

August Board Meeting Minutes

August 25, 2021 • 6:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.

Via ZOOM conference: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86909160163> Meeting ID: 869 0916 0163

One tap mobile +16699006833,,86909160163# US (San Jose)

Attendees: Robert Sakai, Mary Ishisaki, Steve Ishii, Jerry Ono, Kathy Nelsen, Emily Nichols, Dennis Kern, Kim Kolbe, David Dunham

Absent: Alex Prouty, Emily Glick

Staff: Grace Horikiri, Brandon Quan, Melissa Ayumi Bailey

Guests: Jim Anderson, Susie Kagami (JTF), Sandy Mori (JTF), Leah Goldstein (LGPR), Toey Weiss (LGPR), Max Nihei (JTF/JCBD), Benh Nakajo

1. Call to order and roll call 6:00

The meeting was called to order at 6:03PM.

2. Action Item: Approval of July 28, 2021 Minutes 6:03

Motion: Mary Ishisaki; Second: Steve Ishii

The motion was approved with one abstention from Dennis Kern, who was not present at the last board meeting.

3. Action Item: Approval of July Financial Report 6:05

Motion: Dennis Kern; Second: Kathy Nelsen

The motion was approved unanimously.

On the Profit and Loss statement we have a total income of \$400, which is the services provided to Nihonmachi Parking Corporation to clean the parking lot. Our basic income comes in from assessments of the property owners made on property taxes payable no later than October 10th and December 10th. Usually this income comes in sometime between December 30th and January 15th for the December tax payments, and between April 30th and June 15th for the April tax payments. There are two smaller payments that come in after due to late tax payments. We have a total of \$393,000 in assessment payments income from the City and as we go through the year those payments will come in. We are also retaining \$160,000 or 4 months times \$40,000 worth of expenses in case assessment payments come in extremely late and we need to have money in the bank. The retained earnings are held to keep us liquid. We are also putting aside \$40,000 for operations that come in that are greater than anticipated. We have also put away \$20,000 for the SafeCity Camera Maintenance to take care of future costs. We have \$109,000 in funding from our original benefactor remaining, which will cover the next two years of maintenance. The total expenses is \$39,746, giving us -\$39,346, and with the carryovers from the previous year makes the net income \$23,753. We have received \$13,000 from the

City for the BigBelly expenses, which counts towards our match required by OEWD. Our total assets are \$1,133,689 and we are balanced at total liabilities and equities at the same rate.

4. Executive Director & Staff Reports

6:10

A. Executive Director Updates

COVID testing has continued in Japantown. July 31st had 551 people tested. Thanks to our relationship with VirusGeeks we were able to bring COVID testing and vaccination at Nihonmachi Street Fair. Since this past Monday, we have had daily COVID testing from 9am-3pm in the Peace Plaza and this will continue through September 30th thanks to VirusGeeks. On September 10th and 24th, JCBD will partner with DPH for COVID testing in the Peace Plaza. On August 16th, Grace was invited by counsel Claudine Cheng to participate in a panel with the SF Human Rights Commission Violence Prevention Summit. Hillary Nakano of Japantown for Justice also participated. This was a good networking opportunity with the Tenderloin CBD and Merchants Association regarding their efforts against current crime issues in our neighborhoods. This past Tuesday, Grace was part of the press conference with Phil Ting announcing \$5 million in funding from the state to revitalize Buchanan Mall/Osaka Way. Aiko Cuneo and Paul Lanier were able to participate in the event and were appreciative of the effort. Sandy Mori will be forming a committee to begin planning this revitalization.

B. Grant Submission Updates / Heart of Jtown Resiliency Fund Update

OEWD awarded an additional \$13,000 for the BigBelly Program.

C. Cleaning & Safety Updates

Moving forward, unofficial information will be gathered from the community and ambassadors of incidents that have occurred in Japantown. Documentation of broken auto glass and other data will also be included going forward to provide more anecdotal information to the Board going forward. There are a few trees blocking some of the camera views so Rec and Park and DPW were alerted. Rec and Park have been able to come out but DPW is still pending. There was one reportable incident this month from Hotel Kabuki. It was reported that a woman comes onto the premises to take coffee and recently got into an altercation with staff. Hotel Kabuki was advised to report the incidents and the importance of reporting to SFPD was emphasized. Emily Nichols also had an incident take place where a man walking on Geary towards Laguna spit on her. Unfortunately it was not within camera view so there is nothing to share with SFPD, but Emily will file a police report to document it.

5. JCBD Marketing & Communication Committee Updates

6:20

LGPR: A food tour is being planned with restaurants/vendors that are media worthy. An electronic ticket would be purchased online for a self-guided tour. Right now, the locations and mapping of the route are being determined as well as how the ticketing process and event dates will work. A comprehensive pitch to local media about upcoming events is being planned as well as outreach to let them know about Grace's availability for interviews. We are also working on holiday plans and looking for things that are compelling for the media. Before COVID, we had planned a Press Trip with several different writers who confirmed participation. We are trying to have this happen in the coming spring,

pending health directives. We are also excited about recent events such as the revitalization of the Ruth Asawa fountains. We are working both on current events, long leads, and creating experiences in the coming months to help bring Japantown back to life.

Update on the Breath/Bliss Mapping Project: After discussion with NAKED and Rec and Park, the potential of an indoor space was mentioned to save costs/time/security issues brought up with the Peace Plaza installation. The planned location would be Suite 525 in the East Mall. An indoor location allows for better security and greater control over the installation and light levels in order to be able to see the exhibition at both day and night time. Once NAKED gets the go ahead, they can install within 4-6 weeks, so we hope to have this in time for the holiday season.

6. Community Updates 6:30

A. Japantown Task Force/Japantown Cultural District

We are in the final stages of the CCHES report and working towards an adoption by the Board of Supervisors in October. We will be doing a Community Town Hall in September to have one last review and show the new format that includes photos and graphics. We will be the second Cultural District adopted. A Co-Creative Arts Hub is in progress and currently the branding work is in progress. Grace, Steve Nakajo, Yuka Walton, Linda Mihara, and Susie Kagami will be on a Alaska Airline Cultural District webinar on Friday representing Japantown discussing history, current activism, and community legacy businesses.

7. Discussion on the proposed acquisition of the Buchanan Hotel 6:35 to convert it for permanent supportive housing

The board received information sent from HSH regarding the community meeting scheduled for tomorrow about the proposed purchase of Buchanan Hotel for potential permanent supportive housing. Currently the hotel is a temporary transitional shelter, and some of these residents would potentially be transferred in, but there is also the potential for this location to be senior housing. This is one of 4 locations that is up for purchase for permanent supportive housing. The purchase will tentatively be heard by the Board of Supervisors in September.

As of this morning, over 300 people have registered to attend the community meeting. The timeframe is not good for businesses, and the department has agreed to have a different mechanism to provide feedback as well. Grace put together letters for businesses to review and sign, should they choose to oppose the purchase. The head of HSH is Shireen McSpadden, who was previously the head of senior services and adults with disabilities. She is sensitive to and concerned with the economic impact on businesses. Each speaker making public comment in tomorrow's meeting will have 2 minutes, given the number of registrants. The meeting will end at 9PM. If many attendees do not get to comment, HSH will hold a second meeting. It is interesting to see the feedback from different aspects of the neighborhood, including Lower Pacific Heights, the SF Realtors Association, St. Francis Square, Union 2 members. We have to be careful about this neighborhood appearing to be NIMBY due to the advocacy out there for the homeless. There will likely be homeless advocates on the call. There are a group of young people in Jtown that have concern over people reacting without compassion to people without shelter. We will hear many different points of view, and the main issue is we need to hear them. Originally we were told the

temporary shelter program would end in December, but this new program is one the Mayor supports as a way to get people off the streets and into housing. The Mission, Excelsior, and SOMA also have proposed sites and community meetings that will be taking place. The buildings in those areas are apartment buildings and one smaller hotel. JTF has not yet made a statement pending the community meeting and hearing the statements made by different aspects. There is a possibility of this being taken off the Board of Supervisors' agenda due to the need to get community feedback, and HSH is committed to do that. It is not good for this to go to the Board of Supervisors due to the intensity of the advocacy and lobbying needed to get 8 votes. The goal is to get KHP to take the offer of sale off the table with the City, which would alleviate a lot because another location in the Western Addition would be sought instead. This is a program the Mayor is pushing to solve the homeless crisis which is a nationwide issue.

There is concern around the economic impact of the loss of revenue from tourists given the occupancy size of the hotel, as well as how rushed the process has been. There has been no opportunity for communication to learn more about the issue and around harm reduction to the community's revenues. There are also other buildings that have been presented to HSH which are for sale and set up as apartments already that were turned down.

8. General public comment - 2 minute per person 6:50

Benh Nakajo: I have two questions. First one is to Leah and Tory regarding the food tour, are you familiar with Edible Excursions?

Leah Goldstein: Yes, we have connected with the guides to work on putting this together. The difference is this would be a self-guided tasting tour that doesn't require a group or specific time/date to participate.

Benh Nakajo: Second question is to Grace. Is the letter you are circulating to the businesses available to others? My homeowners association is interested in signing.

Grace: I will look for a letter that's more community based to send to you. You can also send letters to me to submit on your behalf.

Benh Nakajo: So my homeowners association could compose a letter and send to Grace?

Sandy Mori: Yes that would be appropriate.

9. Announcements and New Business 6:55

Rich Hashimoto: The JMA submitted its banner proposal for \$26,650, with \$5000 allocated to the JCBD staff to manage installation. Hopefully we will get positive results soon. The second item is garage performance. Last week we had good, positive numbers. It is at 95% in transient vehicles and 80% revenues, it is one of the top 3 performing City garages at this time. There is some tapering off with back to school, but we are remaining optimistic. Customer appreciation month was a huge success and I want to thank JCBD, JCYC staff, and Japan Center Malls for their assistance. 1200 tickets were received and \$155,000 total receipts redeemed, about \$130 per person spent at member only businesses. The highest amount spent was \$3800 at one store.

10. Action Item: Adjournment 7:00

Motion: Kathy Nelsen; Second: Mary Ishisaki

The motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00.

Next JCBD Board Meeting: The next scheduled JCBD Board meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 22, 2021 at 6pm. Due to the rise of the Delta variant of COVID, we will be continuing with our virtual meetings for the time being until we hear more from the City on guidance. Login information is located at the top of the page.

***General Public Comment:** Members of the public may address the Board for up to two minutes with respect to each item on the agenda, and may speak up to two minutes regarding matters not on the agenda during general public comment.

Agenda materials distributed to the JCBD Board members are available for inspection during regular office hours please contact melissa@jtowncbd.org to request materials.