April 14, 2020 Club 44 Meeting Minutes, shared by Susannah Pitman-zoom meeting

* Loans/Grants/Unemployment - all business owners at the meeting confirmed that none of them have received any grants, government loans or unemployment. Some business owners received an email regarding the SBA EIDL, which stated that in order to support as many businesses as possible $1,000 would be given for each employee per business up to $10,000. As stated in the explanation of this aid, these funds were to have been distributed within 72 hours of applying but no business owners have received this money. Regarding the PPP program, some business owners have received a notice that they've been wait listed. Some expressed that their bank doesn't have an application available. Square sent out an email to their customers that they are able to facilitate the application process. Some business owners suggested credit card loans (American Express). Alderwoman Marie Devenezia's son works for Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill and she said she would speak to him for an update. OVERNIGHT DEVELOPMENT NOT SHARED AT THE MEETING - the NJ Department of Labor now has guidelines for applying for unemployment for those who are self employed. Please visit their website for more information.
* Alderwoman Marie Devenezia shared that the 2020-2021 town budget will be finalized soon and presented either this coming Monday or the following Monday Board of Alderman meeting.
* BMS is working on seeking grants for support during this time.
* Banners - banners are now available and can be picked up at Roma Pizza. These banners encourage people to support local small businesses by writing a review, purchasing a gift certificate, etc. and they're designed to convey this message beyond this pandemic. Banners will also be hung at Walmart, Acme and Kings. It is highly encouraged that business owners hang these in their window.
* Virtual Friday - being that last Friday was Good Friday, participation from business owners was low. Some owners are working on creating a virtual offering.
* Video - Allison Ercolani is creating a promotional video. A script was posted in the Club 44 Facebook group. To date she has received 4 submissions. Please film yourself with this script and send her the footage by this coming Sunday. Teleprompter apps are available so that you need not memorize the script.
* Boonton Teddy Bear Hunt - Some communities are putting teddy bears in their windows as an activity for people to search for bears. If you need a bear, contact Evie Burke (Eyewear by Evie).
* Russell Bauman (Walter Bauman Jewelers) is making ear savers for wearing masks. He will have a bag of these available outside of his business for those who need these for wearing masks. These ear savers hold the elastic that normally goes around the ears, which normally can cause pain if wearing for too long. The group thanked Russell for his contribution. Additionally, Evie suggested coating glasses with shaving cream and then wiping them off to prevent lenses from fogging up from wearing a mask.
* Future events - It was noted that planning for future events should start now, knowing that participant's comfort level and restrictions may play a major factor in how events are executed. A "6' Apart" parade was suggested.
* Mondays at 7pm, the town is encouraging residents to stand outside their front door and cheer in honor of all Essential Workers.
* Rents - realtor Larry Brush (William Lawrence Agency) reported that many businesses and building owners he's spoken with have paid/collected March and April's rent but that May's rent is questionable based on aid received by small businesses. Additionally, he explained that commercial mortgages work differently than residential mortgages and are not as flexible for building owners who need alternatives.