

2019 Annual Report

Seaside Heights Business Improvement District

The Seaside Heights Business Improvement District (SSHBID) continued, in 2019, to progress towards a healthier balance between the many capabilities of a vibrant BID and strictly carrying out the promotional aspects of such a district. While promotions are an important element of BID work, the SSHBID had, over years, become predominantly a promotions entity. The SSHBID is increasingly impacting on creating a healthier environment for businesses, business recruiting, encouraging investment in commercial properties, assisting businesses directly with improving their operations, and being an effective economic development partner with the Borough.

2019 was the second year of the transition in SSHBID operations. One of the notable foundations for that continued effort was the SSHBID Board of Directors adopting four Critical Success Factors for the organization (see page 2). The bottom-line for a business improvement district is increasing commercial ratables through new investment and an improvement in the business climate. In order to achieve that in Seaside Heights, the Board identified these four factors, against which it measures all of its activities. With a stronger focus on return on investment, the SSHBID has been able to utilize its limited resources more effectively.

Highlights

Continued improvements in financial and administrative controls

Continued connecting more “across the bridge”

Tremendous growth in email subscriptions and Facebook followers

Concentration on Critical Success Factors that lead to success

New website that more effectively communicates many aspects of Seaside Heights experience

Substantially enlarged Arts and Crafts by the Sea June and August

Instituted regularly-scheduled kite festivals

A Taste of Seaside Heights restaurant promotion

Obtained \$18,000 in grants supporting promotion

Continued to do promotions that put customers directly in businesses

New brochure more widely distributed throughout our major markets

The SSHBID continues to address the challenge of overcoming decades of people on both sides of the bridge believing that when the lifeguards leave and Casino Pier closes the town closes entirely. This will take years of off-peak season education on both sides of the bridge, with customers and our businesses. The tens of thousands of people on the mainland don't cross the bridge believing there is not enough to entertain them. And the business people in Seaside Heights cut back to deal with reduced clientele, reinforcing the impression that the town is closed.

Administration and Organization

The SSHBID's continued focus on increasing return on investment for stake-



holders, thus reducing expenses while increasing revenues and using available funds more effectively. Both years since the change in management of the SSHBID, the organization entered the next year with enough funds to cover a couple of months of operation, rather than needing to cut back activities and borrow in order to continue to keep operating.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Focus on the customer experience (CX)

Optimize Return on Investment (ROI) and sustainability

Brand clarity and congruence

Increase property values and ratables

adopted by the Board of Directors 1/17/19

The SSHBID generated \$18,000 in grants in 2019. This supported promotional efforts with \$7,500 offsetting the cost of brochures and brochure distribution for the SSHBID and \$7,500 towards digital marketing initiatives for the Tourism Development Commission. In addition, the SSHBID received grants from the NJ Department of Labor to reduce the cost of hiring interns for the summer. The interns primarily worked on more energetic social media and other promotions.

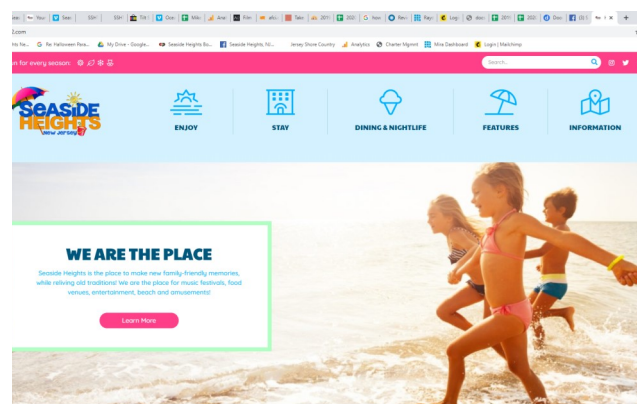
It should be noted also that the SSHBID provides staffing and oversight for the Tourism Development Commission. Applying the same management principals as it has to the SSHBID, the organization has enabled the TDC to go into both 2019 and 2020 with surplus funds, without reducing the effectiveness of its work.

Promotions

The SSHBID gave particular attention to improving Seaside Heights footprint in digital media in terms of numbers of people reached in our primary markets and more effectively presenting the diversity of quality experiences available to our guests. The exit82.com website was totally redesigned in order to more effectively communicate that diversity of experiences available to our guests.

A simplified brochure was developed that was attractive while encouraging people to visit the exit82.com website. The brochure did not contain dated information so it could be used from year to year. And the brochure was distributed widely in our market areas, including eastern Pennsylvania

In partnership with the Tourism Development Commission, a digital advertising campaign was undertaken that increased the number of email subscriptions to nearly 14,000 and Facebook followers to 88,000 (Wildwood has 52,000 and Jenkinson's 85,000).



We enhanced the July 4th fireworks celebration by giving out several thousand American flags that were also tagged with a card encouraging people to visit our website

and sign up for our email newsletter. Arts and Crafts by the Sea in June and August continued to grow as an event popular with both crafters and the public. In June we also supported our outstanding restaurants by conducting a Taste of Seaside Heights event that included 10 restaurants and for which we provided both promotional support and transportation between the restaurants for attendees. The event involved and benefited Big Brothers Big sisters of Ocean County.

We continue to work with JerseyShoreCountry.com to expand the potentials for that on-line country radio station. During the season we hosted four Tuesday night kite festivals and found them to be both very visual and a good draw for folks



from Ortley Beach and Lavallette. We enhanced First Night, both through more effective promotion that better communicated the value to participants and by enhancing the experience. We added Insectropolis from Toms River, superhero characters, the Coca-Cola polar bear, and line dancing with JerseyShoreCountry.com.

Business Recruiting and Planning

With a greater focus on business development, the SSHBD undertook a number of initiatives and set the foundations for others.

With the redesign of the exit82.com website, development of areas dedicated to in-



creasing commercial investment, recruiting businesses, and assisting businesses in locating in Seaside Heights were begun.

The Borough had approached the SSHBID for assistance in funding a video geared towards promoting the redevelopment areas. The SSHBID suggested that the scope of the video be expanded to include both the redevelopment areas and commercial investment in Seaside Heights generally. The SSHBID worked with the Borough and Oak Leaf Productions in developing the video which is now being distributed to potential investors.

Casino Pier/Breakwater Beach had approached the SSHBID with concerns over the handling of registration for charter buses. The SSHBID was authorized by the Borough to handle charter bus registrations and worked with Casino Pier in developing an online registration process which worked extremely well, registering approximately 120 buses.

The SSHBID also has added a job listing page to the exit82.com website. This provides businesses in Seaside Heights a year-round virtual job fair to attract employees. The page is periodically promoted through social media and email promotions.

In keeping with the strategy of building alliances on the mainland, the SSHBID sponsored two Toms River Chamber of Commerce networking events in 2019.

The loss of Funtown Pier has resulted in a decrease in the diversity of experiences for our guests. At the same time, there is under-developed business potential in the North Beach area of the Boardwalk. The SSHBID has targeted that area and the Boulevard as areas to receive particular attention to develop new businesses and help existing businesses to do better. To that end the SSHBID has been very supportive of the carousel museum project including taking the initiative in promotions, such as creating and placing billboards at the new site.

Maintenance and Improvement

The SSHBID continued to provide and maintain attractive planters on the Boardwalk. We also assisted with obtaining decorative banners for the Boulevard and Central Ave.

As part of our work to generate revenues to support our maintenance and improvement efforts we manage the Boardwalk memorial board program. The program enables people to purchase boards engraved with their mes-

sage on the Boardwalk. This is an increasingly popular program with inherent inefficiencies which we continually reduce.

Looking Ahead

The foundations laid in 2018 have begun to reposition the SSHBID as a greater economic development entity for Seaside Heights in the coming years. Plus, we continue to increase the effectiveness of BID activities. We look forward to many exciting new initiatives in 2019.

Seaside Heights Business Improvement District 2019 Board of Directors

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| Jeff Bowden Sand and Surf Motel | Angela Lombardi Angie Lombardi Photo |
| Tommy Boyd Chief of Police | Joe Loundy Seaside Liquors |
| Michael Carbone Beachcomber | Mike Loundy Seaside Realty |
| Nick Dionisio Park Seafood | Sid Loundy Sunrise Motel |
| Carol Durkin Casino Pier | Jim Maglies Captain Hooks |
| Ricardo Gomez Santeria | Glenn McCarthy Klee's Bar & Grill |
| Mike Graichen Borough | John McGrath Hershey Motel |
| Patty Hershey Shake Shoppe Arcade | Kristopher Sabey Surf Liquors |
| Jeff Jackson Jimbo's | Harry Smith Borough |
| Elizabeth King Property Owner | Chris Vaz Borough |
| Greg Kohr Original Kohr's | Steve Whalen Lucky Leo's |

Seaside Heights Business Improvement District

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John McGrath, Chairman of the Board

Michael Redpath, Executive Director

Kristina Wehrenberg, Assistant Executive Director

