

Downtown Business Improvement District Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 16, 2020

VIA ZOOM DUE TO COVID-19 SHELTER IN PLACE ORDER

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Welcome Guests

Board – Erika Bowker, Jed Greene, Adam Dawson, Tobi Lessem, Elisabeth Setten, Jeff Brusati, Morgan Schaffler

Chamber – Joanne Webster

City of San Rafael – Simon Vuong

Guests –Meg Reilly- Marin Society of Artists , Lynn Sondag, Dominican Arts Professor

2. Called to order by Erika at 10:07

3. Approval of April Minutes* - motion Jeff/2nd Elizabeth. Approved unanimously -members listed above.

4. President’s Report, Erika Bowker– Addressing the homelessness issue is pressing, especially as more businesses are vacant and/or unoccupied during usual operational hours. Lynn Murphy, of the police department, mental health sector, is a good point of contact. Perhaps we should reach out and see how we can help/get resources. Eda mentioned that in the past we have worked on a “toolkit” for how to deal with homelessness and maybe we should resurrect that effort. Erika mentioned that the city has a form that allows police officers to go on private property to handle necessary actions relating to homelessness. Simon mentioned that there are specific protocol relating to how the city can deal with private property (i.e. deciding on whether something is garbage or someone’s personal property, this must be considered before removing objects from premises.) For solicitors on Fourth street, there is an enforcement code that is implemented.

5. Executive Director’s Report, Eda Lochte - Dining Under the Lights is on track to launch into both Thursdays AND Fridays, for a total of 16 weeks culminating on October 30th, weather-permitting. DUTL Set up: The City is contributing Brian Auger’s time plus a public works employee, Jackson. Would like BID to cover \$4,800 for another staff supervisor member on Fridays - 10 hours per night for 16 nights at \$20/hour. (Motion by Adam and 2nd by Jed, unanimous BID approval for \$4,800 Friday staff costs for DUTL.)

The West America Bank is now for sale and there is a fence around the parking lot which is prohibitive of DUTL patrons from parking there. BID has Insurance for the event. May Madness event is changed to happen as a Sat. Cruising Night instead. Hopefully registration fees previously paid will be donated to the event, although full refunds *will* be available. Participants of May Madness will be encouraged to stay and eat dinner at local restaurants who offer outdoor or curbside dining.

6. Treasurer’s Report, Jed Greene- The balance of the Target Funds was used appropriately for local businesses as a contribution to the Covid-19 Grant, along with a \$5,000 donation from

the BID . The BID has a positive balance of \$100,000 and some of this profit is due to lack of events (and therefore overhead). No report was circulated because there is missing information. Jed recommends that if there are initiatives that we'd like to propose, to first bring a proposal to Eda, then to the BID for a vote, and that there *are* funds to support relevant initiatives. It was also mentioned that despite the positive cash-flow, it is still recommended that we secure corporate sponsorships for the DUTL event, as next years BID budget will be severely impacted.

7. Events Chair, Jaime Ortiz - None, not present.

8. DSRAD Report, Elisabeth Setten - DSRAD committee invited Lynn Sondag, Arts Professor and Board Member with Dominican, to speak. DSRAD in collaboration with Dominican's arts education department are working on a project called the Storefront Student Involvement, working alongside Next Generation Scholars. The project will be either 7 murals with 5 groups of students or 5 murals with 7 groups of students. The purpose of this is to engage students in their community and explore the topics of "taking up space", how to navigate "white spaces", and identity and belonging - taking into consideration that this is a presidential voting year - although the art will not be antagonistic, but instead uplifting and supportive. The art is meant to be displayed in business windows and areas where there would otherwise be 'blight' and empty buildings. The students will work collaboratively and the artwork will be printed digitally and then hung in windows. Simon mentioned that this has been an effort we've considered in the past and a major barrier is getting permission from property owners. The first step might be to speak with business owners, instead, and they can potentially get in contact with the property owners. H&L properties is involved and we have worked alongside the Economic Vitality Committee which has vested interest in these efforts. DSRAD does not have enough resources to do all the projects they wish to do alone, however, in collaboration with people like Lynn and Dominican, they can endeavor into more projects and have further reach. Elizabeth will send out a proposal at next month's meeting about whether to circulate a DSRAD newsletter.

9. Economic Development Report, Simon Vuong mentioned there are mounting business closures. Some of the community are mentioning they are receiving mixed messages surrounding the re-opening of businesses due to COVID, and Simon says that they should opt in to receive the Snapshot newsletter sent out by the City to receive more consistent messaging. Simon provided an overview of the shelter in place closures, expansion of our temporary outdoor dining for restauranteurs and retailers, answered some questions on business interest for our Downtown vacancies, and provided a brief update on the Goldstone Project. Funding through TAM \$20K Grant was applied for - still awaiting the approval of funding. TBD. This funding would offset costs of traffic barriers and planters to require less capital from local businesses to offer outdoor retail and dining.

10. Chamber of Commerce – Joanne Webster - None, not present. Adjourned: 11:09