



**Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, April 13, 2022
8:30 AM**

Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Joanna Sibley, Donna Labriola, Teri Killgore, Peggy White, Brian Hirahara, Dan Buckshi, Kevin Wilk, Matt Francois, Dan Batlin, Jim Telford, Tracy Dietlein, Rolla Ghaben, Gary Skrel, Jim Fidelibus, Kathy Hemmenway, Pam Kessler, Lt. Drew Olson, Bob Power, Bonnie Waters, Brad Barnett, Nicole Hankton, Jason Yamasaki, Sue Rainey, Margot Stanford, Jenny Perry, Pam McGrath, Cady Marsh, Mike Vickers

- I. Welcome & Introductions – Brian Hirahara, WCD Board President
- II. Public Comment – No public comment
- III. Board Action- Brian Hirahara, WCD Board President
 - A. Approve February Board Meeting Minutes; Motion moved to accept meeting minutes by Peggy White, second by Jenny Perry.
 - B. Proposed to change to a bi-monthly Board meeting schedule; Motion moved to accept bi-monthly meetings by Peggy White, second by all council members.
 - C. Proposed change of association name to Walnut Creek Downtown Association; Motion moved to accept name change by Bob Power, seconded by Terri Kilgore.
 - D. Associate Membership Dues Increase
 - a. Our Associate Membership fees have not been updated in a very long time, if ever. With our budget today and limited staff, this could be a great opportunity to generate some revenue. Property owners with multiple properties may be willing to pay a larger Associate Member fee (\$2,500-5,000). This is just up for discussion, there is no action currently. We could add an announcement to our newsletter with the new Members and Associate Members. This would be a great, positive exposure for them.
 - i. Bob P. agrees with Brian, that our fees have not been updated in so long and he thinks it's a no brainer to increase fees.
 1. Peggy W. thinks it's a terrific idea and we should try to get 4-5 businesses to sign up to build more momentum.
 2. Jim T. mentioned that we should add voluntary dues on our form like the Chamber has.
 - b. Brian H. asks for volunteers to participate in the committee. Jim, Bonnie W., Peggy W., Bob P., Gary S. and Sue R. volunteered. Kathy H. will work on setting up a committee.
- IV. City Council Report – Mayor Matt Francois, Walnut Creek City Council

- A. Is impressed by how many legacy businesses Walnut Creek has and by the collaboration that our board has done with the Chamber. The council is fully committed to keeping outdoor dining going on a permanent basis and some of the policy discussions are on three areas, aesthetics, safety, and the impact to the non-restaurant businesses. In terms of aesthetics, they've been busy working on guidelines for a mix and match approach and standardize a little bit of the look and feel of the outdoor dining structures. The design guidelines for the next wave of outdoor dining are being developed. In terms of safety, there will be raised platforms and concrete barriers to make sure that that traveling public and the people that are dining can both have a pleasurable experience and not interact with one another. In terms of the outdoor dining program and the fee structure; There will be a cost associated with the use of public space and the city is working out the pricing structure for the restaurants that want to participate.
- B. The city has decided not to close any streets or change any of the traffic flow on any streets. That includes Bonanza, they decided to pause on making any changes to the outdoor dining element and partial street closure on Bonanza. This will be revisited at some point.
- C. Should the Rebound Program or Downtown NEXT be extended to bars and how should they regulate that going forward. These programs had primarily been intended to benefit restaurants. If Bars are included and open past 11pm; there needs to be a discussion with the police department and the Council about how that works into the system. The city and the council are committed to outdoor dining. If the Rebound program needs to be extended in this interim period, they fully expect to do so.
- D. The State of the City address mentioned that the city has commissioned both an office and a retail study to try to get a better sense of gaps where the city needs to be planning for future needs and demands. Once they have those study results, they will integrate them into our economic development strategic plan and move forward on the next wave.
- E. The bid renewal is on the notice of intent to proceed as well as the 10% increase in assessments. The T bid renewal is coming up on some future agendas. There's an agreement with HDL to collect TOT from short term rentals.
- F. There will also be a discussion about cannabis on the meeting agenda next Tuesday. The last discussion was to amend the program which currently allows for delivery of medicinal cannabis only and extend to adult use.
 - a. Sue R. asked if the city was collecting money on the Airbnb's.
 - i. Mayor Matt F. answered that they're not currently collecting money from the Airbnb's and this agreement will allow them to do that.
- G. Kevin W. added that there's has been some discussion in the media about charging restaurants for use of public space. This hasn't been decided yet. After multiple meetings, hearings, ordinance review and back and forth, they did codify the buffer zone at Planned Parenthood. They have also requested a report from that faculty in the next six months, potentially either an amendment or the screening review. The big agenda item last week, which was on the use of equipment by the police. The state law

requires all city councils to essentially have all equipment that they have classified as military type equipment, this was approved, and a police department can use the equipment that they currently have.

- a. Bonnie W. asked if there is currently a fee for the restaurants to have outdoor dining.
 - i. Kevin W. responded that currently there is no fee to use that public space and it's been that way since the midst of COVID back in June of 2020. They are now looking at moving forward and discussing a fee for the businesses that are using that space. That public space does account for at least \$7,000 annually from that meter space. That amount goes to the free electric shuttle and all the beautification in downtown. The city is not getting that revenue right now.
- b. Bonnie W. responded that she had heard a rumor that there was a fee of around \$2,400 a month being imposed on the outdoor parklets.
 - i. Kevin W. stated that the city has not made any determination on the monthly fee yet.

V. City Staff Report – Dan Buckshi, City Manager, City of Walnut

- A. The city has been operating in a state of emergency as it relates to COVID since 2020. They continue to work on the city council's five main priorities that were established for the organization. There's need for additional revenue to pursue the facilities and infrastructure side as well as some of the programs that support public safety and the youth & senior programs. The city would like to pursue a half cent sales tax increase. Walnut Creek currently does not have a local sales tax and is at the region minimum. They would like feedback from the community about their thoughts on this topic and whether they should consider it. If they should, what would the community like to have funded?
- B. Teri K. added that every parking space in downtown is a different size, that means every business will have a slightly different size structure. These structures will be called PODS, permanent outdoor dining structure. They are looking at a fee that includes replacing the parking revenue, as well as supplements for code enforcement activity to go out and do inspections and to make sure businesses are operating in a good neighbor manner. Overall, they are looking at a combined rate of \$48 per square foot. The business will need to retain an architect, potentially an engineer to help them with figuring out what the layout looks like using the mix and match materials. There will be a custom option to choose from as well. The funds from the PODS are intended, at this point to go into the parking fund. A large percentage of the parking fund actively fund the beautification projects, some downtown events, parking enforcement, and all the things that happen downtown from the city side. There's also a path being developed for those that have done outdoor dining on private property and other locations.
 - a. Nicole H. asked if there was discussion on the structure for the overhang and the ground flooring or is that going to be up to the individual business owner?
 - i. Teri K. responded that the mix and match program, will provide options for roof

materials, structural elements, railings, and flooring. Rooted has a good example of a raised concrete curb. There's different flooring material that a customer interacts with. The concrete is more a buffer from the vehicles and a way to raise people up. There will be three choices in each of those categories that businesses can choose from. Or there will be an opportunity to go through a custom process.

- b. Jim T. asked if the standardized structures are similar to Fuego and Mainstreet kitchen?
 - i. Teri K. responded that they are hiring an architectural firm to help explore options. The mix and match varieties could come out looking very differently, but that kind of structure is what they're talking about. They'll be looking at how to make them look a little more permanent and more intentional.

VI. President's Report – Brian Hirahara, WCD President

- A. Attended the state of the chamber breakfast the Chamber gave a positive update on a lot of things that they're working on. He wanted to recognize Margo and Bob and thank them for all their efforts in collaboration as well.
- B. Has been involved in Downtown NEXT and has been going around taking pictures of different cities, from San Luis Obispo Santa Barbara, Burlingame other cities for inspiration examples on PODS. Kathy and himself have been talking about coming up with a comprehensive strategic plan for Downtown NEXT.
- C. We really need help from our board with sponsorships and reaching out to their contacts.
 - a. Donna added that the Member Event is coming up next Thursday and on Saturday the 23rd there will be a Community Earth Day Event with the city to cleanup downtown and lay bark. On May 1st Painted Pianos and Downtown Stages return. Update on Uncorked pre-ticket sales and Restaurant Week registrations.
- D. In person Board Meetings are nice to see people in person and lead to better discussions, but Zoom meetings are more convenient for everyone.
 - a. Peggy W. added that we could possibly do a hybrid meeting of in person and Zoom combined. Whatever makes people the most comfortable.
 - b. Bonnie W. is in favor of the idea of a combined/hybrid meeting.
 - c. Sue R. is in favor of in person meetings because they are more spontaneous and people feel free to exchange ideas, and it seems more interactive then just being on a little screen.
 - d. Jim F. likes the bimonthly meeting schedule and likes the thought of offering in person meeting and going to various places to try out what they offer.
 - e. Jim T. misses the in-person luncheon meetings. Maybe making the in-person meeting a quarterly because it offers team bonding and face to face interactions.
 - f. Kevin W. recommendation is to stay away from hybrid meetings because it has technical issues with setting up, people calling in and this leads to nothing but

frustration.

- g. Rolla G. thinks the Zoom meetings are convenient, but also loves the in-person meetings. Suggested to do a social event and maybe meet quarterly or every 6 months.
- h. Gary S. likes in-person meetings. He knows Zoom is more convenient but thinks we should show our commitment and get together.
- i. Bob T. seconds that and agrees with in-person meetings.
- j. Joanna S. would love to meet everyone in-person since she is new to the Board and offers her space to do so.

VII. Board Announcements –

- A. Tracy D. (Broadway Plaza)
 - a. Lululemon expansion underway to take over Nespresso & Madewell.
 - b. Madewell and Nespresso are open in their new spaces. Nespresso will now have a to-go bar.
 - c. Third Love opened last week in the former Aldo space.
 - d. Haagen Daz is now open.
 - e. Quay (Key) Australian Sunglasses is under construction in the former Walking Co. and will open later this Spring.
 - f. Lifetime is on track to open next April and Pinstripes will open 1st or 2nd quarter of 2023 in the former Crate and Barrel space.
 - g. The former Stanford's space is still pending.
 - h. Rituals, Amazon Books & Sur La Table has closed.
 - i. Fabletics will start construction soon in the former Lucky Brand space and opening in the summer.
 - j. Bare Minerals is close to signing a lease for a holiday opening in a new retailer.
 - k. Bierhaus is rebranding to City Square Pizza and is opening in June.
 - l. QuikSpace is like Airbnb for available spaces to lease in Broadway Plaza. Events- Earth Day celebration and denim drive on April 23rd. Animals on Broadway is back on May 22nd. Broadway Plaza turned 70 last year and received a Legacy award.
- B. Peggy W./ Leshner Center- Headliners series is going incredibly well. On April 29th & 30th they are completely sold out. Both those nights they will honoring employees from Kaiser. May 24th they will announcing their entire series for next season. Doubled the number of headliners in the series. On Oct. 1st On Broadway returns. On June 14th DRAA Luau party.
- C. Nicole H. - Calipolitan Cocktail Contest will be on July 13th.
- D. Kathy H. – Will be helping the Chamber out with the Art and Wine Festival on June 4th & 5th. Volunteers are needed, signup link will be emailed again.
- E. Donna L.- Sent a link in the chat for the Membership Event signup.
- F. Brian Hirahara adjourns Meeting

Next Meeting: June 8, 2022