

JAPANTOWN TASK FORCE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020
6:00 PM – UNION BANK COMMUNITY ROOM
1675 POST ST., SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94115

ATTENDEES: Sandy Mori, Kenta Takamori, David Takashima, Benh Nakajo, Beau Simon, Alice Kawahatsu, Mark Moriguchi, Lucy Fisher, Jeremy Chan, Richard Hashimoto, Glynis Nakahara, Rosalyn Tonai, Jon Osaki

ABSENT: Scott Hamaguchi, Jacquelyn Chew, Seiko Fujimoto

STAFF: Steve Nakajo, Lauren Nosaka, Nina Bazan-Sakamoto, Brandon Quan

GUESTS: Grace Horikiri, Derek Tahara, Judy Hamaguchi, Elena Nielsen, Beverly Ng, Toks Ajike, Adrienne Shiozaki-Woo, Raymond Woo, Greg Vilorio, Tomo Hirai

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by President Sandy Mori. A quorum was acknowledged.

New board members, Jeremy Chan and Lucy Fisher introduced themselves.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the JTF Board meeting of January 15, 2020.

It was moved David Takashima and seconded by Mark Moriguchi to accept the minutes from the January meeting (Attachment A.)

The motion passed unanimously. No public comments.

III. UPDATE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, STEVE NAKAJO

Steve Nakajo reviewed the highlights from the February 19, 2020 Executive Director's report (Attachment B). Steve welcomed the new board members and guests, Toks Ajike and Beverly Ng from SF Recreation and Park department. Steve will have his 2-year anniversary as the JTF Executive Director in April 2020. Steve passed out a Cultural District timeline (Attachment C). The CHHESS draft report will be presented to the JTF Board of Directors at the next board meeting in March. The draft report will be available to the public on April 11. The community will be able to give feedback during the months of April, May and June. The CD team will have the last town hall meeting in June or July.

No public comments.

Cultural District update:

- The team has been partnering with the Cultural Heritage Sustainability Committee and the Land Use/Transportation Committee on the focus groups. The committees and the team have been working together to finalize questions, originally composed from the town hall meeting.
- The Land Use & Environmental Resiliency focus group will be held on February 20.
- Julia Sabory, the Cultural District Program Manager from the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development will attend the Cultural Competency focus group on March 2.
- The Young Adults focus group will be held on March 5.
- The team is preparing for the grand launch on April 11 and doing an open call for artists. The deadline for artists to apply is March 1. Honorariums of \$100-\$500 will be given to the artists. The team is looking for 7 performers and the performance will be 10-20 minutes.

Public Comments:

- Who is attending the Cultural Competency focus group and when is it? When is the Cultural Heritage Sustainability focus group?

2020 Census Update:

- The official start date for the census is April 1.
- Letters for invitations to participate in the census will start on March 12.
- There are 4 ways to participate: online, phone, paper forms, and enumerators. Online and phone are available in 13 languages. Paper forms are only available in Spanish and English. If citizens do not reply by phone, online or paper forms, enumerators will be sent out going house to house at the end of May.
- Brandon will be meeting with Nihonmachi Little Friends during the week of February 24.
- The Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs provided materials in Japanese, Chinese and Korean.

No public comments.

JCBD Update:

- Supervisor Preston visit JCBD and he provided a Navigation Center flyer. Navigation Centers are centers that provide temporary shelter for the homeless. There will be a community meeting on Sunday, February 23 2-4pm at the Gateway High Auditorium (Attachment D)
- For the SafeCity Camera Program, there is a total of 125 cameras installed in Japantown. The last 2 properties within the district is the Buchanan Gate and Rumi Okabe's building. After those 2 are completed, the JCBD will go outside the district and see if property owners would like to join in the camera program.
- JCBD is working closely with SFPD to make sure the video retrieval system is working properly.
- According to the data the Block by Block Community Ambassadors have entered, there has been an increase of glass breaking in Japantown. However, there is a big disparity to SFPD's numbers due to many not reporting the breakings. JCBD has asked travel agencies and car rental companies to spread the word on parking smart in SF.
- There has been racial graffiti posted around Japantown. The JCBD is reporting those incidents to the SFPD.
- The Japantown Marketing Communication group has retained LGPR, a PR company based in LA, to promote Japantown through lifestyle and travel magazines. Japantown has appeared in the East Bay Times. Eaters SF will publish a Japantown Eating Guide on February 21. The group is scheduling a PR press trip inviting local and outside SF publications to stay and dine in Japantown.
- The CBD Consortium will be meeting with Naomi Kelly, the City Administrator and Alaric Degrafrinried, the acting director for SF Department of Public Works. Grace will attend to represent Japantown.

No public comments.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Land Use/Transportation Committee (Co-chairs, Glynis Nakahara/Kenta Takamori)
1. Updates

Glynis Nakahara reported that the Land Use/Transportation Committee held their last meeting on February 13. Representatives from SFMTA attended the meeting and gave an overview on the Sutter St. Transit Safety Project. SFMTA is planning to restripe Sutter St. from Gough to Filmore because muni buses are wide and that out of safety concerns the SFMTA wants to widen the lanes. The westbound lane currently has 2 traffic lanes but SFMTA will restripe it to 1

traffic lane due to a safety issue. JCYC and Nihonmachi Little Friends has expressed concerns. SFMTA will be reaching out to the individual organizations. There will be a dedicated left turn lane on Webster St. The Bike station has been installed on the North side of Post. There will be a meeting with SFMTA for festival sponsorship and merchant promotions. The Geary Rapid Project plans to plant poplar trees on the north side and keep the cherry trees on the Japantown side. Glynis encouraged board members to attend the Land Use & Environmental Resiliency focus group on February 20. The committee will discuss with the Planning Department on how to proceed on the design guidelines in March.

No public comments.

B. Cultural Heritage Sustainability Committee (Co-chair David Takashima/Jacquelyn Chew)

1. Update on CHSC support for focus groups and ongoing collaboration model with Cultural District staff

David Takashima reported that the CHSC committee is partnering with the Cultural District team on the Cultural Heritage Sustainability Committee focus group on March 2. The CHSC will also have their regular meeting in March.

No public comments.

C. Peace Plaza Committee (Co-Chairs, Jon Osaki/Richard Hashimoto)

1. Updates
Jon Osaki thanked Toks Ajike and Beverly Ng for updating the Board on the Parks Bond process.
2. Update from SF Recreation and Park Department's Deputy Director of Policy and Public Affairs
Beverly Ng on the 2020 Parks Bond
Toks Ajike, the Director of Capital Planning, and Beverly Ng, the Deputy Director of Policy and Public Affairs from the SF Recreation and Park Department gave a presentation on the 2020 Parks Bond (Attachment E). The SF Recreation and Park Department does not know for sure if the Parks Bond will definitely be on the 2020 ballot since the mayor's priority is push the Mental Health Bond forward. As the Department waits to hear back from the Mayor's office, they are continuing to do community outreach to the Board of Supervisors and Commission in preparation that the Parks Bond will be on the 2020 ballot. The Parks Bond provides funding to 80% of the projects. The Department encouraged the board to spread the word on promoting the SF Parks survey (in Attachment E) and has extended the survey to April.

Jon Osaki and Richard Hashimoto will reach out to board members to get involved in the Parks Bond process and may ask members to attend Parks Bond meetings. Richard Hashimoto explained that SF Rec and Park will be conducting seismic testing on the pagoda during the week of February 24 and begin reconstruction on the expansion joint in the next few months. The renovation and rebuilding of the expansion joint may happen before or after the Cherry Blossom Festival depending on the contractor's timing.

No public comments.

D. Nominations Committee (Sandy Mori/Benh Nakajo)

1. Recommendation of 2 new Board members: Elena Nielsen and Daryl Higashi
The Nominations Committee recommended Elena Nielsen and Daryl Higashi to the JTF Board of Directors (Attachment F). Elena Nielsen works at Kimochi, Inc. Daryl Higashi has retired and has a background in housing.

It was moved by Richard Hashimoto and seconded by David Takashima to approve Elena Nielsen and Daryl Higashi as board members of JTF.

The vote passed unanimously. No public comments.

V. UPDATE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. Bylaws Committee: Mark Moriguchi, David Takashima and Kenta Takamori are continuing to review the bylaws

The Bylaws Committee is continuing to review the bylaws and will bring a set of amended bylaws to the Board.

2. Ad Hoc Committee for the Japan Center Malls

The Ad Hoc Committee is for all of the malls including Kinokuniya, Pa'ina, the Mar family, Kabuki theater and Hotel Kabuki. The Executive Committee will start the process.

JTF and JCBD met with Dean Preston on Japantown issues and he wants to learn about Japantown. In order to continue with JTF projects, JTF needs to have more fundraising for grants. Sandy is currently looking into the Hewlett Foundation and Kase Foundation. Consul General Uyama and his wife left for Japan. JTF donated \$50 in a group farewell gift to Consul General Uyama. He asks that JTF support Toru Maeda, the new Consul General.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements were shared:

- Tomo Hirai announced that she is back working at Nichi Bei Weekly.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02pm.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 6-8pm at the JACL building, 1st floor conference room.