



## Services and Public Safety Committee Meeting

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

9:00am–10:30am

Hybrid Meeting via Zoom and In-Person at 291 Geary Street, Suite 200

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84060754089>

### MINUTES

In attendance: Joe Garrity, Brenna Carrick, Jason Zapata (Legion), Don Thomas (Chair), Captain Eric Kim (SFPD), Maxine Papadakis (Resident), Officer Kwame Lovell (SFPD), Joe Della Cella (Recology), Tammy Brock, Dominique Charles (DPW), Tom Brock, Ricky Soares (Legion), Dimitri, and Steven Suen (Biscuits & Blues).

Staff: Ben Horne (Chief Financial Officer), Jason Cherniss (Director of Operations), Melanie Medina (Executive Assistant), Kristina Ghishan (Intern).

#### 1. Welcome, introductions, & brief announcements

The meeting commenced at 9:00 am with Don Thomas calling it to order and the committee making introductions. Don encouraged the committee not to be discouraged by periodic negative news reports, urging them to focus on the reports to be presented during the meeting. He emphasized the strength of the team involved in the process and expressed hope that the exciting developments and improvements discussed would be encouraged and inspired with the exciting developments that will be discussed and improvements and ability to keep streets and sidewalks clean and safe.

#### 2. Public Comment

Don Thomas called for public comment, no comment was made so he moved onto the next agenda item.

#### 3. **ACTION** to Approve Committee Meeting Minutes from January 2024.

The Services Committee minutes from January 2024 were unanimously approved by the committee as motioned by Don Thomas and seconded by Steven.

#### 4. Committee Updates

##### a. Union Square Foundation Annual Luncheon Fundraiser- May 3<sup>rd</sup>

Don announced that the Union Square Foundation Annual Luncheon Fundraiser will take place on May 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Westin St. Francis Hotel. He mentioned that the invitation is available on the website for anyone who did not receive one. Ben Horne added that the committee should reach out if anyone is interested in sponsoring to support and fund Foundation events.

##### b. Texting Member Services

Jason announced the launch of the Member Services texting program, enabling individuals to report suspicious persons and cleaning requests by texting a picture to the member services number, (415)-781-4456. An auto-response and a follow-up on the report will be sent to the



reporter. This service is currently in beta testing and open only to committee members, who are encouraged to provide feedback on the system, timing, ease of use and its language.

c. Union Square Derby Alley follow up.

Don Thomas noted the ongoing challenges in Derby Alley, particularly related to drug activity and illegal dumping. Don announced plans to involve a Department of Public Works (DPW) team to address these issues. Additionally, meetings will be scheduled with the occupants of the restaurants in Derby Alley to address concerns about vehicles parked in the no parking area. Jason Cherniss mentioned that he will be meeting with Don to create a strategic plan and monitor progress. This indicates a proactive approach to tackling the problems in Derby Alley and ensuring that actions are being taken to clean up the area.

d. Tulip Day debrief and upcoming Union Square events.

Tulip Day saw over 35,000 people in Union Square. Block by Block assisted with setting up barricades in the plaza and along Post Street. The event received international recognition with the help of a marketing firm that was hired. The Alliance team is looking to improve for next year, aiming to make waiting more efficient and streamlined, and improve messaging to help attendees what to expect. Businesses reported an immense uptick in foot traffic. Don Thomas mentioned that he and his wife volunteered at the event and spoke with people from all over San Francisco and the Bay Area. Some attendees shared that they would be willing to pay \$10 or \$20 to access shorter lines. Don Thomas noted that this could be a way to make money for Tulip Day 2025. Jason also shared that Bloom has started, with several businesses participating in the initiative.

## 5. January & February 2024 Operations Reports

a. Lance Goree, Operations Manager, Block by Block

Ben informed the committee that a Block by Block Managers event was taking place and no representatives from Block by Block were able to join the meeting. Jason gave an overview of the operations report. Going forward, the report will be issued monthly, with Jason seeking feedback from the committee for program improvement. Block by Block celebrated a successful Chinese New Year parade, and highlighted an arrest made by SFPD of an arsonist with the assistance of Legion Security. Jason added that the January report would be available in the next few weeks, noting slimmed-down statistics for improved information sharing. Don suggested maintaining consistent statistical comparisons to assess progress accurately over time. Jason discussed plans with Legion Security for a passing call program to monitor soft target locations, with Ben noting ongoing progress despite statistical inconsistencies. Joe Garrity mentioned increased calls during the winter season, and Jason encouraged committee members to report any resistance to decreasing police calls.

b. Ricky Soares, Manager, Legion Corporation

Jason Zapanta introduced himself to the committee as the new operations manager for Legion. He shared that they apprehended an arsonist in conjunction with SFPD and Block by Block. The statistics have decreased from January to February 2024, however illegal dumping has increased along with noise complaints and property damage went up. Lowering dispatch calls to Legion



could be due to the team being more proactive. Additionally, there was a discussion on the differences between sit and lie laws and trespassing.

c. Joe Garrity, SFPD Ambassador Program

Joe Garrity informed the committee that retired SFPD ambassadors are working seven days a week with 3 ambassadors in each shift. The program has expanded, and the ambassadors are switching from paper reporting to an online version via an app. They check in with the command van at Union Square and can handle issues within minutes.

Jason thanked Central station and the SFPD ambassadors for their support on Tulip Day. He also personally thanked Captain Kim from SFPD.

**6. Reports from SFPD – Captain Kim, Lt Hall (Central Station), Acting Captain Manning (Tenderloin)**

Captain Kim informed the committee that police officers cannot enforce sit and lie as a crime due to injunctions. Before moving an individual there must be available services and beds to get the individuals off the streets. He mentioned that crime overall has been decreasing citywide. Central Station is focusing on retail theft in the Union Square area, and year-to-date incidents have decreased by 20%. Last year, there were 144 incidents, compared to 111 this year. Crime rates in the district have risen, but robberies are down by 18%, larceny by 52%, and auto robberies by 62% (from 1500 to 180 incidents). Don Thomas asked Captain Kim about LPRs and SFPD's plan to roll out the program.

**7. Discussion and update regarding master services agreement with Block by Block (10:00) for services starting November 1, 2023.**

Ben Horne shared that the master services agreement (MSA) has been completed after a couple of months of negotiation. Don inquired about the tables and chairs in Union Square Plaza. Ben noted Block by Block is responsible for the deployment of tables and chairs at Maiden Lane, Union Square Plaza, and Hallidie Plaza. Discussion took place regarding park ranger's presence at Union Square Plaza. Jason informed the group that there were park rangers during tulip day but had to be paid for.

**8. Discussion regarding Big belly program, grant and status.**

Jason shared that the Alliance conducted an audit of Big Belly's in the district. Out of 47 cans, 10 are currently out of commission. Efforts are underway to find two individuals who are capable of handling the situation to provide an estimate to get the fleet back up and running. Additionally, Jason mentioned an audit done by Block by Block, which provided an estimate for getting the fleet up and running. They plan to compare this estimate with Big Belly to assess any differences in price and timelines. Jason provided an option of a different type of trash can to replace those out of commission. The alternative cans have a considerable price difference with similar aspects to the Big Belly. The Alliance continues to work with Recology to address the issue of the big belly's not being locked after being emptied. Ben noted that the Alliance has been awarded RFP228 that will fund up to \$50k for big belly maintenance.

**9. Security Camera program updates, LPRs and additional cameras.**

Jason discussed the security camera and License Plate Reader (LPR) program. Several cameras installed by the Union Square Alliance in the district are LPR-equipped. However, the activation of these cameras requires a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the SFPD, which has not yet been



established. Jason met with SFPD to pursue an MOU and policy to enable the activation of these cameras and utilize the technology. He noted that SFPD uses a different system called FLOCK. Dimitri added that there is no timeline for when the program will be fully active or rolled out. The Alliance currently has 16 LPR-capable cameras at intersections in place and is exploring how to make the best use of them. Ben informed the group that he is working on proposals and talking with 720 Market and Burberry, who are interested in installing cameras.

**10. Upcoming Events and Meetings:**

- a. Board of Directors Meeting- March 28, 2024, at 9am- Grand Hyatt
- b. Union Square Annual Lunch Save the Date – May 3, 2024

**11. Adjourned: 10:12am**