

SoHo Broadway District Management Association, Inc.  
10th Annual Meeting – November 20, 2024

## **Meeting Minutes**

Pursuant to a written notice, the membership and guests of the SoHo Broadway District Management Association, Inc. (dba SoHo Broadway Initiative) assembled on Wednesday, November 20th, 2024 remotely via Zoom at 6:00 p.m. for the organization's 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting.

Attached as Exhibit 1 is a list of attendees of the Annual Meeting.

With a quorum of membership present, the meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

Executive Director Erin Piscopink introduced herself, welcomed attendees and introduced Board President James Cavello. James offered greetings to attendees and thanked Deputy Director Brandon Zwagerman for his dedication during transition over past year and further introduced Executive Director Erin Piscopink. James thanked Executive Committee, especially Vice President Michelle Choi and Secretary Sharon Ermilio. He thanked departing Directors Richard Benenson, Emily Hellstrom, Arif Shah, and Jeannette Rodriguez, as well as Gaston Silva and Jason Vacker who will be stepping back into Alternate roles. James then introduced State Senator Brian Kavanaugh.

Senator Kavanaugh offered remarks thanking the Initiative for its work keeping the district clean and safe. The Senator shared optimism about the City but acknowledges its significant challenges. As Chair of Housing Committee, is focused on making sure residents have places to live they can afford and reducing number of unhoused people. The Senator thanked NYPD and DA for pushing down violent crime but acknowledged work to do on quality-of-life issues and ensuring people feel safe. The Senator's office has focused on proliferation of unlicensed cannabis shops and giving authorities tools to effectively enforce.

Erin Piscopink thanked the Senator and introduced the next agenda item, Items to be Voted On. Only registered voting members as of midnight on November 10th are allowed to vote and received an email notification 2 weeks ago and then another on Monday with the meeting packet. Members will be approving the minutes from the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting held on November 15, 2023 and electing board members. Registered members will be voting using a digital survey. To vote in the board elections, a registered member needs to know their membership class which was also emailed to registered members prior to the meeting.

- If you are a registered member but do not know your membership class, please submit a question using the Q&A feature and an SBI staff member will message you back with your membership class. We will also verify membership status following the meeting when tallying votes.
- Members are registered in the following classes:
  - Class A1: Owner of Commercial Real Property
  - Class A2: Owner of Residential Real Property
  - Class B: Commercial Tenants (including owners of shares in a coop for commercial space)
  - Class C: Residential Tenants (including owners of shares in a coop for residential space/JLWQA space)
  - Class D: Elected Officials
  - Class E: Non-voting members.

Suheyla Kipcakli shared voting link in Chat.

Sharon Ermilio oversaw items to be voted on:

1<sup>st</sup> item on agenda: Minutes from 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting on November 15, 2023.

2<sup>nd</sup> item on agenda. Board of Directors Election:

Registered members are electing 9 Board of Directors members plus Alternates tonight. The candidates are listed on the screen. Of the 9 Director candidates, 5 are seeking re-election and 4 candidates are seeking election for the first time. Sharon provided brief introductions of the 4 candidates seeking election for the first time.

- In Class A-1 Commercial Property Owner, there are three new candidates:
  - Adam Weissleder is the Senior Vice President, Director of Leasing for Meringoff Properties Inc. and has been serving as the Alternate for Jason Vacker for a number of years. Adam is already quite engaged with the Initiative.
  - Melissa Siegel is the Senior Director of Marketing for SHVO and developed a great relationship with our staff over the years. She brings a great deal of experience serving on nonprofit boards to this new role with the Initiative.
  - Ashley Natale serves as Vice President with Vornado Realty Trust. Ashley has been the alternate for Gaston Silva for a number of years and is already deeply engaged with the Initiative.
- In Class B Commercial Tenant, the new candidate is:
  - Billy McCollum is the retail district director for the area that includes the SoHo location of Nike. Since stepping into this role a few months ago, Billy has already been a great partner to the Initiative.

Sharon instructed registered members to vote via the link that was shared in the chat which will remain open until the end of the meeting. Staff will attempt to announce preliminary results before the end of meeting with verified results following the meeting.

Erin presented the next agenda item, the Finance Report.

The Initiative's financial year ends on June 30 of each year.

For the prior year ending June 30, 2024:

- Statement of Activities: Projecting \$1,115,730 in revenue against \$829,700 of expenses, for an increase of \$286,077 in net assets.
- Statement of Financial Position: As of June 30, 2024, we had \$707,387 cash on hand; As of June 30, 2023, we had \$406,877 cash on hand, so have seen an increase of \$303,510 from the end FY 2023.
- This increase in assets can be attributed to two main factors. First, an increase in sponsorship revenue. Second, a significant decreased administrative cost because of reduced staffing during FY23.
- We are currently in the process of finishing our annual financial audit which will be published by the end of this year. Audited financial statements are published on our website in the Reports and Documents section;

Overall the organization is on solid financial footing but it should be noted that FY24 was an anomaly. Because financial predictions for the outyears show the Initiative operating at a deficit, the board has taken steps to raise our assessment ceiling. This is currently in the legislative process. We anticipate approval before the end of this year with increased billing beginning in FY26.

This annual report also includes a report on registered members. As of 11/10/2024, there were 127 registered members. During the course of Fiscal Year 2024 (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024) the Initiative saw a net increase of 3 registered members.

Erin next presented the Annual Report: Year in Review and Year Ahead. Erin thanked Brandon Zwagerman for everything he did to help bring me up to speed when she started and everything he continues to do to ensure the BID runs as it should.

Sanitation:

Erin shared great appreciation for our Clean Team, provided through Street Plus, and their dedication to keeping the very busy sidewalks clean. In FY 2024, our clean team removed over 66,000 bags of garbage and over 19,000 incidents of graffiti/posters/stickers. This averages to over 182 bags per day.

Clean Curbs Pilot:

In June 2023, the Initiative launched a containerized waste prototype bin box in the curb lane of Prince Street between Broadway and Crosby Street as part of the City's Clean Curbs program, funded in part by a grant from DSNY in partnership with SBS and DOT. Since this pilot program launched, over 1,000 bags of trash have been taken off the sidewalk at the intersection of Broadway & Prince, while they await collection.

### Beautification:

As part of the Initiative's goal to enhance our public spaces, we provide supplemental streetscape and beautification services to the district. The Initiative partners with the Horticultural Society of New York to plant and maintain 18 planters throughout the district. The Hort installs 4 seasonal plantings annually in addition to watering and maintaining the plantings.

This fiscal year, two custom street light banner campaigns adorned the neighborhood. The current banner campaign from SHVO celebrates the art and design culture of SoHo by highlighting the award-winning architectural design at 530 Broadway which features contemporary art installations from New York-based artist Daniel Arsham. Blue Man Group also continued to sponsor custom banners in the district. Thank you to SHVO for your ongoing support with sponsorship extending into next year. Erin also thanked Neith Stone, for sharing banner sponsorship opportunities with the tenants in the GFP buildings in the district.

### Quality of Life and Public Safety:

The SoHo Broadway Initiative works closely with NYPD, DOT, and other city agencies to help improve quality of life and public safety in the district. There are a few wins in this area over the last year Erin shared:

Staff did a walkthrough with DSNY staff to share ongoing concerns and identify opportunities for streamlining efforts. Staff are in the district daily to monitor conditions and additionally conduct walkthroughs on a regular (bi-monthly) basis to educate vendors then report illegal vending activity to the appropriate city agencies.

Recently, we called for enforcement of the counterfeit goods sales via sidewalk display on and near Canal Street. NYPD responded quickly and we have again seen a nearly complete cessation of these activities in recent weeks.

Finally, the Initiative recently began accepting applications for our new Field Operations and Engagement Manager role and hope to onboard this new staff person in the first few weeks of the new year.

### Community Development:

We celebrated the city's second annual BID Day in May. Erin reserved space at the Housing Works Café and invited neighbors to come meet her and share their ideas or concerns over a cup of coffee. We look forward to hosting similar events in the future.

We also created a community survey to better understand how our neighbors feel about our work and identify opportunity areas. Intern Suheyla Kipcakli visited every storefront, targeted our contact lists, and expanded our reach to encourage engagement through the survey. She is now working hard to digest the results and we look forward to sharing them soon. Some initial findings include that 91% of respondents believe SoHo Broadway is as clean or cleaner than other busy NYC neighborhoods; 58% of respondents believe that SoHo Broadway is safer than other busy NYC neighborhoods; and respondents have a 95% approval rating of the Initiative's work.

### Planning and Advocacy:

We collect data to better understand changes in the district. For instance, through our quarterly retail vacancy surveys we have learned that our retail occupancy remains above pre-pandemic levels with an occupancy rate of 82%. This is slightly higher than the occupancy rate we reported at last year's annual meeting. As an example of this continued growth, GU, a sister brand of Uniqlo, opened their US flagship store at 587 Broadway in September and we were invited to the ribbon cutting.

We also recently held a walkthrough with the DOT Borough Commissioner and his staff to discuss concerns with the streetscape and identify opportunities for improved partnership.

Finally, Erin shared her advocacy efforts through the NYC BID Association. The Association is a membership organization comprised of all 76 NYC BIDs, led by a volunteer board of directors, of which Erin currently serves as co-chair. Through the BID Association, Erin testified at NYC Council on vending legislation, advocated with DSNY to create more favorable outcomes for trash containerization, and met with numerous council members to share the most pressing concerns of BIDs.

### Key Sponsors and Partners:

Erin acknowledged all the sponsors, vendors, consultants, and City partners who worked with us during Fiscal Year 2024 to help us make the year a success.

Erin offered opportunity for Q&A from attendees.

Q1: Quality of life issues have increased (e.g. 3 card monte, electronic music, drummers, clothing rack vendors). What is Initiative doing?

A1: We are aware of these issues. We are in touch with local Precincts and City agencies who respond as they have resources. We will have a temporary person for weekends during holiday season to flag/report at peak times, and hope to be able to address more consistently when new full time staff member begins in January

Q2: What is Initiative's position on SoHo/NoHo Art Fund / fee for residential conversion from JLVQA passed as part of 2021 rezoning?

A2: We have previously submitted public testimony opposing the conversion fee / Art Fund as it currently stands. Since Erin started, we have also reached out to office of Council Member Marte and offered to give testimony if helpful during City of Yes review process. Directors discussed whether Initiative wholly opposed to concept of an Arts Fund or the mandatory conversion fee as it stands.

Q3: How was Erin Piscopink appointed to Loft Board?

A3: Erin is serving as public member of the Board, detached from official role at the Initiative. Likely was invited to join due to working and living in neighborhoods with Loft Law buildings and existing relationships with Deputy Mayor. Erin recuses self from any cases related to SoHo Broadway buildings/stakeholders.

Q4: Question about whether Initiative is considering expansion

A4: Initiative does not have any immediate plans to expand but the idea has been brought up and interested stakeholders elsewhere in SoHo have reached out to Erin. We will consider this more thoroughly in new year once we are fully staffed up.

Q5: Important to note that this is only BID with 50% residential/50% commercial representation as outlined in 2013 MOU and worth sharing and continuing to center that balance. Residents spend great deal of their own time filing 311s and hope we can find right person to lead field reporting/engagement.

A5: We are hopeful that when the new employee joins us in the new year, they were consistently report and coordinate efforts to alleviate quality of life issues and residents will feel less pressure to report illegal street activity directly.

Erin shared preliminary results of voting: All board slates elected, minutes and resolution approved. Congratulations to all new board members.

Erin delivered thanks to the Board of Directors and staff and shared closing remarks: The state of the organization is strong, a great team is in place and looking forward to bringing on a 3<sup>rd</sup> full-time staff person in January. Cash reserves have increased and are invested for strong returns. We continue to engage stakeholders and are launching new programs (notably winter lights program). Thanks to all who joined us and we look forward to next decade of our work.

Erin asked all attendees who are not Directors/Alternates to leave the Zoom as a Board meeting will follow.

Meeting adjourned approximately 7:00 p.m.

Exhibit 1

**Attendance for Meeting Minutes**

Conor Allerton  
Margarite Almeida  
Blair Axel  
Margaret Baisley  
Leigh Behnke  
James Cavello  
Andrew Chang  
Evelin Collado  
Pier Consagra  
Peter Davies  
Danielle De Marne  
Sharon Ermilio  
William Fung  
Chandler Forsythe  
Clarence Hahn  
Brian Kavanagh  
Suheyla Kipcakli  
Sharif Krabti  
Andrew Marcus  
Lee Leshen  
Warren Leshen  
Billy McCollum  
Aarti Mehta  
Ashley Natale  
John Pasquale  
Cordelia Persen  
Erin Piscopink  
Jed Root  
Phyllis Rosenblatt  
Timothy Rosser  
Susan Shoemaker  
Melissa Siegel  
Neith Stone  
Peter Tse  
Stephen Wanta  
Adam Weissleder  
Susan Wittenberg  
Ronnie Wolf  
Brandon Zwagerman