



Ballston Spa Business and Professional Association Annual Report for 2021

It was two years ago that we started to feel the cascading effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and no one at that time imagined we would still be grappling with the issues and challenges. Most Ballston Spa businesses have managed to keep going, reinventing their service models, dealing with unprecedented staff and supply shortages and following evolving mandates in the name of public health safety. It has not been an easy and smooth journey, to be sure. Even so, in the midst of this uncertainty, we have actually seen new businesses spring up, driven by the vision and passion of their owners, something that is a hallmark of all our small businesses. It is truly inspiring. Initiatives like Save Our Locals remind us that the health of our community depends on the vitality of our business district. The Ballston Spa community's continued support—shopping, dining, engaging services—makes a huge difference.

Because the pandemic upended so many of the Association's normal activities in 2020, we were unable to hold our main fundraiser, the annual "The Way We Were" Car Show that year, which certainly made an impact on our bottom line for 2021. We had to walk the fine line between conserving resources while still providing the support our members need and expect. It was more important than ever this past year to keep our local businesses in the forefront as they found their footing in the ever-changing landscape of restrictions and guidelines. We didn't stop marketing the village due to COVID, we marketed even more because we weren't going to let COVID be the story. The story, and the bright spot in all of this, has been the resiliency of our members: shops, services and restaurants that continually and creatively adapted to the evolving situation, finding new ways to reach and serve their customers, non-profit organizations who rose to the challenge as community needs grew and residents who generously supported all the above.

In 2021, we continued to promote and expand awareness of our vibrant downtown through our marketing endeavors. We saw a return to many of our regular activities. As the prevailing New York State guidelines gradually evolved and vaccination numbers improved, our summer events were able to take place. Movies were shown on summer First Fridays, outdoor concerts were enjoyed again in Iron Spring Park and the twice weekly summer farmers' market features several diverse new vendors to join with favorite returning ones. Unfortunately only one networking breakfast and one "pop up" mixer were held during the year. However, most gratifyingly, the 19th Annual "The Way We Were" Car Show took place downtown once again in October with over 400 cars and hundreds in attendance. Small Business Saturday promotion brought shoppers downtown and the Holiday Parade was back in full force. The BSBPA also continued to partner with the Village of Ballston Spa and contribute representation to ongoing economic development issues and initiatives.

In November 2021, the BSBPA distributed a member survey to gauge the effectiveness, satisfaction and perceived value of the Association's efforts on behalf of members. The response rate was 32.8% with a good mix of business/non-profit/resident representation. That response rate is excellent relative to association survey averages of 15 - 20%. The survey results summary is posted on the BSBPA website:

<https://www.ballston.org/2022/01/31/bsbpa-member-survey-results-summary/>

BSBPA Board members held a half day strategic planning retreat to review the member survey results, as well as explore and discuss more effective methods and practices.

Key Retreat Takeaways:

- ◆ Overall member satisfaction with BSBPA is very good.
- ◆ The longer the membership experience, the higher the level of overall satisfaction.
- ◆ For new members of less than 5 years need more focus to improve satisfaction and benefit level. New initiatives for Business member engagement could help push more of those "on the fence" to the "Promoter" category.

- ◆ The vast majority of responding members feel that dues are low or appropriate.
- ◆ Communication and outreach get high marks.
- ◆ Events like Farmers' Market, Concerts, Holiday Parade and Car Show remain popular.
- ◆ Events like the Ice Cream Social could be repurposed to be more community centered.
- ◆ Networking and business cross promotion collaboration is valued.
- ◆ The current mission of the BSBPA is strongly supported along with encouragement from members for some expansion and revision in priorities and programs.
- ◆ Be better in tuned to what business want, what works and what doesn't. Meet businesses where they are financially and on their schedule.
- ◆ Address any retention vulnerability for business members.
- ◆ Need to improve perception of membership value with non-profit members.
- ◆ Better orientation and education of members so that they will take advantage of benefits and opportunities.
- ◆ BSBPA has to satisfy a diverse membership within its small budget and staff, putting more responsibility on board members than organizations like chambers of commerce do.
- ◆ Volunteer involvement is biggest challenge to continue most popular events.
- ◆ Expand people resources via four level participation: Board, Committees, Volunteer Corps and Staff.
- ◆ Board members should have clear sense of purpose and direction.
- ◆ Board assessment should be done on a regular basis.
- ◆ Board meetings should focus more on big picture and strategic direction

Next Steps:

- ◆ Review Focus on improving member satisfaction.
- ◆ Plan and assign ownership for action steps required.
- ◆ Continue to build upon communication strengths.
- ◆ Reexamine and possibly re-purpose event programming. "Do less but do it better."
- ◆ Consider outreach to organizations similar to BSBPA for successful practices.

Board Members

The following BSBPA board members are ending their terms:

- Donna Dardaris (Resident) Board member since 2015
- Kathi Leigh (Ballston Area community Center) Board member since 2016
- Kelly Ostrander (Contour Mortgage Corp.) Board member since 2016
- Nate Thompson (Hope Church) Board member since 2018
- Ashley Tyler (Jumper Bean Day Care/ Preschool) Board member since 2017
- Bernadette VanDeinse (Resident) Board member from 2012-2016 and 2020-2022.
- Chris Sorrell (2020), Tracy DeRagon (2020) and Liz Kormos (2018) stepped off the board mid-year.

We thank each of them for their dedication, time and effort in service to the board and to the Ballston Spa community.

The BSBPA welcomes the following new board members for 2022:

- Mike Yates, (Ballston Spa Lions Club)
- Nathan Ward (Resident)

Additional new board members are anticipated but hadn't been finalized at the time of this report.

Executive Administrator Ellen Mottola retires on March 31, 2022, a position she has held since 2004. Dana Womer takes over the Executive Administrator position starting April 1, 2022.

2021 AT A GLANCE

Active Membership

Businesses: 163
Residents: 50
Non-Profit: 40
Total: 253

Gift Certificate Program

Over 80 participating merchants and businesses.
Total sales this year: \$9,394
Total redeemed: \$5,339
Ballston Spa gift certificates encourage "Shopping Local"

Community

Movies in the Park, June-September
Concerts in the Park-July and August concerts in Iron Spring Park
Farmers' Market-18 years, supporting local farm producers
19th Annual "The Way We Were" Car Show--400+entries
Ballston Spa Holiday Parade
Holiday Window Display Recognition
First Fridays-17th year
Adopt A Plot/Village Beautification
7 Ribbon Cuttings celebrated
11 Beautification Awards conferred
BSBPA \$500 Scholarship
Member Benefit Card Program
Networking Breakfast at Gateway House of Peace*
Pop up Holiday Mixer at The Real McCoy Beer Company*
*Breakfasts/Mixers still mostly on hold due to Covid



Community Partnerships

Village of Ballston Spa
Capital Region Chamber/Chamber of Southern Saratoga County
Saratoga County Chamber
Saratoga Convention & Tourism Bureau
Ballston Spa Central School District

Online Presence

ballston.org website
Enhanced member listings
Over 315,000 unique visits annually
Over 1.1 million page views
Over 2.7 million hits

Social Media Platforms

 Facebook.com/BSBPA 4,600+ Followers, Events-45,000+ reach
 @BSBPA 1,196 Followers
 @bsbpa 1,397 Followers

2021 AT A GLANCE

2021 Marketing

Print Ads: Hill Country Observer, Discovery Map, Capital Region/Saratoga Living Magazine, Daily Gazette.

Group Advertising: Southern Saratoga Magazine-3 issues with seasonal group ads along with feature articles, Small Business Saturday group ads with Daily Gazette, Saratoga Magazine summer publication. Albany Broadcasting

Directory Board Signs—downtown boards all replaced and updated

Trash Can Panel Advertising –2 additional cans/8 additional panels

Ballston Spa Map Guides: 10,000 distributed throughout Capital Region.

Social Media: Small Business Saturday-Free social media graphic promotions for BSBPA member business. BSBPA Member News & Deals FB Page, Sharing and Promoting BSBPA members and events via Facebook, Twitter & Instagram throughout the year.

Ballston Spa Themed Merchandise

T-shirts, hats, mugs and stickers available at selected retail shops, Ballston Spa Public Library, at the Ballston Spa Farmers' Market and online.

2021 Officers

Sandy Hassfurter | President

Resident

Christine Kernochan | Vice President

Saratoga National Bank/Resident

Mike Schaffer | Vice President

The Real McCoy Beer Company

Michael Mendrick | Secretary

Resident

June Lane | Treasurer

Ballston Spa National Bank

2021 Board of Directors (as of March 1, 2022)

Donna Dardaris, Resident

Mackenzie Frederick, State Farm Insurance

Kathi Leigh, Ballston Area Community Center

Lisa McCoy, Saratoga's Community Federal Credit Union

Kelly Ostrander, Contour Mortgage Corp.

Nora Osuchowski, Ballston Area Recreation Commission

Stacy Simmons, Garden with Stacy

Nate Thompson, Hope Church

Ashley Tyler, Jumper Bean Day Care

Bernadette VanDeinse, Resident

Dave Womer, Adirondack Cabling & Security

Thank you!

To our generous event sponsors throughout the year.

To volunteers who gave their time, talent and efforts.

To our business members for being the engine of Ballston Spa's vitality.

To our non-profit members for their dedication to all in our community.

To our resident members for their continued support in this "Village of Friends."

Executive Administrator

Ellen Mottola



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