



## Public Affairs Committee

October 26, 2021 – 9:00 -10:30 a.m.  
Via Zoom

## MINUTES

### In Attendance

Committee members: Martina Uner, Don Thomas, Wes Tyler, Corinna Luebbe, J. Timothy Falvey, Erik Murray, Benjamin Duverge, Terry Lewis, Beau Simon, and Kelly Powers.

Staff: Marisa Rodriguez (Executive Director), Karin Flood (former Executive Director), Lisa Frisch (Director of Marketing and Events), Eva Schouten (Marketing Coordinator), and Melanie Medina (Intern)

Guests: Shireen McSpadden (HSH)

#### 1. Call to Order and Introductions

Karin Flood called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Introductions were made.

#### 2. Public Comment

Karin called for public comment. Seeing none, she moved to the next agenda item.

#### 3. Announcements

- Welcome New Executive Director Marisa Rodriguez  
Karin introduced Marisa to the committee.
  
- Open House Tonight- Tuesday October 26 from 2-5pm, Alliances Office  
A reminder of the Union Square Alliance Open House was shared with the committee.
  
- Reopening Status- City lifted indoor mask mandate on October 15  
Karin announced the indoor mask mandate lifted starting October 15 from the city for vaccinated individuals for office spaces only. Other indoor activities such as retailers and restaurants still require masks indoors despite status of vaccination.
  
- Hallidie Plaza Improvements  
New directional banners, chairs and tables, and plants have been added to Hallidie plaza. The city is still in the works of planting the terrace.



- Holidays

The ice rink is currently being installed and will open November 3 to the public. Macy's tree will have a nonpublic lighting on November 18. Lighting on the palm trees down Market and Powell Street, and Maiden Lane are up.

**4. Action to Approve the September 14, 2021, Minutes**

Karin directed the committee to the minutes of the last meeting and provided a summary.

**Action:** The Committee unanimously approved the September 14, 2021, minutes as motioned by J. Timothy Falvey and seconded by Don Thomas.

**5. Presentation New Director of Homelessness and Supportive Housing: Shireen McSpadden.**

Shireen McSpadden is the new director of the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing. Her priorities are staffing up, engaging with the community and stakeholders, and transparency as an organization. HSH's overall goal is to create temporary housing for the homeless population, which hopefully will be transitional housing to move them into more permanent housing. Due to covid, they had to shut down their shelters causing a higher rate of homelessness in the streets. Because of this, HSH needs additional funds from the state and federal government to help create temporary housing. Project Homekey is an example of that, where the HSH and the Episcopal Community Services were able to purchase Hotel Diva. HSH is looking into purchasing hotels outside Union Square and the Tenderloin and creating cabin like housing in areas to replace the locations for tents.

HSH works alongside other departments such as the Dept. of Public Health, Social Services, and Healthy Streets Operation Center.

The following questions by the members were addressed:

- How to get ahead of the homelessness issue
- What the current demographics of the homeless population is and how to address those who became homeless due to the pandemic
- The system used to keep track of the homeless population
- How subsidies can close the bridge of being homeless to being stabilized
- Outside behavior can be kept indoors and off the streets

**6. Other legislative items and updates**



- OEWD Grant Opportunity: Build Back Better

Karin announced to the committee she applied for an OEWD grant called Build Back Better. The purpose of this grant is to reactivate the downtown. If granted, phase one would be \$500,000 for technical support such as surveys, focus groups, and research. Phase two would be delivery of the findings from phase 1 which may include reactivation of store fronts and boosting retail. The Alliance and four other downtown BIDs would need to match 20% of the grant with OEWD, and this could be from in-kind donations.

- Retail Theft

Marisa spoke about the prioritization of the addition of more cops and supporting the 10A Sheriff program to add security to our community. A discussion arose about the connection retail theft has to the economic recovery of the city, and how the Alliance can provide the city with data to get the help we need.

- 10A Sheriff Program

Karin has written a letter of support of the 10A sheriff program. This program would allow sheriffs to work overtime around Union Square for extra security for retailers.

**7. Adjournment and Next Meeting: November 9, 2021.**

Karin adjourned the meeting at 10:22 a.m.