



Public Affairs Committee

March 12, 2024– 9:00 -10:30 a.m.
Hybrid, In person and via Zoom

MINUTES

In Attendance

Committee members: Erik Murray, Timothy Falvey., Spencer Sechler, Stephen Brett, Wes Tyler, Darcy Brown, Lauren Ellis, Pulkesin Mohan, Christine Torrington, Don Thomas, Brian Fenwick, and Beau Simon.

Staff: Marisa Rodriguez (CEO), Ken Rich (COO), Melanie Medina (Executive Assistant), Kristina Ghishan (Intern)

Guests: Chico Lockhart and Chip (Block by Block)

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Marisa Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. Introductions were made.

2. Public Comment

Marisa called for public comment. No Public Comment.

3. Announcements

a. Union Square Foundation Annual Luncheon- Save the Date May 3rd

Marisa informed the committee to save the date for May 3rd for the Union Square Foundation's Annual Luncheon at the Westin St. Francis Hotel.

b. CDA Conference

Marisa spoke to the committee about her and Jason's time at the CDA conference in San Deigo. She noted that San Diego are facing similar challenges in their downtown district similar to San Francisco.

c. Tulip Day March 9th

Marisa spoke regarding the success of Tulip Day and its positive impact on business in Union Square which saw a significant surge in customers on that day. She thanked those who volunteered to help with crowd control and ensure the line moved smoothly. Darcy Brown proposed volunteer shifts for Tulip Day for next year. Don shared his experience as a volunteer and was delighted with the outcome of the event.

d. Macy's



Marisa highlighted Macy's ongoing situation regarding the announcement to sell the property. She noted the Alliance is working behind the scenes to encourage Macy's to continue their presence in Union Square.

e. Union Square in Bloom

Marisa highlighted key dates related to Union Square in Bloom.

- Launch Event: March 23rd
- Mother's Day Event May 12th
- Bar Crawl July 20th

f. Economic Development & Powell Street Project Updates

Ken Rich updated the committee on the second meeting date for the Powell Street Improvement Project that moves into the next phase of the project which will take place on April 11th (time to be determined) and a third meeting that will be taking place to announce the third phase of the project (time and date to be determined).

4. **Action** to approve the February 13, 2024, minutes.

The committee unanimously approved the minutes from January 9, 2023, as motioned by Don Thomas and seconded by Spencer Sechler

5. **Chip & Chico Lockhart, Block by Block, Homelessness Outreach Efforts**

Marisa informed the committee that in years past the Alliance partnered with Miracle Messages for homelessness outreach. However, with the program no longer running, and the Alliance has been seeking a new organization to support homelessness outreach. She then introduced Chip, the Western Division VP for Block by Block, and Chico, Project Manager at Block by Block. Chico presented to the committee the different outreach efforts conducted by Block by Block. Chico outlined the role of Block by Block's outreach program, educational efforts, the relevancy of the outreach efforts, and the different systems that are used to track data. Chico also spoke on his assessment of Union Square from December 2023, to better understand the unhoused population in Union Square.

The role of Block by Block Outreach encompasses addressing quality of life issues, fostering relationships, monitoring trends, frequenting hot spots, and building rapport with community members, local law enforcement, and stakeholders. Education is also a key component, involving conversations with community members to inform them about available resources and policies. Additionally, Block by Block focuses on relevancy by engaging with individuals to reduce calls to local police, identifying community needs, and providing alternative housing options. Chico also emphasized the importance of the



Homeless Management Information System and the data it provides within the Union Square District.

Discussion took place regarding the tracking system, SMART, Block by Block uses and if there is a system that can be used just for Union Square, the current available resources San Francisco offers for individual experiencing homelessness and mental crisis, and the potential of having Block by Block at the table with the City to address citywide homelessness issues.

Chip informed the committee that we can send a proposal of services regarding this matter for the Alliance's review.

- 6. Adjournment 10:30 AM**
Next Meeting: April 9th, 2024, 9:00am