

Minutes of Regular Meeting

**Board of Directors
San Jose Downtown Property Owners' Association**

August 17, 2021

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the San Jose Downtown Property Owners' Association (POA), a non-profit California corporation, was held via Zoom conference call.

Board members present: Egge, Freise, Kline, Lowell, McMahon, Phan, Ristow, Southwell, Zelalich

Members absent: Schneider

Also present were SJDA, Block by Block and City of San Jose staff: Executive Director Scott Knies, Director of Public Space Operations Chloe Shipp, Street Life Project Manager Sarah Billings, Business Development Manager Nate LeBlanc, Director of Policy and Operations Nathan Ulsh, PBID Project Coordinator Dennis Yu, Block by Block Program Director Chris Kendrix, DOT Division Manager Eric Hon, Brad Segal from PUMA, Yvette Freeman from PUMA, Kristen Lowell from PUMA, and Daniel Makela from PUMA.

Zelalich called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

The minutes for the March and June meetings were unanimously approved. Phan motioned to approve the minutes, and Kline seconded.

President's Report: Zelalich, Freise

- Personnel Update: Zelalich introduced Billings to the board as the new Street Life Manager.
- Ulsh announced SJDA is receiving funding through an Economic Development Agency grant awarded to the City of San Jose for small business support. Funding to SJDA will be used to hire a staff member for two years. SJDA was tapped by the City to provide support for other potential PBIDs. Leblanc has an offer for a qualified candidate, this role is multifaceted and is new for SJDA. This will be an extra set of hands for business development. The person will be able to make changes quickly, but there was also a close second choice that was capable too.
- Shipp shared that board member Nathan Guido has stepped down from the board for personal matters. The board can appoint a new member to fill his vacant position, and a new treasurer will need to be appointed.

New Business:

- Vacant Board Seats: Ted McMahon and John Southwell were brought forth by staff to fill the vacant large property owner and hotel operator board vacancies. Freise nominated McMahon and Southwell to join the board, Phan

seconded, all were in favor.

- Shipp brought forth Freise as a staff recommended PBID Board President. Freise was excited to fill this position and felt there is a lot of energy behind this group. Zelalich motioned to nominate Freise as Board President, Phan seconded, and all were in favor.
- PBID Renewal: Segal introduced his Progressive Urban Management Associates (PUMA) team to the board. Segal presented findings from the last steering committee meetings. He shared recommendations on boundaries, zones, and services. Segal is four to six weeks away from being able to present numbers and is at the end of the strategic planning phase.

Outreach themes showed that safety is the number one concern. The need to fill vacant storefronts has been intensified by pandemic. Physical connectivity between pockets of activity needs to be improved. SJDA and PBID can be bolder and more impactful on downtown's evolution.

PUMA team did a July site visit. Their overall impression was that downtown was better than expected, better than most peer cities. Segal noticed substantial new investment and optimism. SJDA's guiding principles should be to think big and bold, adapt, and keep clean and safe as the PBID's foundation.

Segal suggested outreach and services to the unhoused population, economic development, beautification, and storytelling can be the focus of renewal. PBID should consider a measured expansion, expanding premium zone, and identify areas to reevaluate in five years.

Egge asked if the premium area will increase, while the cleaning budget stays the same. Segal clarified that there will be a higher assessment and the cleaning budget will increase. The number is not fixed.

Phan asked about Safety Ambassador expansions. Segal responded saying that adding social workers that can deal with mental health issues and having safety training would be appropriate. Freeman will offer a menu of options for outreach, the possibilities are vast on what ambassadors can do. Social workers can be added to the team or contracted separately. There are many safety concerns brought up by Phan, the police cannot deal with certain mental health issues. Segal used an example of a mental health team that is accessible by phone call and has been successful. These ideas might not need to wait until PBID renewal and can be implemented now.

Freise asked when the expansion zones would be evaluated. Segal said likely in November there will be a vote on the areas. It will be important to meet with property owners in expansion areas to help them understand what PBID is. Segal also needs to look if there is enough density to generate funding for new services.

Zelalich wants to make sure increased assessment goes toward capital

beautification projects. Segal said property owners aren't as interested in capital improvements as much as clean and safe. We need to activate the spaces we have. Very little appetite for capital improvements, rather activate existing public spaces, until the use of existing spaces are used.

Kline said Adobe is interested in activation over beautification, their staff is still not comfortable walking from those spaces to Caltrain. Knies followed up on Kline about possibly considering Park Ave as an expansion for Adobe and its neighbors, but recognizing there is not much assessment fee there. Kline responded saying if we expand we might have to go all the way because encampments are just going to be on the other side of the PBID boundary.

Freise thinks an interim board meeting on expansion might be a good idea to dive deeper into which areas make the most sense.

Staff Reports:

- Operations Report: Shipp presented highlights from the Operations Report on pages. The report highlights PBID renewal, Billings as the new Street Life Manager, Groundwerx employee of the month, St James Park fee for service, Resilience Corp, and Laura's Law.
- Business Development Report: LeBlanc presented highlights from the Business Development Report. The report focused on business recovery and resilience, small business support projects, EDA grant and Business Resilience Coordinator hiring, and committee updates. LeBlanc announced he is willing to be the person to call if you don't know who to call. This is his approach and his job is to help small businesses with whatever they need.
- Street life Report: Billings presented highlights from the Street life Report. The report focused on San Pedro Arch lighting and fencing cups.
- PBID Coordinator Report: Yu presented highlights from the Street life Report. The report focused on SoFA Pocket Park, SoFA plant up, street tree maintenance, mural relocation, and Citydash.

Other Matters:

- No other matters.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 a.m.