



Minutes for the April 5th 2023 Meeting of the Participatory Budgeting (PB) Committee of Freehold Borough

In attendance: Mark Bravaco, Carrie Conger (co-chair), Joanna Connelly, Ron DeMarco, Kathy Eckhardt (co-chair), Ted Eckhardt, Cary Freyre, Dan Xavier.

The meeting began at approximately 7:15pm (due to our having been locked out of Borough Hall). In approximate chronological order:

It was noted that today, April 5th, was technically the first day we had planned to accept project proposal forms—even though the Project Proposal Form isn't available just yet.

It was agreed upon that the webmaster of the Freehold Borough website and Sascha would be emailed about posting our Project Proposal Form to the PB webpage, and that an online method for filling out this form (Google Forms or something similar) would be used to streamline the process for applicants who don't want to or can't print out the document. The Project Proposal Form should be accessible by next Wednesday.

The new flyer and emblem for this year were reviewed and agreed to, except for one minor change—to shorten the URL at the bottom of the flyer using a service like Bit.ly in order to make it easier for members of the community to visit our webpage. Mark B. agreed to this change and said that he would send out the updated version to the Committee by email.

Dan X. observed that the new flyer and emblem are economically—and environmentally—efficient in that they aren't year-specific and are therefore “evergreen” and reusable in years to come. Before the meeting, Dan X. had printed out fifty color-copies of the flyer, and Mark B. had printed out ten black-and-white copies.

It was asked if Mark B. could create larger, poster-type flyers for this year, and he indicated that he could. Dan X. (I think) offered to print out these poster-flyers and some more of the regular-sized flyers at work.

Dan X. indicated that he would push back outreach presentation(s) he'd planned to make sure that the Project Proposal Form is uploaded and accessible at the time of presenting.

Carrie C. indicated that she was a bit behind in her PB responsibilities (due to having just started a new job), but she committed to catching up on things soon.

Cary F. said that she would reach out to the Rotary Club.

Ted E. noted that it had been quite difficult to get in contact with the Little League, but he had recently made headway and noted that it “will happen.”

Carrie C. said that she would send out information for a virtual option for individual members to attend future meetings, if they cannot make it in-person.

The PB PowerPoint, which now has the new emblem on its title-slide, was shown via the TV in the meeting-room. Kathy E. indicated that it was almost, but not quite, finished.

Taking a newer, more recent photo of the pedestrian footbridge at Lake Topanemus for the PB PowerPoint was discussed. I am uncertain as to whether we decided to go forward with this.

The Committee discussed the possibility of marching in the Memorial Day Parade in a section dedicated exclusively to Freehold Borough volunteers, and Dan X. brought up possibly driving one of his cars in the parade so that Carrie C.—who has difficulty walking—could join us more easily.

Carrie C. and Kathy E. agreed to call/email people who have submitted project proposals in years past in order to remind them that the process is starting up again.

The Committee talked about advertising in Freehold Borough High School. Dan X. proposed giving some flyers to his daughter (who’s a student there) to attach to bulletin boards, etc.; and it was also suggested that some of us go inside the teachers’ lunchroom and pitch the program to faculty members.

One important idea that came up during the meeting was possibly incentivizing high-school students (particularly those in the National Honor Society) to submit project proposals by offering them volunteer hours in return.

The next PB Committee meeting is scheduled for May 3rd.