



## Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

March 22, 2023 • 6:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.

Via ZOOM conference: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86382763888>

Phone Option: 1-669-90-06833 • Meeting ID: 863 8276 3888

**Attendees:** Robert Sakai, Mary Ishisaki, Kathy Nelsen, Daniel Byron, Kim Kolbe, Eunice Ashizawa, David Dunham, Amit Patel, Marlon Smith, Steve Ishii

**Absent:** Dennis Kern

**Staff:** Grace Horikiri, Brandon Quan, Melissa Ayumi Bailey

**Guests:** Roland Tolosa (AVS), Dr. Emily Murase (JTF), Emily Nichols (JTF), Alice Kawahatsu (JTF), Rich Hashimoto (JMA)

1. Call to order and roll call 6:00
2. Discussion on return to in-person meetings and changing start time to 5pm 6:03  
**Action Item:** Approval to return to in-person meetings and change in start time  
Motion: Mary Ishisaki; Second: Daniel Byron  
The motion passed unanimously.  
The City has ended its restrictions in regards to in-person meetings. It was recommended that the Board go back to meeting in person. The board members generally expressed interest in returning to in-person meetings, but prefer if there is a hybrid option for meeting in the event someone is unable to attend in person. Amit offered the potential for Hotel Kabuki as an option for meetings. It was also expressed that the Board Meeting time be changed to 5PM along with the switch to hybrid.
3. **Action Item:** Approval of February Minutes 6:07  
Motion: Eunice Ashizawa; Second: Amit Patel  
The motion passed unanimously.
4. **Action Item:** Approval of February 2023 Financials 6:09  
Motion: David Dunham; Second: Eunice Ashizawa  
The motion passed unanimously.  
Budget Variance Report. The March year-to-date report shows a gross income of \$441,713. During the month, we received the following income: 1. NCC Anti Asian Hate Funding \$103,845 (1st invoice), 2. Grant from SF Japantown Foundation \$10,000, 3. OEWD Big Belly Project Grant \$6,500. In addition, the donation from various artists supporting the Heart of Jtown Resiliency fund has increased to \$1,024 year to date. The Pop Up sales for March is \$15,957 with a year to date total of \$50,789. The Nihonmachi Parking Corporation cleaning service came in at \$630.00. The total income thru March 2023 of \$441,713 is 25.77% under the 9-month income budget of \$595,095. We have not received the 2nd installment of the Assessment revenues from the City and also the remainder of the outstanding receivables from NCC/APILO funding. The actual expenses through March 2023 is \$466,238 and the budget is \$617,493. This is \$151,255 under the budget or 24.5%. The salary budget ytd is \$116,325 and the actual expense is \$99,026 for a favorable variance of 15%.  
Balance Sheet. The March year-to-date balance sheet shows a cash balance of \$697,409 which is an 8.5% increase from prior month's \$642,736 balance. The total assets as of 3/31/23 is \$909,868 and the retained earnings is \$934,393.  
Profit & Loss. The gross income for March year to date is \$441,713 and the total expenses is

\$466,238 which gives a net loss before carryovers of \$24,524. With the carryovers from the prior years included in the budget, the year to date net income is \$490,822.

#### Funding Updates

Grants submitted recently include:

- 1) AARP Community Challenge Grant for \$50,000 in support of the creation of a Disaster and Emergency Evacuation Plan for the senior homes and service centers in Japantown. Along with creating the plan, staff will work with Kimochi, Kokoro, and Nihonmachi Terrace to host training workshops on logistics and protocols with the San Francisco Asian American Firefighters Association. There is currently no centralized management plan for a natural disaster in Japantown. Award notification should take place at the end of April or early May.
- 2) OEWD RFP 225 for \$50,000 in support of the Big Belly Operations Program. This will update the 4 current bins and install 3 new units. We will hopefully receive award notification by March 24.
- 3) Avenue Greenlight through the Council of District Merchants Association in the branding and marketing program area for \$30,000 will be submitted on April 5. The lightboxes on the 1700 Post building will be replaced with SF Japantown branded graphics and a physical wayfinding map will be proposed. This year, the grant program was opened up to nonprofit organizations and not solely merchants associations.
- 4) Reimbursements for NCC Anti Asian Hate grant. The first reimbursement was received for \$101,619.29. Invoice 2 for \$34,675.32 is pending reimbursement. Invoice 3 for \$67,158.27 is in progress and will be submitted this week. Finally, one more invoice for \$79,207.12 will be submitted by June 30 to close out the grant, totaling \$282,000.
- 5) OEWD RFP 223 the Heart of Jtown Revitalization Project Invoice 1 is in progress. This grant supports the pop up shop and other public activations. \$15,000 will be requested for the work done from January 1, 2023 to date.

#### 5. Executive Director & Staff Reports

6:20

##### A. Executive Director's Trip to Japan to promote travel - SF Travel Asia Mission

Grace will be going to Japan for the SF Travel Asia Mission from 4/11-4/22, sponsored by the Japantown Merchants Association. The purpose of the trip is to promote Japantown and travel to San Francisco as well as explore ways for Japanese businesses to open in the United States.

##### B. SF Office of Small Business Japantown Walk-Through - 3/2

A walkthrough was done with Katy Tang, Marianne Thompson, and Iris Lee from the Office of Small Business a few weeks ago. First stop was Cafe Mums, then Paper Tree, Soko Hardware, and a few other merchants inside and outside the mall. This was to ensure small businesses are up to speed on permits and other opportunities for the merchants. They also stopped by the pop up shop and spoke with the artists about the possibilities of a permanent shop in Japantown or their own nonprofit organization.

##### C. SF Chamber of Commerce Japantown Merchant Walk - 3/24

Melissa connected with Somiah Handy of the SF Chamber of Commerce through the Leadership San Francisco program. Somiah coordinates Merchant Walks for small businesses in San Francisco. The Japantown Merchant Walk will be taking place from 3-5PM on March 24. Chato, Uji Time, Tokkaido Arts, YakiniQ Cafe, Soko Hardware, and the Heart of Jtown Pop Up Shop will be participating, and a reception will be hosted at Hotel Kabuki. 30-40 SF Chamber members are expected to participate.

##### D. Strategic Plan Update

The content is being assembled and a draft will be available to share at a future Officers Meeting and subsequently Board Meeting. It will be a living document that can change going forward. Content was pulled from Annual Reports and e-newsletters, which shows what we should continue to do and also do in the future.

##### E. Street Lamp Banner Update

The SFPUC had previously put a hold on any new street lamp banners and planned to remove all existing banners. This has been put on hold and they are working with DPW currently.

F. The Heart of Jtown Pop-Up Shop Update

A financial report was included in the Board Packet. The shop opened December 16 and is open 3 days a week, and to date a little under \$50,000 in sales have been made, which is very successful. The artists work very hard on promotion and marketing on social media. The artists also serve as ambassadors for Japantown and share information about events and recommendations to customers. The lease has been extended till June. The artists also donate back 10% of what they make, which is used towards the rent along with funds from OEWD RFP 223.

G. Japantown Renovation Projects - Small Business Mitigation

The Peace Plaza and Buchanan Mall/Osaka Way renovation planning is underway. Katy Tang and others from the City have been asking about a mitigation plan for the small businesses and recommended starting now. Grace is gathering information from other merchants associations, CBDs, and BIDs on creating a mitigation plan for Japantown. Linda Mihara also spoke to VP Kamala Harris about this issue at a round table recently. A one page plan will be drafted and shared soon which will be submitted to City agencies and the Mayor's Office.

H. Cleaning, Safety and SafeCity Updates

In the new fiscal year, the contract with Block by Block will be ending. Staff is exploring other companies and the support they provide to their ambassadors, such as a deescalation training program and mental health support for their staff. Some companies bring therapists to the ambassadors which is significant. Block by Block does not provide services like this. A bid process is being explored for the new fiscal year.

There were 5 requests for video this month, 4 from SFPD and 1 from the public. SFPD requests were for car break ins and 1 hit and run, and the public requests were for car break ins. Rich, Grace, and Brandon attended the SF Safe Town Hall. SFPD is seeing a shortage of over 500 officers and that effect is being felt in Japantown. The overtime program has been cut, and Japantown has lost foot patrol officers due to that. SFPD is seeking a \$25 million budget supplemental, which was conditionally approved today and sent back to committee. Crime information is still submitted by the community and sent out via Safety Alerts, along with information from SFPD and other outside agencies.

SafeCity Program Updates. One camera went down at Post and Laguna, which was a license plate reader. We are approaching the time where some equipment will wear out, and about 2/3rds are out of warranty. Discussion around budget for equipment replacements is taking place, and AVS is working on a replacement timeline.

6. General public comment - 2 minute per person

6:45

Dr. Emily Murase amplified the need for construction mitigation and remediation for small businesses during the Peace Plaza and Buchanan Mall/Osaka Way renovation. The initial design was approved by SFAC in civic design review and logistics can now be discussed. The Japantown CHHESS goes before the Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee tomorrow ahead of the full Board of Supervisors meeting on April 4. Please attend a press conference at 9:00 before the hearing as well as the hearing at 10:00 to provide public comment. A paid summer internship called the Japantown Youth Navigators has been launched to staff the Japantown Cultural District Visitor Center. 100 applicants have applied to the program and it will be the first in Japantown to offer training in the private sector. JTF is hiring a summer intern to test internet speeds in Japantown in order to submit challenges to the FCC based on actual data collected vs data reported to the FCC. Finally, Cultural District Program Manager Susie Kagami will be departing JTF on April 5 to become Executive Director of KOHO. A community obon is being planned for August and a film festival in the fall. Susie will continue as a contractor with the Peace Plaza Committee.

7. Announcements and New Business 6:50  
The Northern California Cherry Blossom Festival will be taking place on April 8-9, 15-16, with the Grand Parade returning on April 16.
8. **Action Item:** Adjournment 7:00  
The meeting was adjourned at 6:50pm.

**Next JCBD Board Meeting:** The next scheduled JCBD Board meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 26, 2023 at 6pm. Location will be announced 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.

Agenda materials distributed to the JCBD Board members are available for inspection during regular office hours please contact Meliisa Bailey Nihei at [melissa@jtowncbd.org](mailto:melissa@jtowncbd.org) to request materials.