



UNION SQUARE
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT
DISTRICT

Board of Directors Bi-Monthly Meeting

March 26, 2020 – 9:00 -11:00 am
Virtual Communication via Zoom

MINUTES

PURSUANT TO FIVE DAYS NOTICE, a meeting of the Board of the Union Square Business Improvement District (USBID) was held at 9:00am on March 26, 2020 through the virtual communication system Zoom.

PUBLIC NOTICE of the meeting was posted at the Main Library and on the USBID's website; notice and documents were sent to Board members via email. Following is a record of those in attendance and the meeting minutes by agenda topic.

In attendance

The following directors and advisory committee chairs were in attendance: Cammy Blackstone, Stephen Brett, Matthew Coleman (Marketing Committee Chair), J. Timothy Falvey, Leah Heil, Shirley Howard-Johnson, Russell D. Keil, Terry Lewis, Corinna Luebbe (Public Affairs Committee Chair), Marcus Mirt, Kelly Powers, Mark Purdy, Jim Sangiacomo (Finance Committee Chair), Spencer Sechler, Julie Taylor (Treasurer), Don Thomas (Services Committee Chair), and Wes Tyler

The following staff and contract service providers were in attendance: Karin Flood, Benjamin W. Horne, Robbie Silver, Chris Boss, Joshua Chan, Bri Caspersen, Zarrina Yousufzai, Eva Schouten, Beau Simon (Cooper, White and Cooper), Karen Gagarin and Karl Bijan (Block by Block).

Guest: Wogai Mohmand (Morgan, Lewis, & Bockius LLP).

Summary of Actions Taken by the Board of Directors

On March 26, 2020, with no public comment received, the Board of Directors took the following actions:

- **Action:** The Board unanimously approved the Executive Director's Report including ratifying the Executive Committee actions from February 27, 2020, as motioned by Jim Sangiacomo and seconded by J. Timothy Falvey.
- **Action:** The Board unanimously approved the Board minutes from January 23, 2020 as motioned by Matthew Coleman and seconded by Spencer Sechler.
- **Action:** The Board unanimously approved to provide private security at the front floor of the Elkan Gunst Building motioned by Mark Purdy and seconded by Spencer Sechler
- **Action:** The Board unanimously approved option two for bonuses for Block by Block staff as motioned by Stephen Brett and seconded by Jim Sangiacomo

- **Action:** The Board unanimously approved the changed personnel policy (sick time advance) as motioned by Mark Purdy and seconded by Kelly Powers.
- **Action:** The Board unanimously approved the Telecommuting Policy as motioned by Don Thomas and seconded by Russell D. Keil Jr.
- **Action:** The Board unanimously approved retention of Colliers (with exclusions for Flood Building and 291 Geary Street) as motioned by Don Thomas and seconded by Spencer Sechler.
- **Action:** The Board unanimously approved hosting a holiday market at Hallidie Plaza as motioned by Don Thomas and seconded by Matthew Coleman.
- **Action:** The Board unanimously approved the Unaudited Financial Report at 02/29/2020 as motioned Spencer Sechler and seconded by J. Timothy Falvey.

Meeting Notes by Agenda Topic

The following notes supplement the actions taken by the Board and provide further information on agenda topics where no action was requested or taken.

1. Call to Order - Observing a quorum present, Wes Tyler, called the meeting to order at 9:02am. Introductions were made.
2. Call for Public Comment – Wes called for public comment. Seeing none, he moved onto the next item.
3. Executive Director’s Report- The following updates were provided:
 - a. **Coronavirus**
Karin informed the board that some restaurants and essential stores are open. Other stores have barricaded their windows for their safety. The BID is continuing to operate as much as possible as our services are considered essential by the City and County of San Francisco.
 - b. **Mr. James C. Flood Memorial & Fund**
Karin shared a few words about her father. She also thanked those who donated to the Union Square Foundation, the Society of California Pioneers and San Francisco General Hospital Foundation. Wes also shared a few words about the start of the USBID with James C. Flood. In his memory, silence was observed and the cable car bell was rung 10 times, one time for each year he served as the USBID Board President.
 - c. **Rusty Middleton**
Karin informed the Board that Rusty Middleton has resigned from the Board to start his own consulting firm.
 - d. **Notice Board Meetings**
Karin informed the Board that to comply with the city contract, the USBID has to notify all stakeholders about 2 Board meetings. Ideally these should coincide with the election of new Directors. Due to the current situation it is unclear when these meetings will be but the first one may be September 2020.
 - e. **Executive Committee met on February 27 and approved**
 - As per the new City contract, the minutes from meetings must now be posted online; Karin informed the Board to be aware that when they make motions their names will be listed.
 - The Committee renewed the 2-year term for Moe Jamil who works for the City Attorney’s office and has been an active committee member
 - Approved the contract with AVS. \$450,000 of the \$500,000 grant donated by Chris Larsen will go to AVS for additional cameras and LPRs

- Approved the artist contract with Meryl Pataky for light art project in Campton. \$30,000 for the artist fee and \$35,000 for installation costs.
- Line of credit has been increased from \$700,000 to \$1mil.
- Approved a letter supporting the Powell Street Streetscapes project.

No public comment was received.

Action: The Board unanimously approved the Executive Director's Report including ratifying the Executive Committee actions from February 27, 2020, as motioned by Jim Sangiacomo and seconded by J. Timothy Falvey.

4. Action to approve prior meeting minutes of January 23, 2020

No public comment was received.

Action: The Board unanimously approved the Board minutes from January 23, 2020 as motioned by Matthew Coleman and seconded by Spencer Sechler.

5. Coronavirus discussion, impacts, service levels, plans and actions

a. To approve using Block by Block staff to provide security for Elkan Gunst Building (323 Geary) in order to continue providing essential services to the District

Ben informed the Board that on Tuesday, March 17, the Elkan Gunst Building posted a notice that the building would be closed giving less than 24 hours' notice. Karin worked with the landlord and Ben drafted an agreement which states from 05:00am – 11:00pm the USBID will provide private security to give USBID staff access to the building. This costs approximately \$750 a day and takes away from the services on the streets. The agreement is until April 7th or later depending on the shelter in place directive. This agreement can be cancelled at any time.

No public comment was received.

Action: The Board unanimously approved to provide private security inside the front door of the Elkan Gunst Building motioned by Mark Purdy and seconded by Spencer Sechler

b. To approve bonus recommendation for Block by Block staff

In order to show appreciate for the Block by Block staff, Ben suggested giving a bonus to the team for all their hard work during these challenging times. Two bonus options were presented. Option one totaling at \$22,000 and Option two totaling at \$36,000. The Board discussed options and asked questions.

No public comment was received.

Action: The Board unanimously approved the option two bonus option (\$36K) for Block by Block staff as motioned by Stephen Brett and seconded by Jim Sangiacomo.

c. To approve personnel policy to allow up to 80 hours advance of sick time for certain situations

Ben drafted a policy to provide advanced sick time to the USBID staff in relation to the COVID-19. It will allow up to 80 hours negative sick time which can be made up when returning to work. The only risk is that a staff member with negative hours cannot be recovered if they were to quit, though this is unlikely.

No public comment was received.

Action: The Board unanimously approved the personnel policy to allow up to 80 hours advance sick time for certain situation as motioned by Mark Purdy and seconded by Kelly Powers.

d. To approve Telecommuting (Work from Home) Policy

Ben informed the board that the USBID staff is working remotely. They are successfully connected to the server through virtual private network and would like to give an advance of \$50 per month for internet and \$50 per month for phone usage. The policy needs a legal review. The personnel menu will be revised this year and these new policies will be incorporated.

No public comment was received.

Action: The Board unanimously approved the Telecommuting Policy as motioned by Don Thomas and seconded by Russell D. Keil Jr.

e. To approve new Operations and Administrative office search and retention of Colliers

Due to the situation with the current Operations and Administrative office, the USBID is considering moving offices. Julie Taylor informed the Board that she is happy to help find a new location for the ops and admin office. She would do a wide search to offer many options and advised the Board it is a good time to move now. Julie then recused herself from the meeting. The Board discussed and agreed with hiring Julie but asked that exclusions be made for the Flood Building and 291 Geary as discussions had started for potential space prior to Julie's engagement.

No public comment was received.

Action: The Board unanimously approved new ops and admin office search and retention of Colliers (with exclusions with entities that are directly related to Board members who have already started lease discussions) as motioned by Don Thomas and seconded by Spencer Sechler.

6. To Receive the BID's Advisory Committee reports and to take **action to approve several Committee recommendations:**

a. Services & Public Safety – Don Thomas

SFPD Ambassador Program

Karin informed the Board that another division within the Police Department must review their policy. She also needs to confirm if the funding for this Fiscal Year can be transferred to next year. When the review is complete there will be 10 retired police officers operating in the district.

- Security cameras update

Ben informed the Board that video requests are still coming in. Overnight security is provided by Legion Security. The following number is provided by Legion's overnight emergency contact: (415) 724-2909.

- Operations report for January and February 2020

Karl summarized the current situation in the district during the COVID-19 pandemic. There is less trash than usual however graffiti and quality of life issues have increased. There has not been a lot of property damage but asks the Board to keep communicating with the Member

Services. He also informed the Board that on March 16 the Block by Block staff practiced social distancing, cleaning the office and equipment four times a day and flexible shifts in order to protect against COVID-19.

b. Marketing & Communications – Matthew Coleman

- Annual Lunch/Holiday Event

Matthew Coleman announced that the Annual Luncheon has been postponed until September. Rob informed the board that a hold has been placed on September 25th at the Westin St. Francis; however, there has been consideration of combining the Annual Luncheon and Rockin' Holiday fundraiser as they will be scheduled so close together at the end of the year. The expectations for fundraising this year need to be lowered and combining the two events will save in expenses.

- Update on RFP, re-branding proposals, process and timeline

Matthew Coleman updated the Board that out of the 7 design firms, 5 submitted proposals, and 3 have been selected for in-person interviews. These have been postponed to early May. There is a new goal to have the rebranding done in order to welcome the public back to Union Square with a fresh new look.

c. Streetscapes & Public Realm – Rob Silver

- Discussion regarding hosting location Holiday Market 2020

Rob updated the Board on relocating the Holiday Market to Hallidie Plaza (to replace Winter Walk previously hosted on Stockton and then in 2019 Grant), lower Powell and Market Street. This location would save a lot of administrative work in comparison to last year as it is supported by the Mayor's office and he will mostly work with OEWD.

No public comment was received.

Action: The Board unanimously approved hosting the holiday event for 2020 (replacing Winter Walk) at Hallidie Plaza as motioned Don Thomas and seconded by Matthew Coleman.

- Campton Place updates

Rob updated the Board that the Light Art Project is moving forward. Quotes have been made for the electrical upgrade work at the building. The building where the art will be placed has not been painted completely but we will move forward regardless and will likely clean. Bri updated the Board that a couple weeks before the ISCOTT meeting to activate Campton, the city was requiring a fulltime on-site attendant when closing Campton Alley for activation. This is unfeasible financially. Therefore we will request that the \$40,000 grant will be spent on smaller monthly events and additional art pieces without the need of street closures.

- Powell Street Improvement Project and Promenade updates

Rob informed the Board that the SFMTA provided several examples for new pavement materials, street furniture and landscaping on the first and second block of Powell. They will be discussed in further detail during the Streetscapes Committee Meeting next Thursday at 9:30am. Everybody is welcome to join. The deadline for the decision on design must be made by June 1. The project will begin by January 2022. The promenade needs repairs which cost \$18,000. None of it will be reimbursed by the City. Also, hardier landscaping will be provided to lower the costs of maintaining the grasses. However, this is currently an unfunded project with very limited resources.

- Pedestrian counters

Rob updated the Board that Springboard is the new vendor for the pedestrian counters. They were chosen because they can tap into our current system. The pedestrian counters (6 of them) are online. Two new locations have been added on 200 Grant and 200 O'Farrell respectively.

d. Finance & Audit – Jim Sangiacomo

- **Action to approve the Unaudited Financial Report at 02/29/2020.**
Ben summarized the Financial Report at 02/29/2020. The \$60,000 grant from the City has not been received yet but is expected. Hopefully the USBID will receive the assessment payments by the end of April as predicted at around \$2.7mil. But, it was unclear at this point if the deadline will be extended for property taxes.

No public comment was received.

Action: The Board unanimously approved the Unaudited Financial Report at 02/29/2020 as motioned Spencer Sechler and seconded by J. Timothy Falvey.

- **Insurance Update**
Ben updated the Board that the new insurance broker, BPIA, has combined many of the policies into one and is syncing up renewal dates to March 1. It was also approved to acquire cyber insurance policy to protect the BID against possible cyber-attacks.

e. Public Affairs & Advocacy – Corinna Luebbe

- **Election debrief**
Karin informed the members that the results of two ballot measures on the March 3 election. Particularly the bond measure for City College passed which will add an extra tax to property owners (\$11 per \$100,000 of assessed value) and the vacancy tax, which will tax landlords per linear foot in Neighborhood Commercial Corridors for any vacancies they have after 6 months. This cost will escalate after a year etc. However, this vacancy tax does not apply to the Union Square area.
- **Congestion pricing update**
Bri informed the Board that the City will implement congestion pricing. They have created a committee who will create a policy. It is currently scheduled to be implemented between 2023-2025.
- **Supportive housing at 589 Post Street**
Karin updated the Board about the supportive housing at 589 Post on the corner of Post and Taylor. The City will master lease the building to offer individuals exiting navigation centers a home. Concerns about security and congregating outside have been expressed. The last update is that they are still considering the concerns internally.
- **Vacancy Study**
Karin informed the members that the BID received a \$25,000 grant to do a vacancy study of the district to find out why properties are vacant and how to offer incentives to fill these spaces. The study will move forward but the date will likely be delayed because COVID-19 has created an unusual situation. Rob asked the Board to participate in an economic impact study in response to COVID-19 through completing a survey on the USBID. Union Square might become subject to economic relief from the City. There is no deadline to fill out the survey, however he hopes to collect initial data in the next couple of weeks.

7. Announcements & New Business

- Next Executive Committee Meeting April 23, 2020
- Annual Luncheon Postponed
- Next Board Meeting May 28, 2020 – 9:00 a.m. Location TBD

8. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 11:05am.