

BID Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 21, 2024, 10-11 AM

San Rafael Chamber Conference Room

817 Mission Ave, San Rafael, CA 94901

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Welcome Guests

Called to order by Terrance Thornton, 10:17a

Attended: Terrance Thornton, Amy Bullock, Adam Dawson, Tobi Lessem, Morgan Schaffler,

BID Staff: Sarah Tipple

San Rafael Chamber: Karen Strolia

City of San Rafael: Stacey Laumann

Guests: Carol Pronzini, MSA

Absent: Bishlam Bullock, Jeff Brusati, Kelly Phu, Jay Yinger, Valon Grajqevci, Joe McCallum

2. Approval of Feb Minutes*:

Did not have a quorum to vote

3. President's Report, Terrance Thornton – Following up from last month, he has worked on consolidating the bank accounts from Bank of Marin – the savings account and west end account have both been closed- a little under \$5k – moved to the general account. General checking and May Madness accounts are still open.

Joe is no longer a board member due to his time constraints and since Karen will be attending the Board meetings, the Board no longer needs an additional Chamber rep. The Board will look into reaching out to a few more potential members.

4. Executive Director's Report, Sarah Tipple – Now being an employee of the Chamber, her title has changed from Executive Director to Director. The Chamber Leadership Institute class project of painting more utility boxes is moving along. There are new public art review board requirements that changed the timeline – doing 6 utility boxes and her role is the point of contact with the artists. What is different between this and 2019 is that it will extend beyond downtown and will be called “art with a purpose” – showcasing unity, inclusion, workforce development, economic vitality, and other tenets of the Chamber's missions.

The annual Clean and Green Day on Earth Day is coming up – traditionally held the Friday before Earth Day, but this year it will be on Monday, actual Earth Day. It starts in the plaza with 4 leads, Terrance is graffiti removal with Tom – volunteer of the year. DPW leads the mulching project – Tobi helped lead in multiple phases – it cleaned up the intersections. Last year, Sarah coordinated a phases 2 and 3 to continue the mulching portion of this beautification effort.

With \$2k in our budget for beautification this year, there is little we can do to cover 14 ish blocks of Downtown for a large beautification project. It would be great to collaborate with City efforts and put that toward existing beautification projects for Downtown. Will connect with Stacey on what baseline city programs exist that the BID can get behind and support. Is there a power washing program or mulching calendar? Let's see what is in the Economic Strategic plan that we can work together on. We could bring

back the block ambassador program to support these beautification efforts. Most board members are the block captains for their blocks, what about the other blocks? We could add the beautification committee to next month's agenda. Last year it was combined with the DSAD committee.

Hanging flower baskets have always been a commonly recommended beautification program but not activated because of the expense and other concerns brought up by City staff. There is a very informative hanging flowerpot program proposal Sarah was given by her old contact with the City and volunteer coordinator. It shows multiple options on how other cities and towns fund and coordinate this – DPW, hiring an outsourced gardener, business-supported – these were options presented in a proposal. Ace Hardware could adopt a block and see how it works for them to sponsor and maintain a block at a time. Recommendation of yoyo hooks for ease of watering. The West End could be the pilot program to see if it works and is affordable. Power washing – probably part of the city maintenance program – Stacey can look into it. The resounding agreement is that power washing regularly, mulching the blocks, and possibly adding a flower program. We could also update the street banners to highlight diversity, look at St Luis Obispo's.

5. DSRAD Committee - Sarah, Terrance, Jay, Morgan, Carol – The monthly meeting is today and the BID will be sharing more proposals to be approved – the rainbow crosswalk, matching mural/art funding for businesses, SR Art and Wine Festival – wants to bring it back with a private organization. YIA does not have the bandwidth to bring back the Italian Painting Festival. DSRAD sponsorship could be used to bring musical arts back to the streets.

Morgan explained that creating a 501©(3) with the funding might not be the best model and will look to another model that is in line with the 2040 General Plan. Further CA Arts Council funding may disappear due to state budget cuts. DSRAD is hoping to create a sustainable program to generate an arts council. Shift money from 501©(3) into creating more art programming.

6. Event Committee– Sarah, Kelly, Terrance, Amy – The committee discussed the new potential Dancing Under the Lights, as a pivot from Dining Under the Lights. The committee discussed a Saturday vs Friday due to traffic concerns and creating a weekend destination. The dates proposed are either the last Saturday in July or the third Saturday in August. Morgan suggested doing it the last Saturday before school starts (17th of August) – and that coincides with the third Saturday in August. The proposal was sent to Karen, then sent to City, and now waiting for feedback. If this year's event is successful, the committee would like to do two per year, the first and last Fri or Sat of the summer.

7. City Updates, Stacey Laumann – She has been working on the DSRAD committee items and the City Process updates, specifically business retention. There is an opportunity for the city to communicate that we want to help people amplify their businesses and move through processes more simply. There are a lot of inquiries about new projects and has been assisting with streamlining the communication process for these inquiries. She has been working on beautification downtown with a call from the mayor to activate the empty storefronts. They have identified an artist and will fill the windows with visual arts in the old body kinetics building. She is in conversation with the Goldstone building as well and has been given the green light to activate that storefront. The downtown library needs to move due to seismic upgrades – they are looking for a temporary (6-month) downtown location and are potentially moving into the beauty store. Their timeline is august to do tenant improvements. Looking for an artist to do installations in the Knimble window.

8. Chamber Updates, Karen Strolia – Figuring out how the BID and Chamber are going to move forward

together. Stacey and Micah have met and figured out what the processes are making good headway. The Chamber is focused on their State of the City event on May 15 and they are wrapping up the membership directory.

BID members should participate in the transit center conversation. It is run by the transportation authority of Marin. We can get on their subscription list and get involved, Sarah will add that info on our website and in the next Newsletter.

9. Roundtable check-in/next agenda suggestions, all – Add beautification committee

Adjourned 11:06am

*action items