

Committee Board 12- Manhattan
Business Development- Meeting Minutes
November 5, 2018

Committee Members Present

Eleazar Bueno, Chair
Tanya Bonner
Waldys Cruz
Domingo Estevez
Sara Fisher
Rud Morales
Bruce Robertson

Committee Members Absent

Matthew Levy
Glenis Aquino

Board Members Present

Richard Lewis

Guests: Liliam Arias, Jackie Tesman, Heidy Hernandez, David Eisenbach, Evelyn Collado, Paul, Angie Hammond.

Meeting called to order at 7:06 p.m. with quorum. BD Committee Chair Eleazar Bueno opened the meeting by welcoming Committee members and guests.

Bueno introduced Liliam Arias from SBS to discuss programs they are offering and executing in the Washington Heights Area.

Arias started by explaining the programs provided by SBS located in the WAHI Business Center Solution where access to capital is the main focus. They provide a a General flyer also translated in spanish where all the services are listed. In addition to 311 where they also provide information, their website is also a source of information for Business plans, Projections and Growth.

Arias stated the business courses shown in the calendar are all related to: Marketing, Financial Management, Legal Assistance and Legal Consultation. Within the legal consultation they provide Pro-Bono lawyers, lease negotiation- once a month by appointment-, and commercial leases programs also on line.

Sally asked if all of this info is different languages. Arias answered that yes, depending on the demographics and population.

Arias continued saying that the Legal Assistance program was launched 2 months ago in Sept 2018. Arias mentioned the WAHI SBS branch also provides the MWBE certification and that they have someone on site helping navigate through city complications, Ana.

She listed Maria Aybar as the person in charge of Recruitment Training. And herself as the Access to Capital to go person. Arias also mentioned the 3 additional programs run by SBS: 1. Workforce. 2. Careers. 3. Neighborhood Initiatives. One of those initiatives is "Love our Local".

Bueno asked what's the most sought after issue where people need help. Arias answered that Licenses, funding, credit are the main asks but that unfortunately most businesses have enough money shown on the financial statements to qualify.

Sally Fisher commented that there was 20 million dollars allocated to Small Businesses to what Arias responded that there are only available at the federal level. She also said that they do not work with grants, only do advisory work to stop predatory lending with too high interests set up to make businesses fail.

Bueno asked for the loan process walkthrough. Arias mentioned that the loan process goes thru regular banks and lenders where at times 10,000 SBA loan apply, alternative lending thru credit unions. She also mentioned that TD Bank was lending to startups.

Rud morales asked if a lot of people take advantage of the MWBE training and certification. Arias answered no, that her staff is training on how to motivate businesses to take advantage of the certification, the bidding process, and the accelerator module to help access contracts.

Angie Hammond of the Love your Local initiative is present to help push round 2. The applications deadline is January 22, 2019. Round 1 had 25% of the applicants from WAHI/Inwood.

20 Businesses are finalist to receive 90k to improve their businesses. Assistance in Spanish and resources provided.

Categories prioritized?. Her answer is no, its for any business that provide jobs. The application itself takes 20 minutes and businesses should have been 3 years in existence, not taxes owed, no violation and either an A or B grade, and lastly not renting space.

Hammond mentions that the initial assessment will determine whether the business owes back taxes.

Sally asked if the information is provided in Spanish. The answer was no, but there is assistance available.

Sally asked what area covers the initiative. Hammond answers that it covers WAHI from 155th Street to 218th Street.

Bruce Robertson asked what can the committee do to help. Robertson points to Heidi Hernandez as a vehicle for information. He also mentions that 90% of the business owners are spanish speaking.

Bueno suggests that Jackie Tesman should work with Angie to partner with the resources Jackie has to help disseminate flyers and a little hand holding for any questions.

Domingo Almanzar if there's any social media presence for the initiative. Angie answered that SBS is doing everything in their power to be in all mediums. Almanzar asked for the list of any local partners. Angie listed a few: CB12, Merchant Associations, WAHI Chamber, WAHI BID.

Updates us on the SBJSA forum by Tanya and Domingo, moderators

Only perseverance will help the message get out to spark interest, what is a stake, actions taken and the petitions. NYC City Council Speaker has reviewed it

Information provided to help the bill was provided by Jackie included the store fronts vacancy report.

Domingo stated that the National Chamber of Commerce was present and that it helped put the bill in context for the strategies needed to pass. Outreach is needed to get folks understand the bill.

He posed the question of whether the bill help businesses with the rezoning. First the definition of small business needs to be established. Right now, only under 99 employees are considered to be small businesses.

Tanya said the idea is to start the conversation and the businesses need to step up to put pressure the council to introduce bill.

Sally stated that petitions need to be signed without landlords seeing it because the businesses owners fear repercussions

Jackie commented that it is not longer an issue.

Lilliam said that petitions are to put regulations on contract real estate taxes.

Domingo asked if the business owners are protected while on the process of evictions. David Eisenbach responded that the bill was weak on tax assessment pass along.

Rud said that triple net leases do not protect businesses, and that the bill needs to be discussed with community and businesses.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.