

March 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

March 24, 2021 • 5:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M. Via ZOOM conference:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81445128895> Meeting ID: 814 4512 8895
One tap mobile +16699006833,,81445128895# US (San Jose)

Attendees: Robert Sakai, Mary Ishisaki, Kathy Nelsen, Steve Ishii, Daniel Byron, Kim Kolbe, Dennis Kern, Alex Prouty, Emily Glick

Absent: Jerry Ono, Rob Malone

Staff: Grace Horikiri, Brandon Quan, Melissa Ayumi Bailey

Guests: Rich Hashimoto (JMA), Emily Nichols (Buchanan Hotel), Greg Viloría (JCM), Robert Hsu (Tokaido Arts), Elena Nielsen (JCCCNC)

- 1. Call to order and roll call** **5:00**
The meeting was called to order at 5:01PM.
- 2. Vice President's Announcements** **5:03**
There are no Vice President's announcements at this time.
- 3. Action Item: Approval February 24, 2020 Minutes** **5:05**
Motion: Mary Ishisaki; Second: Dan Byron
The motion passed unanimously. Dennis Kern abstained due to nonattendance at the February meeting.
- 4. February Financial Report** **5:10**
 - A. Action Item: Approval of February Financial Reports**
Motion: Dennis Kern; Second: Kathy Nelsen
The motion passed unanimously.
Multiple files were sent this month breaking down each budget category in order to more easily show total expenditures for the Financial Report. The budget to actual variance report shows a negative of \$48,188 for year to date, but we will deduct out of this the depreciation for 6 months that was added in, putting us in the positive at \$8087. Another depreciation will show at the end of the year along with income from the City paid at the end of April- first of May. This will put us at about \$50,000 without depreciation. The Marketing Committee met with the Finance Working Group and worked out a budget for going forward which will be reported on later.
 - B. BakerTilly Financial Statement**
Our income from the City is low enough to require a financial assessment and not a full audit, which saves costs. The report is boiler plate, their main comment was related to the fact that there are no major changes that need to be made in how we do business. They flag Block by Block as a single contract at about 1/3rd of the total income, but that

is the way things work out for JCBD. We can possibly look into other bids and contracts going forward. There were also concerns about banking only with Union Bank at this time, but it should not be an issue overall and there is little risk of Union Bank going under.

5. Executive Director & Staff Reports

5:15

A. COVID efforts

Staff still checks in weekly with businesses on new information as we move into Orange Tier. 12 restaurants of 15 are taking place in the Shared Spaces program, and staff assisted with their applications. 11 businesses received assistance on the CA Covid Relief Grant and 6 have received funding to date. We are conducting COVID testing in Japantown still, next dates are April 8th, 23rd, May 14th, 28th.

B. Heart of Jtown Resiliency Fund Update

Donations are still coming in and total to date is \$510,759. Upcoming projects for funding include murals on boarded up storefronts on Post St. and elsewhere in Japantown.

C. CBD Consortium 501(c)6 Formation Update

The formation of a 501c6 would provide the Consortium with a stronger, unified voice when making requests to the City and other vendors. It also allows us to advocate for funds to continue to provide services above and beyond what the City provides. The fees will be on a sliding scale based on CBD budget size.

D. Asian Hate Crimes

There has been a rise in Asian hate crimes in SF and beyond. JCBD staff is participating in community roundtables to discuss what we are doing to keep our community safe. The Community Ambassadors, re-introduction of 4 SFPD foot beat officers, and the SafeCity Camera program are layers of protection for Japantown. All are doing a great job keeping their eyes and ears open and keeping our community safe, in particular the seniors.

C. Grant Submission Updates

Unfortunately OEWD RFP #215 Programs Area P and T were not awarded. Feedback was received from OEWD for future submissions. We were awarded \$10,000 from the JA Community Foundation's COVID-19 Emergency Grant Program, and another \$2500 in operating support from the Union Bank Charitable Foundation. To date, JCBD has been awarded a total of \$32,500 in grants for this fiscal year, which puts us above the requirement from OEWD for 6% of additional funding each year. We still have a \$50,000 grant pending with Union Bank Charitable Foundation for COVID related support for businesses.

D. Cleaning & Safety Reports

The Ambassadors have continued doing a great job and have been able to take on more long term projects since the levels of trash have been down, such as weeding. Al and Shanice are good about getting homeless people to move along, which has contributed to less trash overall within Japantown. They have reported an increase in auto glass, but again the video requests are not correlating with the clean ups. We have received two in the past week, which is an increase since January. Additionally, there

have been 4 businesses/properties that experienced vandalism or break ins. Safety tips have been shared with businesses in Japantown to help improve security. On March 17th, Capt. Yep did a walkthrough with the patrol officers to introduce and familiarize everyone. Also in attendance were Sharon (JMA) and Rich Hashimoto. We have not had any reports of attacks in Japantown, however there was an incident in which a community member was confronted in the Peace Plaza by a group of skateboarders who made a racist comment and aggressively approached the community member. There were no injuries or SFPD reports made in regards to this incident. We are sharing literature and whistles as part of crime prevention and protection. Community Ambassador AI assisted a senior crossing the street when the light changed while she was in the intersection. There is interest in exploring sensitivity crossing installation at Post/Buchanan and Sutter/Buchanan. The JTF Land Use Committee is a possibility for outreach on this issue. Alice Kawahatsu was also mentioned as a community member leading pedestrian safety issues who can also be contacted.

7. Japantown SafeCity Program Updates 5:30

AVS will be starting installation on the Nakamoto Building. Funding was designated originally for the cameras on the trellis but since the trellis does not have power and issues related to COVID made the decision to change the location. An update will be presented at the April Board Meeting once installation is complete.

8. JCBD Marketing & Communication Committee Updates 5:35

The Marketing Reelz were completed last Friday with 6 businesses: Hoshinoya, On The Bridge, Super Mira, Sasa, Sanko, and Chato. These are 15 second promotional videos for social media and websites. Everyone was excited to be included and ended up comping most of the food prepared for the videos. Thank you to Kim Kolbe and Chris Killmann for their work on the Reelz.

Social Media assistance is also now being provided to small businesses through work with Small Business Coordinator Max Nihei and Emily Nichols of the Buchanan Hotel. Kippu Restaurant will be the first business that is provided assistance. Cross promotion postcards for Japantown are in progress and will be shared with the Japanese Tea Garden and other sites in the City to promote Japantown. Photos by Aubrie Pick and graphics from our banners will be used for these postcards.

The work on the e-commerce site has been continuing with Robert Hsu and Greg Vilorio. This is to create a singular website for Japantown merchants to sell items online. A working draft of the website has been created. Items would be separated by product type as well as by individual store. JCBD will continue to support the development and progress of the website.

9. Community Updates 5:40

A. Japantown Task Force

JTF hired Susie Kagami as Strategic Partnership Coordinator and Max Nihei as Small Business Coordinator (supervised by JCBD, paid by JTF). JTF is facing severe cutbacks from MOHCD and the City for ongoing funding. A supplemental budget was

presented and approved for the Cultural Districts in spite of this fact to gain more funding. Artist Meetup will take place tomorrow night.

10. Discussion and possible action items for future meetings 5:45

There is some interest in discussing the Board Meeting time from 5:00 to 6:00, or at another time. Some people are having a harder time making the 5:00 time. This item will be an action item for the next meeting.

Alex Prouty would like to recommend nominating Emily Nichols to the Board. This will be discussed at the next Officers Meeting and possibly put on the next agenda.

11. General public comment* 5:50

Robert Hsu (Tokaido Arts): I am the owner of Tokaido Arts, which has been in business for 50 years. I am the next generation owner. Greg and I have been pushing hard on the e-commerce site and it has been a labor of love for the both of us. It is going slower than envisioned but it isn't derailing our plans at all. This is something I really want to see come to fruition as someone who considers Japantown my home and as a merchant. This is a great opportunity for marketing in a robust way and I look forward to keeping in touch about our progress.

12. Announcements and New Business 5:55

13. Action Item: Adjournment 6:00

Motion: Mary Ishisaki; Second: Robert Sakai

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:56PM.

Next JCBD Board Meeting: The December JCBD Board meeting will be cancelled. The first scheduled Board meeting for the new year will take place on Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at 5pm. Due to Shelter in Place Order the board meeting will be conducted on ZOOM. 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.