



Public Affairs Committee

June 13th, 2023 – 9:00 -10:30 a.m.
Hybrid, In person and via Zoom

MINUTES

In Attendance

Committee members: Wes Tyler, Russ Keil Jr., Stephen Brett, Erik Murray, Lauren Ellis, Erik Murray, Beau Simon, Thomas Brock, Tammy Brock, Russ Keil Jr., Evan Kaizer, Jim Chappell, Spencer Sechler, Joesph Shelly, Rick Laubscher, Timothy Falvey, and Casey Neuburger.

Staff: Marisa Rodriguez (CEO), Ken Rich (COO), Melanie Medina (Executive Assistant).

Guests: Jay Cheng, Cassandra Costello (SF Travel), and Lynn Bruni-Perkins (SF Travel).

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Marisa Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Introductions were made.

2. Public Comment

Marisa called for public comment. Marisa spoke on the recent news of Westfield's closure and the opportunity it presents to the city to reimagine the space.

3. Action to approve the May 9, 2023, minutes.

Action: The committee unanimously approved the minutes from May 9, 2023, as motioned by Russ Keil Fr. And seconded by Spencer Sechler.

4. Announcements

- Union Square in Bloom 2023

Union Square in Bloom has been trending well and will go until September. The Alliance will conduct surveys and collect data from social media and with Bloom participants to see how to improve for next year.

- July 28th- Economic Development Summit

On July 28th, the Alliance will be holding a Retail Safety & Economic Development Summit. Topics to be covered include zoning, tenant attraction and the Downtown revitalization.

- Mayor's Press Conference- Powell Street Promenade Updates



On May 16th, Mayor London Breed held a press conference at the corner of Powell and Geary to state her \$6 million commitment to the Powell Street. This money would go towards the refreshment of the promenade and tenant attraction along Powell Street. Board President Aaron Peskin is also in support.

- Suit Up!- June 16th at Macy's
The Union Square Foundation has partnered with Macy's and Ladies in Power to provide suits to 15 young girls from the Bayview as part of a curriculum where the girls learn to build self-esteem, healthy lifestyles, and financial literacy. The program will wrap up with a fashion show at Macy's with the donated suits from Macy's.
- ULI Advisory Services Panel- Planning Department
Marisa took part of an advisory panel with the Planning Department and other city-wide organizations to develop recommendations for San Francisco. The report's findings included a focus on making downtown a mixed-use neighborhood, business and employee attraction and retention, transit reliability and quality, branding and public relations, and governance changes.
- Rezoning
No updates at this time.
- Downtown Recovery Group meeting
No updates at this time.
- C3R Open Space Funds Update
No updates at this time.
- SFPD- Gator Update
No updates at this time.

5. SF Travel Marketing Campaign (Tourism Video); Cassandra Costello & Lynn Bruni-Perkins

Cassandra Costello, Executive Vice President and Chief Policy and External Affairs Officer, along with Lynn Bruni-Perkins, Executive Vice President, and Chief Marketing Officer, representing SF Travel, informed the committee regarding the organization's campaign video and projections for conventions in 2024 and 2025. Cassandra provided updates on the progress of convention returns, acknowledging that they have been slower than anticipated but are showing improvement. The primary objective is to assure convention attendees in 2023 that San Francisco is a clean and safe destination for their visits. The negative news headlines have had a noticeable impact on tourism and



convention activities. Despite this, San Francisco continues to maintain its position in the top 10 convention locations.

To counter the negative perception and attract positive media attention to San Francisco, SF Travel initiated a 16-week commercial campaign called "AlwaysSF," funded through a grant from Visit California. The campaign's goal is to encapsulate the essence of San Francisco and reclaim the narrative. Lynn then presented details about the creation of the video, the research that went into it, and played the video for the committee.

6. Jay Cheng; Community Activation Efforts

Jay Cheng, a political strategist with a background in real estate, addressed the committee concerning the 2023 elections and the emerging wave of new voters. Given the historical recalls in San Francisco, the city's electorate has shown increased engagement in the voting process and in shaping their representation. As the upcoming election approaches, there is an opportunity for voters to influence various boards of San Francisco. During the discussion, Jay Cheng highlighted the challenges of appointing Supreme Court judges, citing the lack of interest due to public animosity, long working hours, and compensation concerns. The conversation also encompassed the potential outcomes that may arise from the upcoming elections. Discussion took place regarding the candidates and their political stances.

7. BOS Budget Hearing

On Thursday, June 15th, the funds for the Powell Street Promenade will go before the Budget and Appropriations Committee. The Alliance wrote a letter of support to state the importance of the Powell Street for Union Square and how funding. Marisa encouraged members of the committee to submit a letter as well. A letter template was distributed to the committee after the meeting.

Action: The committee unanimously approved the letter of support for the Powell Street Funding as motioned by Russ Keil Jr. and seconded by Stephen Brett.

8. Adjournment 10:40 AM

Next Meeting: August 8, 2023, 9:00am