

**Black Rock Minutes of the Regular Board
NRZ, Inc. Meeting on March 31, 2014
Draft**



The meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm.

Board members in attendance were:

Dave Barbour	John Gibson	Gerry Manning
Stephanie Barnes	Peter Holecz	John Soltis
Frank Basler	Joe Ianniello	Kraig Steffan
Joy Cline	John Marshall Lee	Bruce Williams

Also attending were Deborah Thomas-Sims, Steve Stafstrom, Stuart Sachs, Peggy Ianniello, and Tara Collins.

Meeting came to order: 7:05 PM:

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting on January 27, 2014. Joe Ianniello moved; John Marshall Lee seconded; the vote was unanimous.

Old Business:

❖ **NRZ Leadership Committee:**

Deborah Thomas-Sims gave a report. John Marshall Lee commented that three new NRZs are in the process of being created.

Indemnification:

John Lee received a summons from MTAG Services, LL, that has cited six entities related to a 340/344 Brewster tax-related matter. The 6th party named is the Black Rock NRZ. Gerry read a letter he has written to City Attorney Anastasi asking for clarity regarding liability indemnification for our and all NRZs. Joe talked about the Burroughs' Board experience as a fall back if this does not work. Steve Staffstrom said the fine is zero, since none of us draws a salary. The question is who pays the legal fees.

- ❖ **Treasurers Report:** John Marshall Lee said once again no funds came in, and no moneys were expended this month. There is \$1851.68 in the account.

Standing Committees Progress Reports, Updates

❖ **Standing Committee 1: Business and Economic Development**

Village District Subcommittee Stephanie Barnes reported that Joy Cline, Steve Stafstrom, and she have been working with the City on the Village District. Steve has been in touch with David Kooris.

Black Rock Business Development Group: Tara Collins reported that Victor DeMario on leaving Source Coffee House tripped on the sidewalk and sustained several injuries. He's planning to sue the City because the sidewalk has not been properly maintained. The Business Development Group has been

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fairly dormant with the holidays and severe winter. They are going to get revved up again soon. The Restaurant and Bar owners want to do another Restaurant Week in the fall. There is a lot of interest in the Business Development Group – and, people are busy running their businesses.

- Gerry thanked John Soltis for arranging for the meeting with Anaergia that was held at the BR Library. It was a very interesting presentation about its technology which takes sludge from the wastewaterplant and uses anerobic bacteria to convert it into methane, which is then burned to create energy. It will produce enough energy for 1,000 homes. (It also processes food waste in accordance with a new CT law saying large institutions must either give excess food away or send it to a facility like this if one exists within 20 miles.)
- Fuel Cell Facility: It will be located behind Sikorsky, far from the water and not visible from the street.

❖ **Standing Committee 2: Education**

Laura Hurwitz was ill. She did not attend the last construction meeting, so does not know the status of the work being done on the Black Rock School.

❖ **Standing Committee 3: Arts, Entertainment, & Culture – Bruce Williams reported:**

- The Black Rock Art Guild currently has a show going on at the Nest.
- The Coast Guard vessel, Kathleen Moore, has been commissioned; Bruce showed pictures of the the new Fast Response Cutter and the monument for Kate Moore's grave at Mountain Grove Cemetary contributed by the cutter's builder, Bollinger Shipyards of Louisiana. The wife of the #2 officer of the Coast Guard, Mary Jane Currier, will be coming up along with Captain Higgins of the cutter when the monument is dedicated on May 8 at 3:00. Cathy Malloy, the wife of Governor Malloy, has agreed to speak, as well! Mayor Finch will welcome the guests to the city.
- The plaque on the corner of Beacon and Seabright will be commissioned sometime around Black Rock Day. The current rock, on which it will be installed, is to be replaced by a larger one.
- On June 15 (Father's Day) fifteen 1930's style hydroplanes will participate in the second Annual Aqua Cup race on Black Rock Harbor. On the night before students at the Bridgeport Regional Aquaculture and Science School will have a presentation on how they built the boats.
- The "Victoria" and the "Galleon" replicas of Magellan's ships have postponed a scheduled June visit to Black Rock.
- On May 22 through the 25th replicas of the Nina and the Pinta will be at Captain's Cove.

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- Ben's Lighthouse: One of the children killed, in Newtown, Ben Wheeler, loved lighthouses. A "Ben's Lighthouse" group has formed and is coming down to help paint and clean up our Lighthouse, combining service and learning about lighthouses and the history of ours. Stuart Sachs said he's been in touch with them, and they want to have a long-term relation to the lighthouse. Take a look at it's website: <http://www.benslighthouse.org/> It has a terrific mission and series of programs!

John Soltis drew the Board's attention to the Black Rock Library's Second Thursday concert series. Check their web page.

❖ **Standing Committee 4: Zoning, Land Use, Development, & Historic Preservation**

- Fox Street Bridge: Gerry met the First Selectman of Fairfield at a meeting about the bridge. He says that property owner Widdick wants to build a big condo project which will probably not get through Fairfield zoning. The Greater Bridgeport Regional Council made an excellent presentation for a ca. \$3.5M project to build the bridge. There is erosion on the south side of the creek, which will need to be addressed in the environmental impact study.
- 340-344 Lots of work is being done inside – plumbing, electrical, etc. As the weather improves, we'll see more work on the outside. The trees cut down on the north side of the property were diseased and were cleared to make way for the gravel drive for emergency vehicles to have access to the two lots in back
- 3336 Fairfield Avenue: Hersch needs \$3-4M to build on the cement foundation already in place. He's applying for bridge money, and if he gets it, he'll be breaking ground soon for his River Bank Landing project.
- Brennan property, a proposed apartment complex next to Viale: Several of us met with Ray Rizzio, Tom Brennan's attorney. Dave Barbour said it's a big building, and in Dave's opinion, it's not compatible with the context (e.g. 6 stories). He said they made some suggestions to change the design to make it more likely all the variances they are asking for will be granted. Ray was delighted the NRZ is willing to work with them, not just fight them. John Marshall Lee has gathered information about the project, much of which was unfavorable. It is clear that there will be a density issue. Stephanie and Stu said they will probably rent enough of it so they can turn around and sell it. The concensus is the NRZ is not in a position to make a response either way at this time.
- Bank Building: Rumor about it being a Popeye's was true, and the City along with building owner, Nial O'Neil –, with some encouragement, turned it down. Steve Staffstrom says there is a possibility that Popeye's will go on the DeNardo property across from Wendy's. Bruce pointed out that the mural on the building is by a noted artist, and is very valuable. There is a possibility it will be removed and replaced in City Hall.

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- Fox Street: Stuart Sachs said he filed an application for 36 Fox Street, changing from Greens Farms Antiques to a different use under another name, a use in which the same fellows will store their equipment. The owners have to file a number of reports to qualify this change. John Marshall Lee complimented Stu for disclosing about his involvement in this.

❖ **Standing Committee 5:** Outreach & Communications: Felicia Stoval Upchurch has moved and her phone has changed; she will be removed from the roster. The board also suggested Bishop Diamond be removed as well (Cathedral of Faith), since he has not attended in more than a year.

❖ **Standing Committee 6:** Quality of Life, Environmental, & Public Safety: No formal report. We have already talked about the Fox Street Bridge this evening.

Meeting adjourned: 8:51 PM upon a motion by John Marshall Lee, seconded by Peter Holecz

NEXT MEETING: Monday, June ³⁰~~23~~, 2014

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Basler, Secretary, Black Rock NRZ