



Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, August 3, 2022

Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Peggy White, Kathy Hemmenway, Kevin Wilk, Teri Killgore, Brian Hirahara, Tracy Dietlein, Bob Power, Kristy Lincoln, Dan Buckshi, Captain Tracie Reese, Chief Jamie Knox, Dan Batlin, Jenny Perry, Gary Skrel, Jonathan Bartlett, Barney Fonzi, Bob Linschied, Bonnie Waters, Lieutenant Bruce Jower, Kelsey Wendt, Rolla Ghaben

- I. Welcome & Introductions – Brian Hirahara, WCD Board President
- II. Public Comment – No public comment.
- III. **Board Action**
 - A. Approve June Board Meeting Minutes
 - a. Approval of June 2022 Board Meeting Minutes; Motion moved to accept meeting minutes by Peggy White, seconded by Bob Power.
 - B. Sales Tax Initiative – Brian Hirahara
 - a. The city council has approved moving forward with the initiative to increase the city sales tax by a half-cent. WCD has had discussions with city staff & councilmembers to request they consider adding benefits for the downtown business community, in order for WCD to defend and sell the sales tax initiative to its members. The city has made changes to add additional language to satisfy this.
 - i. Dan Buckshi – The council took formal action on July 19th to put the half-cent sales tax before voters. Local government cannot impose a tax on anyone locally, the city council can only ask the voters if they want to tax themselves. Estimating this can generate \$11-13 million dollars. Intent is to support facilities, infrastructure, programs, and services.
 - ii. Kevin Wilk – Important to recognize that there will be a citizens advisory committee that will be managing/reviewing how the funds are spent.
 - iii. Gary Skrel – If the measure passes in November, how quickly will the oversight committee be formed?
 - iv. Dan Buckshi – Sales tax funds will start arriving in April-June 2023 and the committee would be formed around then. Oversight committee would ensure that all laws are being followed, funds being spent appropriately, and in accordance with the councils' spending plan.
 - v. Jonathan Bartlett – What is wrong with a 2/3 majority and having a specific budget?
 - vi. Dan Buckski – The council discussed this. A challenge is the spending plan is very specific and is difficult to change where those funds are allocated to. With unplanned events in the community, we would be unable to appropriately respond.
 - vii. Jonathan Bartlett – Suggested that if the goal is to provide flexibility to the city, it should be more of a conversation regarding specific expenses and the need for greater flexibility with the city.
 - viii. Brian Hirahara – The challenge of a 2/3 majority vote makes it more challenging especially with inflation worries.
 - ix. Gary Skrel – Historically there is an automatic 30% who vote no on every tax measure.
 - x. Dan Buckshi – A 2/3 threshold is significant, and the polling has shown that there are folks who are fundamentally against taxes for various reasons. To clarify, this allows us to invest in both facilities, programs, and services as

- opposed to other taxes that are more specific to one or the other.
- xi. Brian Hirahara – Key points to note: 50% of the sales tax will be from residents outside of the city; WC will still have lowest sales tax in Contra Costa County; Knowing how much it could cost the average WC resident per household.
 - xii. Bob Linschied – Is 50% of sales tax coming from non-residents an updated and accurate number?
 - xiii. Dan Buckshi – A year and a half ago.
 - xiv. Brian Hirahara – Is \$10 a month for the average family resident, correct?
 - xv. Dan Buckshi – Yes, on average \$10 a month.
 - xvi. Kevin Wilk – \$10 a month means spending \$2,000 a month on taxable goods. Large purchases such as car sales helps bring that average up.
 - xvii. Gary Skrel – Even though the election day is in early November, ballots are mailed October 12. The work needs to be done before they get their ballot.
 - xviii. Dan Buckshi – Agrees campaigns should be organized now.
 - xix. Kevin Wilk – With places like Rossmoor, majority vote by mail and we need to give a compelling reason for them to vote for this.
- b. An emergency meeting in late August will be scheduled to take board action.
- IV. City Council Report – Kevin Wilk, Walnut Creek City Council
 - A. Winter Shelter Nights for homeless with Armory will continue for the next year.
 - B. The Youth Commission presented to the city council, called “a seat at the table”. The Youth Committee will appoint a person to provide a youth perspective on the commissions for the park recreation open space commission, the arts commission, and the transportation commission.
 - C. Climate Action Plan - updated plan into 2030 and will have a full report in October.
 - V. WCD Staff Report – Kathy Hemmenway, WCD Executive Director
 - A. Introduced new Administrative and Events Assistant, Kelsey Wendt.
 - B. Working with city staff to update contract between City of WC and WCD.
 - C. Had a sustainability presentation by RecycleSmart & city staff discussing waste and recycling laws that are impacting the restaurants. SB13 AB3, the new organics and green waste law and AB1276, new single-use plastics law. The recorded conversation is available. Need restaurants to participate more on a monthly basis.
 - D. Events season is here, starting with Arts Around August and First Wednesday tonight. Moveable Feast that is taking place attendees moving among local restaurants with a public art tour in-between. Broadway Plaza Concerts start tomorrow night where we host the bar as a fundraiser for our organization.
 - VI. WC Chamber of Commerce & Visitor’s Bureau Report – Bob Linschied, CEO WCCCVB
 - A. Ethan Allan will be hosting this month’s Business After Hours on August 25th at 5:30pm.
 - B. Working on a project with Diablo Magazine called Visit Walnut Creek that will be a printed and online publication available to visitors.
 - C. March 6, 2023 agreement will be finalized for the East Bay Women’s Conference to be held at the Leshner Center. Has been held in San Ramon for the last 2 decades. WC will be the perfect location for this event and excited to have a younger demographic of attendees. Application is available to serve on the committee.
 - a. Brian Hirahara – A brilliant idea to have this in WC. Great to bring more people to the city, showcase the downtown, and support out businesses.
 - VII. Macerich/Broadway Plaza Report – Tracy Dietlein, Vice-President of Marketing, Macerich/WCD Vice-President
 - A. Opening this Fall are Doc Martens (former Rituals), Fabletics (former Lucky Brand space), Lululemon expansion opening in late October. Swarovski (former Bare Minerals) by the end of the year.
 - B. 2023 openings are Chanel Beauty, Lifetime Athletic and Pinstripes.
 - C. Former Stanfords space is close to signing. 2 leases for Amazon space that will be divided into 2 spaces. Lease available for space next to Madewell.
 - D. Summer Concert Series begins this week with Petty Theft on Thursday night, WCD booth opening at 6:30pm, concert begins at 7pm, many other organizations will be present. Denim

Drive for back to school to benefit the Assistance League of Diablo Valley. If anyone has any denim they can donate, please bring it down.

- E. The street will continue to be closed throughout the end of the month.
 - a. Brian Hirahara – How big will the lululemon be?
 - b. Tracy Dietlein – Over 9,000 square feet.
- VIII. City Staff Report – Teri Killgore, Assistant City Manager, City of Walnut Creek
 - A. The brick building across from City Hall will have Kindbody taking over the entire space. Pinstripes is in for permits and estimated for a summer 2023 opening. Crate & Barrel is moving to the old Talbots location, estimated in early spring. Salt & Straw ice cream concept moving into old Take One Pizza shop.
 - B. Outdoor dining policy was adopted by Council in June. Committed to trying to use a modular approach, where people can mix and match from some pre-approved elements to get approved quicker, versus a custom approach that can be longer. This will be brought to the Council for final adoption in early Fall.
 - C. EBMUD construction scheduled for Locust and Bonanza in January 2023. Bonanza and Locust will maintain their temporary dining structures. Permanent outdoor dining structures will begin on Main Street first, followed by Locust Street structures in early Fall 2023.
 - a. Kathy Hemmenway – Board members can join in for review and suggestions of the outdoor dining structure review process.
 - b. Kristy Lincoln – Any update on what is going into old Bierhaus/City Square Pizza location?
 - c. Teri Killgore – They will not be reopening but there is a clause in the lease allowing the lease to be assigned with city approval. No formal proposal yet for that location but there is outside interest on the building.
 - d. Brian Hirahara – Any update on 5 Tacos & Beer?
 - e. Teri Killgore - They are in paid status and are waiting for permits to be submitted. Timeline is unknown.
- IX. DRAA/Lesher Center for the Arts Report – Peggy White, DRAA Executive Director
 - A. New MOU was enthusiastically approved last night by City Council. This new agreement takes the partnership to a new level of collaboration such as sparking economic activity, supporting DEI issues, mental health and wellbeing, etc.
 - B. On Broadway single tickets just went on sale and are almost at capacity. This year will be honoring Angie Coffee and Eric Rudney.
 - C. Big upcoming endeavor for the Lesher Center is Fiesta Cultural in June 2023. 5 days including a newsmaker speaker, and 3 major headliners.
 - a. Bonnie – How many people will Walnut Creek be able to accommodate for the Women’s conference?
 - b. Bob Linscheid – Reimagining the delivery and determining the most important aspects of the event, for the attendees. Likely around 700 attendees.
- X. WCPD Report – Chief Jamie Knox and Lieutenant Bruce Jower
 - A. Chief Knox – Saturday DUI crash resulted in a fatality and the suspect is out on bail. Another Rolex robbery occurred and Apple smash and grab. This is a regional issue with retail crime and Rolex robbery occurrences. PD is recognizing the criminals getting smarter and following their investigative tactics. When evidence is released and with the presence of social media, the criminals can view this material, so PD is limiting what is being released online. WCPD will be chasing these criminals while still considering the safety of everyone and focusing on the long game with these crimes.
 - a. Dan Buckshi – Can you share about the Apple arrests made?
 - b. Chief Knox – Apple had 2 unarmed security guards that got a vehicle description and license plate of criminals. PD sent out a look out and another agency spotted the car, arrested 2 people, and recovered 2 ghost guns. Also found an affiliated vehicle with 3 individuals. 2 adults and 3 juveniles were arrested and recovered stolen Apple property. Crime was committed in WC, but arrests were made in a different county.
 - c. Captain Reese – WCPD is working with Santa Clara PD to determine the best approach to who will handle the prosecution.
 - B. Lieutenant Jower – WCPD and WCD are working on a communication program to get

information spread between downtown businesses and PD. Aimed to address crime and traffic issues and distributing info between each other. Microsoft Teams group is being formed called "WCPD/WCDA" with 2 categories. "General" category for businesses to share any general information between each other. "Crime Tips" category to share crime and traffic related information such as surveillance system footage and witnesses that can be viewed immediately by WCPD and for WCPD to solicit information from the businesses relating to recent crimes. Working to get businesses signed up so that this can be a successful communication program. Contact Kelsey Wendt from WCD to get your business signed up.

- a. Kathy Hemmenway – Encouraged all businesses to sign up as this can be valuable for both the businesses and WCPD.
 - b. Jonathan Bartlett – Addressed the instant alarm button and not knowing when the right time is to use this. A part of making WC unbearable for criminals could be a campaign for how to use the systems that are already in place within the businesses. The retailers have an eye for crime, and he would be willing to further this conversation.
 - c. Chief Knox – When you have an alarm system and you use the panic button, it goes directly to the alarm company. First step is usually to call the business and then the police, as this does not go directly to the police dispatch. WCPD has recently identified a consultant to review the camera strategy within the city with intent to place public safety cameras within the downtown. The surveillance cameras within businesses are important to identifying these crimes.
 - d. Bob Linscheid – Smash and grabs are occurring all over the country. Can you speak to real time crime centers?
 - e. Chief Knox – Elk Grove just opened a real time crime center. This is a dedicated position that is monitoring security cameras, social media, live streams, etc. Developing a system that is more real-time is in process, however, police departments have limited funding for these tools. WCPD would like to explore this newer technology.
- XI. President's Report – Brian Hirahara, BH Development, Board President
- A. The specific language additions to the tax initiative include the addition of arts programs, local business support, and downtown improvements.
 - B. Discussions occurring regarding taking information from the retail study and partnering with the city to construct a strategic plan for the downtown.
 - C. Take One Pizza will likely be Salt & Straw. La Fogata location will now be Model Bakery and will be used as the regional commissary. Shake Shack is moving along. Relax the Back is open. Nick the Greek is about to open. The Agora will have Circle Lighting and Removerie Tattoo coming. TD Ameritrade closed. Starbucks on Newell has been closed but are still paying rent. Align Development has purchased the parcel between Sweetgreen and Slice House resulting in loss of parking and construction difficulties.
 - D. Sales tax initiative will be important to provide support to.
- XII. Board Announcements – Open opportunity for the Board Directors to share business news
- A. Barney Fonzi – Working on Visit Walnut Creek. First guide to promote WC to tourism industry. There are advertising opportunities with affordable rates if anyone is interested.
 - B. Kathy Hemmenway – Emergency meeting will be taking place the week of August 29th, time and date coming soon. A possible September meeting relating to the tax measure initiative. The next board meeting is October 12th.
 - C. Bob Linscheid – The Chamber will be discussing the tax measure at their next board meeting and a final vote is expected in September.

Meeting adjourned at 9:46am.