the limitations are.
- Z: John Erik left an absence, - he was someone who was passionate and oversaw much of this. Until we have someone to replace him we're doing what we can.
- Genia: 97 is looking neglected. Is that a municipal or county responsibility?
  - Krissy: Is there some kind of committee where we can discuss this and not take up member time?
  - Lily: suggest we create a wish list of projects we'd like to address and for which we need volunteers.

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**Agenda topic** Events Committee | **Presenter** *Tanya Vannatta & Zach Scheitlin*

- Mother's Day Purse Bingo: TV: It is scheduled to take place at the Youth Center on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1-5pm. All supplies have been ordered. Tickets have sold out.
  - We need help distributing flyers. SM is where we get individual sign ups. We also need donations for raffle prizes. Three ways to get revenue: Ticket Sales, 50/50, mystery purse
  - The CBA usually makes approx. \$5K from the event.
  - Irene: could another day be chosen that won't compete with restaurants? After a long day at the event people will go home.
    - Tanya: In the future, we can be flexible, perhaps we can incentivize them to visit restaurants, maybe not do it on Mother's day.
    - Irene: perhaps week after or before

- Z: There are several other conflicting events before and after that weekend. Mother's day is also the first day of hunting season – purse bingo can be the mother/daughter outing option to that. All things considered, that weekend is what worked out. How about if you make an offer to incentivize people to visit your place after bingo?
        - Irene: People drink a lot at those events then they just want to go home.
    - Z: Radio ads start April 27 and 28, and May 4-5<sup>th</sup>. We're looking for volunteers to talk about events as interviewees.
  - The first CBA Events Committee meeting starts April 4<sup>th</sup> at 5pm, thereafter they will take place every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the Month. A reminder will go out via MailChimp. We are also working on a master calendar where members can see the whole schedule.
  - Country Fair: There was overwhelming feedback that July is too hot for this event. So, we're moving it to June 3<sup>rd</sup> down to grassy field at the park to provide a cool environment. We'll still have entertainment and vendors on Main street; the Depot lends itself well for that.
    - Genia: If you're moving it to a much sooner date, why move it where it will be cooler?
      - TV: businesses have complained about closing Main Street for events.
    - Irene: moving it to the park takes away from business traffic.
    - Z: We'll have announcements: We've had success with kids games, possibly petting zoo in a space that will be more comfortable and fun. And for adults we'll allow space with music, dance and food on Main Street.
    - NV: one of our bigger concerns are the pony rides; it's really unsafe to have horses by the Depot. There will be a lot of othe activity in the center by the Depot.
  - Casino night on June 10<sup>th</sup> at Seminary Hill. [Update; Date moved to 7/29/23]
    - Z: This is a fundraising event that helps provide money for hamlet marketing. Take a look at the global calendar to replace things we may be doing, i.e. raffles, etc. We hope to make this a yearly Callicoon event.
      - Irene: Again a Saturday that takes away from business. Irene: can you choose another night like Thursday night?
        - Z: No. But, please take it into consideration, that there are 52 Saturdays in a year and we're taking two.
  - Callicoon Pride may or may not take place. It's still in discussion.
  - Artwalk 2023 - NV: we submitted a DVAA grant for for \$2K which has been approved for Artwalk.
    - NV: DVAA has that we not send a press release after DVAA's Awards ceremony.
    - NV: With this we'll be able to afford Stipends for all artists.
  - Dickens on the Delaware: NV: Farm Arts Collective has asked we co-sponsor a grant program. They need a sponsor in Sullivan County. The money will be used to help with new costumes, & production elements.
    - **Motion to support Farm Arts Collective motion (Tom) 2<sup>nd</sup> (Zach) All approved.**

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Agenda topic Train Depot Update | Presenter *Nicole Vallance*

- NV: I invited Wendee and Evan, Depot president and vice president to present of share an update. Unfortunately, they couldn't make it tonight, but they will join us next month. The CDI is about to finalize the RFQ, and we're waiting for a copy to be shared. A new volunteer Jim Burton, a professional architect and professor at a local architecture college is helping to draft preliminary plans and work on RFQ. (he's retired and will not bid, so there is no conflict of interest). Further reporting on this will be given at next month's meeting.
- We're received a letter from a coalition of community members. Genia will share a digital copy.
  - **Irene:** I would like it submitted with the Train Depot update and included in the member minutes.
- **Tom:** there's a rumor going around that the CDI lost the 2019 USDA grant for \$100K (to have been used for furniture, etc.)

- **NV:** The expiration date came up Feb 28<sup>th</sup> (CBA was notified just days before). They've reached out to the Senator, and USDA representatives. There was a budget update submitted in September that the CDI was told verbally was approved, but there is no written record and now the funding is subject to the GONE Act, so cannot be extended further. The spend deadline has expired, and CBA is not able to resubmit for same use. On the USDA's advisement the CDI has now resubmit another grant.
- Genia: Are the CDI responsible to the CBA.
- CBA holds the lease, funding and loans, but the day to day is the responsibility of the CDI. CDI was formed separately, but is still answerable to CBA via our partnership and MOU agreement.
- **Patti:** Email from Freda got re-approved
  - **NV:** the email said the DASNY list of things have to be satisfied by Sept, 31. We'll have to get the facts from CDI.
  - **Patti:** we've been dealing with this since 2021. We've gotten three quotes for the roof, aand other items, etc.
- **Rosie:** the \$100K grant was not lost. It was a big mistake where everyone on the call - including administrator at USDA - who said they would extend grant. They did not get it in writing so it expired. Note: CBA was not on the call.
- **NV:** Internal controls need to be strengthened considerably – including an approval process for DASNY grant (\$250K) SEQR approval. I'm personally going submit the SEQR request at next town planning meeting April 19<sup>th</sup>.
- **Irene:** Parking study conducted and spent \$17,000 were done Silver Feather funds. I don't have a copy of study. They were on my property. What does Claire have a copy and I don't?
  - **NV:** The study cost \$7,800 and was paid for out of the silver feather but some of that will be reimbursed by the county. I am assuming Claire likely has a copy because she was one of the 3 people from the CBA Board working in the project at that time (Patti and Irene being the other 2)
  - **Irene:** can you send copy to me?
  - **NV:** It is part of the project planning and was not intended for public circulation since it has data relating to private property. I'll ask about creating a redacted copy to make available on request. [update: this was provided to Irene on 4.11.23 – a redacted version now exists]
  - **Rosie:** that study included a lot of sensitive information
  - **Irene:** like my land
  - **NV:** we'll discuss this with the CDI. The CBA and the town paid for it. Ultimately, the county paid for it. Anyone who has sensitive information in it should have access to it.
  - **Irene:** when you get a chance send me copy.

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**Agenda topic** New Business | **Presenter** *Nicole Vallance*

- **Rosie:** I've asked Tom which bank is holding CBA money to approach them to get another shredding truck in town. Last time it was in the town of Callicoon. Previously was it Wayne Bank?
  - **Tom:** Hudson Valley Bank and Wayne Bank will be partnering and getting that. We'll get details from Tess and put in the next newsletter.
- **Rosie:** We have many stray cats in town who are not fixed so we'll have LOTS more. Penny, who works with Rosie, has contacted Rocky's Rescue (in Roscoe) to trap the cats. They get all their shots, neutered, vaccinated and treated for all parasites. This service will cost \$60 / cat. We're looking to raise \$300 to treat 5 cats.
  - Members committed to donations:
    - Irene / Western \$60
    - Rosie \$120
    - Tom \$60
    - Rachel \$60
  - Tamara is offering to place them in homes, including treatments. Rosie will contact Tamara to get more details.

- **Motion to have CBA match amount Rosie just raised (Tom) 2<sup>nd</sup> (Rosie). All approved.**

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Agenda topic Public Comment | Presenter *Nicole Vallance*

- **Patti:** Danielle (Hilson of The Clothesline) will reopen April 8<sup>th</sup>
- **Alex:** Board of Youth Center is looking to hire a staff person. Putting out a call for Friends of Youth Center (used to exist – see article in The Democrat). We need to raise money to pay someone to do all the work done at the Center. We're not hitting up businesses; we've already done that. We'll be asking individuals in community.
- **Rachel:** Suggestion to have a letter prepared.
- **Alex:** Yes. Fred will get the story out in The Democrat.

**NEXT MEETING - Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> - 5:30pm**

**MEETING CLOSING -Motion to Adjourn (Tom) at 6:46pm, 2<sup>nd</sup> (Zach). Approved Unanimously.**

Dear Wendee,

We would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to all those who have led the Callicoon Depot project for the past five years. We, the undersigned, are all citizens of this community and have a vested interest in the successful completion of this public project, which is the crown jewel at the center of our town. Although we have some concerns about the status of this important endeavor, our community includes many other business stakeholders, residents, and visitors, so we are writing on their behalf as well.

We believe it is essential that any information about the progress of the Callicoon Depot project be publicly shared as we enter another busy summer season. We therefore request that the questions listed below as well as any other relevant information are addressed and made available for further review. It is in the community's collective interest that this public project is conducted in a transparent, cooperative, and accountable manner by the two organizations that have responsibility for it—the Callicoon Business Association (CBA) and the Callicoon Depot Inc. (CDI).

### **Some Preliminary Questions**

1. Please outline the grants and the grant timelines, and status. (e.g., How much money has been spent? For what? When?)
2. Are there official renderings for the renovation and design, meeting minutes, and the business plan(s)? Where are these records kept and are they accessible?
3. What is the timeline for the project?
4. How would you describe the proper roles of the groups involved?
5. Please provide an updated list of all board members, their terms of service, the voting rules for elections, and key Board requirements. How can additional individuals from our community volunteer to be involved?
6. What are the roles and responsibilities of the CBA, CDI, and Upper Scenic By-way groups in relation to the project?

7. Who reviews contracts for the project on behalf of the town, further protecting the interests of the community?

8. We note that the parking study, conducted using CBA Funds, has not been released to the business owners or residents of Callicoon.

Please respond to us about these questions as soon as possible and provide any other information that you feel is important. We see this as an iterative process and wish to be as cooperative as possible to help move this project forward.

Sincerely (the undersigned),

Dr. Nicholas Brodyn, Community Member  
Genia Brodyn, Community Member  
Karen Dettori, Business Owner  
John Dettori, Business Owner  
Kim Farley, Community Member  
Jennifer Friedrich, Community Member  
Sylvia Hummel, Community Member  
Mike Levine, Community Member & Donor  
Victoria Lesser, Community Member  
Maggie Moore, Business Owner  
Patti Moorhead, Business Owner  
Lillian Peditto, Business Owner  
Irene Nickolai, Business Owner  
Paul Uhlir, Community Member  
Jim Wilson, Business Owner  
Joanne Wasserman Brinkerhoff, Community Member  
Patricia Zinz, Community Member

CC: Nicole Vallance, Richard Lowe and Callicoon Depot, Inc Board