

BID Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 21, 2026, 10-11 AM

San Rafael Chamber Conference Room

817 Mission Ave, San Rafael, CA 94901

Zoom Meeting ID: 822 1765 7338

Passcode: BID

1. Call to Order/Roll Call 10:05AM

Attended: Terrance Thornton, Tobi Lessem, Rick Lewis, Morgan Schaffler, Adam Dawson

BID Staff: Sarah Tipple

SR Chamber: Karen Strolia

City Staff: Stacey Laumann

Guests: Jaime Ortiz – Bank of Marin & SR Chamber

Absent: Temple Schauble, Crystal Vargas, Jeff Brusati, Jay Yinger, Kathrine Erilla

2. Approval of December, January, February, March, & April Minutes*

The meeting did not have a quorum, so no vote could be taken.

3. President's Report – Terrance: Terrance announced that this will be his final meeting as BID Board President as he steps away to focus on family. He shared how meaningful it has been to serve on the BID Board and witness the positive impact the organization has on Downtown San Rafael and the community. After joining the Board to stay connected following the challenges of COVID, he expressed his appreciation for being part of such a dedicated team and contributing to the success of Downtown San Rafael.

4. Director's Report – Sarah: Building on Terrance's comments, Sarah shared that one of the most rewarding aspects of working for the BID is seeing ideas become reality. She highlighted the new permanent Utility Box Art Program, after requesting \$10,000 in funding support from DSRAD and will fund the painting of five utility boxes in 2026. Sarah developed the program framework, including the website, sponsorship opportunities, artist application process, and project timeline. The call for artists received more than 20 submissions, and the DSRAD committee selected the top five designs. Sarah will be seeking Board input on the final utility box locations in the coming weeks. The permanent program will eventually paint 1 box per year and create a maintenance process for the older boxes.

Sarah thanked BID members Tobi, Adam, and Katherine for their volunteerism at May Madness. Also to the main MM committee Jaime and Rick for their awesome support of the event. As the BID's largest fundraiser, May Madness provides funding for Downtown promo projects. Rick shared the history of the event, which he helped launch with Greg Borrelli in 1986, and highlighted the recent return of the original red roadster that helped inspire the event's beginnings. The final event budget will be presented at a future meeting. Stacey suggested collecting additional attendance and demographic data to help demonstrate the event's economic and community impact. Sarah noted that she has car data and event photos will be posted to the BID and May Madness websites.

Sarah shared that applications are now open for the 4th Annual Pride Art Walk Puzzle. Originally launched with DSRAD grant funding, the program has become a permanent BID initiative. Participating businesses

display Pride-themed window art featuring hidden words that visitors collect to solve a Harvey Milk quote for a chance to win prizes. Sarah noted that the community and businesses have embraced these month-long scavenger hunts, which encourage visitors to explore all of Downtown without requiring street closures. The BID now hosts three annual hunts: Pride, Lunar New Year, and the Elf Hunt.

Sarah announced the 1st Annual Downtown Pizza Month will start this July. Created in response to the growing number of pizzerias Downtown, the promotion aims to celebrate and support the local pizza scene, with seven restaurants and an eighth expected to open soon in the West End. Visitors can collect initials on a Pizza Punch Card to earn rewards while exploring multiple locations. The program is designed to turn a perceived challenge into an opportunity, promote collaboration among businesses, and position Downtown San Rafael as a Bay Area pizza destination. Should be fun!

Sarah reported that planning for the 3rd Annual Dancing Under the Lights on August 7 is on track and that preparations are being finalized before her maternity leave. Sarah expects to begin leave on June 22, will be fully out during July, and plans to return remotely in August. During her absence, Erika will provide up to eight hours per week of BID business outreach, promo, and communications support. Erika was the past BID Board President and is our current social media contractor. Elisa Seppa will assist with management of Dancing Under the Lights and potentially the launch of Hops & Vines or other event needs if they come up. Karen will facilitate the August and September BID Board meetings. Sarah noted that a strong support team is in place to ensure BID programs, events, and business services continue uninterrupted.

5. Summer Mixer Update– Morgan, Katherine (absent): Sarah reminded the Board that the 5th Annual BID Summer Mixer at the Pacifics baseball game will take place on Friday, June 5. The event provides an opportunity for local businesses, community members, and stakeholders to network while supporting a local team. As one of three annual BID mixers, the event also serves as an important way to introduce the BID and its work to the broader community. T&B Sports is celebrating its 80th year on 4th Street! They will be throwing out the 1st pitch and handing out celebratory hats to the 1st 100 attendees, thank you T&B!

6. Budget Review – Sarah: No questions asked during the meeting

7. Beautification – Tobi, Adam, Jay (absent): Tobi reported that a proposed schedule and block list for the 2026 mulching program will be presented in June. Adam will assist with planning efforts. Once dates are finalized and reviewed for conflicts with other community events, a save-the-date notice will be distributed to BID members and volunteers.

8. DSRAD Updates – Stacey: The DSRAD public art program continues to make strong progress. The new public art installation at the B Street Community Center has been well received, featuring poetry presented in both English and Spanish. Work is ongoing for the C Street Garage where the artist is incorporating prose into the artwork to create shading effects. The fountain art project is also nearing completion, with custom tiles currently being fired in Italy and expected to arrive soon. City staff have completed repairs to the fountain lighting.

An artist talk and public art celebration will be held on July 10 at 5:00 p.m., followed by a public art walk in conjunction with the Summer Market and Second Friday Art Walk. Pond Farm will participate in the

event. On August 1, a 25-foot sculpture will be installed at City Hall, and Local Edition Creative is documenting the public art projects through photography and videography.

DSRAD also launched its ArtBurst Grant Program, offering \$5,000–\$10,000 grants to support arts activations, murals, performances, poetry, and other creative projects for businesses within the district. Stacey also mention progress for Sarah’s Utility Box Art Program.

Finally, DSRAD reported that it has hired a marketing firm to develop a new name and brand identity for the Arts District. Several concepts are under consideration, with the goal of creating a name that is more memorable, accessible, and reflective of the organization's mission. Stay tuned for fun updates!

5. **City Updates – Stacey:** Stacey shared that the City has been listening to the business community concerns regarding downtown cleanliness, maintenance, and the impacts of the loss of the Downtown Streets Team. As part of the proposed 2026–2027 City budget, two new Public Works maintenance positions have been recommended to support downtown trash removal, sidewalk power washing, rapid response maintenance, and ambassador-style services. While the budget has not yet been adopted by the City Council, the proposal received a positive response during initial budget discussions. Very exciting.

Stacey also provided updates on the Summer Market, which recently launched and will continue for 4 Fridays alongside the Downtown Second Friday Art Walks. Board members were encouraged to help promote the events. She noted that staff are developing a community activities flyer highlighting family-friendly events, local business activities, and City programs. Stacey shared that holiday programming plans have not been finalized yet. She also noted that Movies in the Park will return this summer.

Regarding development activity, Stacey reported that there were no major updates to the City's development pipeline. She encouraged anyone interested in current and future projects to visit the City's Major Projects webpage, which Sarah regularly shares through the BID newsletter.

6. **Chamber Updates – Karen:** Karen reported that the Chamber has launched its Business Survey and will soon distribute it throughout the Business Improvement District. Postcards have arrived, and Board members were encouraged to help promote participation. The survey is intended to gather feedback on business needs, priorities, and existing programs to help identify what is working well, what improvements are needed, and provide recommendations to the City. Survey responses are requested by mid-June.

7. **Round Table Check-In/Next Agenda suggestions – all:** June 6 soft opening of Bodywise+, featuring complimentary chair massages, herbal treats, movement classes, and wellness activities. Mike's Bikes also announced a new e-bike and gravel bike demo program, allowing customers to test up to two bikes with demo fees applied toward a future bike purchase. MSA moving in October, potentially at 4th Street location.

Adjourn 11:06AM

**action items*