



## Services and Public Safety Committee Meeting

Tuesday, November 19, 2024

9:00am–10:30am

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

### Minutes

**In attendance:** Don Thomas (Club Donatello), Lieutenant Dean Hall (SFPD), Chip (Block by Block), Don Lepana (Block by Block), Joe Shelley (Legion), Sergeant Jennifer Marino (SFPD), Sylvia (SFPD), Dmitri Shimolin (AVS), Steven Suen (Biscuits & Blues), Tammy Brock (Property Owner), Brian Loomis (Recology), Kristie Arevalo (CBRE), Steven Gil (CBRE), Missy Thompson, Domenique Charles (DPW), Sergeant Joe Garrity (SFPD), Lieutenant Thomas Maguire (SFPD), Sergeant Tony Suhrke (SFPD), Lieutenant Scott Ryan (SFPD), Lisa Ising (SFMTA), Maxine Papadakis, Wes Tyler (Chancellor Hotel), and Brenna Carrick (Newmark Knight Frank)

**Staff:** Ben Horne (Chief Financial Officer), Daniela Vasile (Interim Director of Operations), Melanie Medina (Executive Assistant), and AnaKatrina Cortado (Intern).

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

Don called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Don recognized Jerome Hunter, a Block by Block Ambassador, for his heroic actions in saving a man from drug usage by contacting emergency services and performing CPR.

##### a) Holiday Fundraiser – December 5, 2024

Ben invited the committee to attend the Union Square Foundation's Annual Holiday Party on Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at the Town & Country Club. The funds raised will benefit the Union Square Foundation that help the Union Square Alliance continue to fund the public realm. He encourages committee members to reach out to staff members in obtaining tickets for themselves and anyone else they wish to invite. Committee members are more than welcome to send members of their organization in their stead.

#### 2. Public Comment

Don called for public comment. Hearing none, Don moved on to the next agenda item.

#### 3. ACTION to Approve Committee Meeting Minutes from September 24, 2024

Don directed the Board to review the previous Services Committee meeting minutes sent out in advance.

**Action:** The Services Committee unanimously approved the September 24, 2024, meeting minutes as motioned by Don Thomas and seconded by Wes Tyler.

#### 4. Committee Updates

##### a. Holiday Safe Shopper – Thursday, Nov 21 – 11:30 a.m. Union Square



Don reminded the Committee that SFPD will be hosting the Safe Shopper Press Conference on Thursday, November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, at 11:30 a.m. Lieutenant Hall elaborated that the Safe Shopper Program began on Monday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and will continue until December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024.

b. Clean & Safe Teams Appreciation Event – December 12 (TBC) GG Tap Room 1-3 pm

Ben reminded the committee that the appreciation event for the Clean & Safety team is planned for December 12, from 1-3 pm.

c. Block By Block staffing update

Don reminded the committee that Lance Goree, Operations Manager of Block by Block, will be stepping down from his position effective November 20, 2024. To ensure a smooth transition, Block by Block has prioritized identifying a replacement for the role. Johnny Linares will assume full-time responsibility overseeing the account in the meantime. He has been relieved of all other duties to focus entirely on the responsibilities of the Operations Manager. Johnny will also collaborate with and train the incoming manager to ensure a smooth handover of responsibilities. Additionally, Chip highlighted Miracle Matau, who has been serving in a supervisory role, focusing on Block by Block's internal systems. Ben took a moment to recognize and appreciate Lance's contributions to the Union Square Alliance and the broader Union Square community, commending his impactful work during his time in the position.

d. District 360 Project Updates

Daniela provided an update on District 360, its platform for collecting data within the district. Progress is being made to integrate Legion security guards into the platform, with the final stages of approval for the Figma design in progress. Once approved, it will take a few weeks for Legion security guards to gain access to be implemented into the system. District 360 is also working on finalizing geolocation and mapping capabilities to track ambassadors' walk paths and district visits. Daniela explained that these features promote accountability and transparency by allowing the Alliance to track and report on the movements of Ambassadors and security guards. This ensures accurate records if anyone claims they have not seen personnel in a specific area.

Joe and Chip added that the data could also help identify activity clusters, enabling adjustments to deployment strategies. Lieutenant Hall clarified that no current plans exist to integrate the SFPD into the system. Dmitri shared that AVS is exploring Salesforce as a platform, which may enable correlating service records with the location of nearby cameras. This could significantly reduce the time needed to identify sources of issues.

e. Hospitality Zone RFP 230

Ben updated the committee on the Alliance's proposal for RFP 230, aimed at enhancing hospitality and security in Union Square and Yerba Buena. The city has allocated \$1.9 million, less than the requested \$2.5 million, to be spent this fiscal year. The Alliance is in discussions with Block by Block, Legion, and Applied Video Solutions to finalize contracts, quotes, and service proposals, noting that the grant exclusively funds Block by Block Ambassadors. With this funding, the Alliance plans to increase safety ambassadors by over 20, and reallocate assessment funds to double the security team from two to four guards providing 24/7 coverage. This expansion is



only funded through June 2025, with hopes for program continuity under the next mayoral administration. Contract negotiations with the city are ongoing. The Alliance will present their budget to the city by Friday, pending approval from the Board of Directors. The contract is expected to be finalized by early January.

f. Union Square Derby Alley working group update/DPW

Daniela provided a recap of previous discussions regarding ongoing issues in Derby Alley. The committee has considered various solutions, including removing or repairing the gate, addressing the trash problem, installing floodlights, and activating the alley to discourage encampments. Dominique updated the committee on her progress, noting that she contacted SeQuential, the managing company responsible for abandoned oil drums in the alley, and is awaiting a technician's follow-up. The abandoned oil drums and fluctuations in unhoused individuals contribute to safety concerns. Dominique also confirmed that the garage in the area remains secure and is investigating increased trash accumulation reported by Hotel Diva. To address these issues, she will contact property owners to discuss trash storage solutions.

Steven emphasized the need for improved lighting in the alley. Daniela shared that she received an estimate for video camera installation and is working with Ben on the agreement. Ben highlighted that grant funding could cover a significant portion of costs for both cameras and lighting but expressed concerns about the gate being a continuous maintenance issue due to the high likelihood of repeated vandalism. Should the committee decide to remove the gate, a permit may be required. The committee will continue to explore options to ensure long-term safety and functionality within Derby Alley.

g. Bigbelly program updates and sponsorships for 2025

Several Bigbelly units have been repaired, with some replaced and fitted with new wraps. Block by Block is working on completing the wraps with a few units remaining. Daniela mentioned that three Bigbelly units have not been replaced, and she is in contact with the necessary parties to get them reinstated, as five Bigbelly units are currently in storage. Ben shared plans to relaunch the Bigbelly sponsorship program. Properties like the Hilton have already committed to sponsoring seven units for 2025. Ben will reach out to past and potential sponsors in the coming months to secure ongoing funding for the program.

h. Planters and Bollards Update

Daniela informed the committee that a message had been sent to the Union Square community regarding the mayor's initiative on planters and bollards. Daniela and Marisa recently met with DPW and learned that a blanket permit for properties to install bollards does not currently exist. However, the city plans to release a program allowing individual locations, that wish to participate and are willing to cover the cost, to install planters as bollards require a separate permit. The Alliance proposes selecting a few bollard designs and working with individual locations to install them temporarily within their doorways before securing the necessary permit. This would allow installations to be completed before the holidays season. Daniela has reached out to vendors for design options that could complement the district. The Alliance will continue working with the city



and DPW to obtain a master permit and determine funding responsibility. Tammy noted that a 20-day historical review may be required for bollards as they affect the exterior of properties.

## 5. September and October 2024 Operations Report

### a. Johnny Linares, Director of Operations, Block by Block

Don provided an overview of the September and October 2024 Operations Report, highlighting key challenges faced by Block by Block, including the successful relocation of an encampment at 240 Post Street through collaboration with SFPD, Legion, and other services. The report also noted increased demand for baseline services, with significant rises in drunk and disorderly incidents and litter and debris weight. Additional statistics on staffing, officers, and video footage requests were shared. Don emphasized the importance of accurate data entry to improve service delivery and recognized Miracle Matau for her positive impact on operations. He also highlighted Celaya Gavina, September's Ambassador of the Month, and shared before-and-after photos of Block by Block's efforts in Union Square. Don further acknowledged Jerome Hunter, October's Ambassador of the Month, for saving a life during an overdose incident by performing CPR and noted plans for internal recognition. Finally, Don briefly highlighted Wayne Alexis for his positive contributions to hospitality in the district and encouraged committee members to share the Operations Reports with friends and neighbors to highlight Union Square's improvements.

### b. Joseph Shelley, CEO, Legion Corporation

Joe presented the September and October Operations Report for Legion, highlighting the team's efforts around a new initiative called "passing calls." This program was developed internally to track locations that were frequently targeted, allowing Legion to focus attention on high-priority areas. Jason had previously suggested building a program around passing calls, and there has been significant progress in that regard. From August to September, there was a notable increase in Self-Initiated Activities (S.I.A.), which refers to Legion's proactive engagement without the need for a dispatch. S.I.A. rose by 1,253 activities, reflecting a greater focus on proactive measures by Legion guards. However, there was a decline in S.I.A. in August, which could be attributed to either a decrease in passing calls or issues with documentation. Joe also provided statistics on incidents of shoplifting, narcotic use, vandalism, and other related activities.

### c. Sgt. Joe Garrity, SFPD Ambassador Program

The SFPD Ambassadors have transitioned to a new app for recording statistics which has been in use for the past couple of months. Sergeant Lee and Lieutenant O'Mara have successfully integrated the system. However, due to the shift in data collection methods, there will be no year-over-year comparisons, as previous data was recorded under the old reporting system. While this creates some challenges for historical comparisons, month-to-month data will still be available from April to September. Additionally, four SFPD ambassadors will be deployed over the holiday season, with a focus on areas spanning Nob Hill, Mason Street, Hyde Street, Taylor Street, and part of the Union Square district. These ambassadors will work three days a week—Wednesday through Friday—and will be stationed around the Safeway Union Square Holiday Ice Rink and at concerts leading up to the Macy's Great Tree lighting. Joe Garrity also addressed how to manage the historical review process for installing bollards and plants, that was discussed earlier in the



meeting. Don highlighted the advantages of installing planters over bollards in terms of its aesthetic contribution to the district's landscape.

**6. Reports from SFPD – Assistant Chief Lazar's Representative, Captain Kim, Lt. Hall (Central Station), Acting Captain Manning (Tenderloin)**

a. SFPD real-time investigation unit and FLOCK LPR system and pilot

Lieutenant Hall informed the committee that SFPD is exploring real-time investigations using the Union Square security cameras. Lieutenant Maguire, Acting Captain over Strategic Investigations, expressed interest in discussing the potential for SFPD to receive real-time access to security footage when incidents occur. Currently, obtaining video footage for SFPD is a cumbersome process, and they have had success in the Mid-Market and Tenderloin areas where the SFPD's Real-Time Investigation Center can access images of suspects' vehicles or incident details, speeding up case resolutions and apprehensions. However, SFPD faces delays in acquiring timely video, particularly for incidents that happen at night, such as vehicle crashes into storefronts. Real-time access to Union Square's security cameras would enhance SFPD's ability to respond quickly, provided agreements can be made.

b. USA cameras current policy and Prop E updates to the 2019 Acquisition of Surveillance Technology Ordinance and request from SFPD for real time access to security and possible **action** to approve recommendation to amend policy to Board of Directors.

Lieutenant Maguire noted that similar agreements already exist with the Tenderloin, Mid-Market, and Fisherman's Wharf. However, Ben clarified that while those areas provide access to security cameras, it is not in real-time but with a delay of one to two minutes. Officers can then identify which videos they want and request access through investigations. Ben reminded the committee that the Alliance's security camera policy allows SFPD to request video footage at any time, and the Alliance will provide it, with large-scale events requiring Executive Committee approval. He emphasized that granting real-time access to SFPD would require changes to the current process, but they would still need to request the videos from the Union Square Alliance. Don raised concerns about ensuring an electronic tracking and recording system, where any access is traceable via a pin or code, and a report would be generated to confirm the videos accessed. Dmitri confirmed that billing and audits would track the system's usage, such as who accessed which cameras, and requests would still need to go through the Alliance. He noted that although there may be some delays, the process could be streamlined to make it more efficient. This protocol has been in place in other districts for about four years, with positive results before Prop E and post-2019. The committee watched an example of how real-time access video footage helped the police department detain two suspects who allegedly stole from the Apple Store in the East Bay.

**Action:** The Services Committee unanimously approved recommendation to amend the Union Square Alliance's current camera policy to the Board of Directors as motioned by Don Thomas and seconded by Wes Tyler.

**7. Contract updates, discussion, and actions to approve renewals of contracts for recommendation to the Board of Directors**



Ben welcomed Block by Block, Legion, and AVS to address the renewals of their contracts, and asked them to step out for the committee's discussion on extensions. Chip reported on Block by Block's ongoing collaboration with Ben, Daniela, and the team, focusing on the continuous involvement of the RFP 230. He noted the need for additional positions for Safety Ambassadors, which is covered by the RFP 230 grant, and expressed excitement about continued partnership and growth. Joe mentioned that Daniela has been diligently working on the contract renewal for Legion, and highlighted that Legion adjusted its overtime policies as the holiday pay will eliminate the overtime hours. Dmitri thanked the committee and emphasized AVS's 24/7 system health monitoring to ensure timely access to evidence. He noted that AVS detected 75% of issues over the past year and used the majority of their prepaid hours. Unused hours went towards ensuring that all cameras were clean and focused for the holiday season. Dmitri also confirmed AVS's readiness to support additional training if the Board of Director approved to amend the Alliance's security camera policy.

a. Block by Block

Ben directed the committee to review Block by Block's contract extension, which would run from December 1, 2025, to November 30, 2025. The extension is supported by the RFP 230 grant, providing \$1.62 million for Block by Block, with the remaining \$180,000 to \$190,000 allocated to the Union Square Alliance's administrative costs. The contract includes 18 deliverables, and Ben noted the increased bureaucracy regarding grants due to the city accountability concerns with non-profit organizations. Pressure washing and Union Square Park services will remain mostly the same, with a 3% wage increase. The total short-term monthly estimate for Alliance staff is just under \$500,000.

b. Legion

Legion's current contract extension is for about seven months and is subject to change. With RFP 230 freeing up assessment funds, the additional funds could be used to enhance security within Union Square. The proposal includes a slight increase in wages and hours, as well as the addition of a supervisor, which Legion believes will significantly improve the proactivity of the security team in the district.

c. Applied Video Solutions

AVS has renewed their maintenance agreement, with Dmitri noting the challenge of keeping up with maintenance for over 530 cameras and 55 servers. The agreement saw a 7% increase due to the rising number of cameras, as well as the associated costs for both the cameras themselves and their ongoing maintenance. Further discussion was held regarding the reasons for the increase in costs. Additionally, the Alliance will need to replace the system soft security software in October 2025, which could add an additional \$25,000 cost. The monthly cost of the maintenance agreement is estimated to be \$8,000, although the Alliance continues to benefit from a Discount-Support Plan.

d. Clean & Safe team bonuses

Ben states holiday bonuses are given to the Clean & Safety team. The Alliance has allocated \$50,000 in the budget for the holiday bonuses-- \$38,000 - \$40,000 allocated for Block by Block





and \$10,000 allocated for Legion. Therefore, the Alliance would like the the committee's approval to recommend the holiday bonuses to the Board of Directors.

**Action:** The Services Committee unanimously approved renewals of contracts for recommendation to the Board of Directors as motioned by Don Thomas and seconded by Maxine Papadakis.

**Action:** The Services Committee unanimously approved the Clean & Safety holiday bonuses as motioned by Don Thomas and seconded by Maxine Papadakis.

## **8. Security Camera program updates**

### **a. Recent/Current Camera projects and LPRs updates**

Dmitri discussed the three LPR locations selected for the pilot project, which have now been activated. This allows investigators to conduct searches using the Vigilant system, a tool used alongside the FLOCK LPR system deployed by the city under the state grant. The Alliance is piloting three additional locations where city-installed LPRS are not currently present, effectively addressing gaps and providing SFPD with another discreet method of investigation. The next step will involve real-time alerts and SFPD is working to gain access to stolen vehicle plate information for integration. While AVS has completed their scoping project, they will continue to support and monitor the pilot program to ensure its effectiveness.

## **9. Upcoming Events and Meetings:**

- a. Alliance Board of Directors Meeting – November 21, 2024, 9am (Marker Hotel)
- b. Union Square Foundation Holiday Party – December 5, 2024
- c. Winter Walk – December 13 – 22, 2024
- d. Next Services Committee, January 21, 2025

## **10. Adjourned: 10:52 a.m.**