

BID BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thurs., April 16, 2020

Via Zoom

1. Attendees

Board - Erika Bowker, Adam Dawson, Bonnie Ayers Namkung, Jed Greene, Jaime Ortiz, Jeff Brusati, Elisabeth Setten, Morgan Schaffler, Ogi Teker

Chamber of Commerce - Joanne Webster

City of San Rafael – Simon Vuong

Guests – Meg Reilley-Marin Society of Artists, Houman Chitsaz-Attorney

2. Called to order by Erika at 10:10

3. Approval of Minutes - motion by Morgan/2nd Jed. Approved unanimously -members listed above.

4. President's Report - Erika Bowker

Thank you for all your work, Eda, promoting downtown in the midst of the crisis.

Mini-grants - City of SR, County and Chamber put together fund for mini-grants for up to \$5,000 each. Eligibility - any small SR business with \$1 million or less in gross receipts, less than 20 employees and operating for at least a year. Must show a significant impact to revenues from COVID. Have already received 30 applications. Businesses have until Monday April 20 to apply. Motion – Adam moved/Jed 2nd. Passed unanimously – see members present above.

Discussion - a lot of funding for nonprofits has been halted so these organizations are very impacted. Marin Community Foundation was approached and did not want to participate in this grant program. For this phase City/Chamber/County is focused only on for-profit businesses.

Target funds – amount remaining is \$20,962. Discussed sending letter to committee to ask that the balance be designated for disaster relief fund. Motion – Jed moved/Adam 2nd. Unanimously passed – see members present above.

5. Executive Director & VP Report – Eda Lochte and Adam Dawson

San Rafael Covid-19 relief fund – received requests for BID to contribute. Would like to give \$5,000 of BID funds to support our small business members. Hops and Vines cancelled so we can use that budget to contribute to disaster fund. Erika discussed in her report.

Eda sent newsletter to members informing about disaster relief fund. Also jumped into action by creating a real-time list posting the status of businesses (open/closed/available for takeout /delivery) on BID website. Promoted it on social media. COO of Nextdoor contacted Eda because they've set up a list to display delivery, pickup at the door, etc.

Street banners – working on ordering horizontal banners for 2 locations on 4th St. to feature Shop local, Eat local, Support San Rafael message. Worked on design so we can order them

from a local producer now. Davis Sign Co. which donated design time of \$100/hr. and discounted banners to \$825 each. Total is \$2,100 for banners and installation.

They can stay on display till July 27 so we need a sturdy material. Showed two designs and members preferred option A.

Business directory - have wanted to build a business directory on the BID site. It's especially important now because people want to know what's open, who delivers, hours, etc. Web designer Abby sourced a plugin that will allow businesses to update their own listings. Cost of the plugin is \$200 now and \$300/yr. ongoing. Abby's time is \$675 for initial setup with businesses already on the active biz list.

It's important to communicate to members that they can update their listing and encourage them to do so. The Chamber has the capability and few people use it.

Advertising through the IJ – cities of San Anselmo and Novato had ads in Sunday IJ and San Rafael should consider. Recommend two ¼-pg color ads + 80,000 digital impressions for \$1,500. City did some digital ads that ended last Sunday. The IJ's impressions are huge now and we can choose the period the digital impressions would run, suggest 3 weeks.

We have a budget for advertising. Discussion of the ratio of print ads to digital and rationale for print vs. social media campaign.

Big thanks to Erika, our president who's coordinating social media. She's doing a great job.

Discussion - do we know anything about discounts at local biz for seniors? Rough Linen, a local business, is contributing by making masks for Kaiser. Johnny's Donuts is donating to first responders. Moonlight Deli is giving free lunches to first responders.

6. Treasurer's report – Jed Greene

Because of the shut-down, our events income and costs will go down. Because we allocated funds for promotion we have room to cover advertising now. We may want to build up extra cash because we don't know what our income will be next year—will there be fewer business licenses?

For now, we have plenty of money to go ahead with the advertising plan. It will support our businesses and the IJ as well.

May Madness is rescheduled for Aug. 29, so we're hoping it will still happen.

Voting on \$4,475 total for the following actions:

Banners, option A – Adam moved/Elisabeth 2nd. Unanimous approval – see members in attendance list.

IJ ads print and digital ads – Morgan moved/Jed 2nd. Unanimous approval – see members in attendance list.

Online directory – Jed moved/Adam 2nd. Unanimous approval – see members in attendance list.

8. Chamber of Commerce Report – Joanne Webster

News article said feds are out of PPP money. A few local businesses have been approved but haven't received funding. One company in Mill Valley that was already connected to SBA got funds.

Happy to answer questions about award criteria and judging. Their intentions is to distribute funds May 1. Administered by an impartial committee, put together based on knowledge of small business and San Rafael. Among the members, a banker, CPA, someone from Latinx community. Each applicant will get a score and top scorers will be placed in a lottery.

There's interest in making the program countywide. The fund is \$200,000 and if grants of \$5,000 are given then it will only reach 40 businesses.

So grateful to Damon Connally, Mayor Phillips and Danielle O'Leary for spearheading this program. We got it off the ground very fast. We expect a second phase which will be even better.

8. Economic Development Report – Simon Vuong

City's been mapping the disaster response for 5 weeks, with staff meetings of 30 to 40 working to respond. Danielle and Simon are working on business aspects, including disaster relief fund. Have been cutting city services to what's essential. Most departments are closed. Website is updated to show City's services modifications.

City had used Open Counter, a self-service portal to help small businesses looking for location information. The contract will not be renewed. It was not used enough to justify expense. The main purpose was to see if a particular business type was allowed at a certain location. They're seeing what we can learn and how to bring building permits and planning into the mix.

9. DSRAD report – Elisabeth Setten

Spent DSRAD funds for the year on social media, before the COVID disaster. The contractor has been doing a terrific job. Look at @artsanrafael on Instagram. We're supporting arts orgs and supporting the shop local message. Building a brand and increasing the interaction and followers every week.

10. Adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

11. Next Meeting: Thursday, May 21, 2020, TBD