

**Dimond Improvement Association  
Board meeting minutes, 12/8/16**

**Board members present at start of meeting:** David Coleman, Julie Johnson, Marion Mills, Tom Rose, Jennifer Joey Smith, JoAnn Tracht-Rawson, Victoria Wake. **Arriving at 7:20 p.m.:** Fran Donohue. **Arriving at 7:30:** Robert Raburn, Daniel Swafford. **Absent:** Zandile Christian, Craig Flanery. **Guests:** Carol Lonergan, Karen Long.

**Abbreviations used in minutes:** DB&PA (Dimond Business & Professional Association)

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Meeting was convened by Joey at 7:05 p.m.

**1. Approval of agenda.**

ACTION: Approve agenda as prepared. (Motion: Marion; Second: Joey; in favor, unanimous)

**2. November minutes.**

ACTION: Approve minutes from November 10 board meeting. (Motion: Julie; Second: Marion; in favor, unanimous)

**3. Co-Chairs' report.** Joey encouraged each board member to have coffee or lunch with another board member whom they don't usually see outside the meetings, just as a way to build unity and improve communications.

**4. Treasurer's report.** Julie distributed a report on bank account balances. Julie, Fran, and Zandile will work with a consultant/trainer in January, most likely deciding to convert financial record-keeping back to the desktop version of QuickBooks.

**5. Dimond Library donation.** Karen Long, chair of the Friends of Dimond Library (FODL), spoke about the impending remodel of the library interior. The \$600,000 budget for the remodel does not include the purchase of needed new furniture, estimated at \$200,000. FODL has been asked to raise \$50,000 towards the goal and is soliciting a donation from DIA.

ACTION: Approve a donation of \$500 to the Friends of Dimond Library for the furniture fund, and consider an additional donation after the 2017 DIA program budget is developed early next year. (Motion: Joey; Second: Tom; in favor, unanimous)

**6. Work-in-Progress (WIP) reports.**

*Oaktoberfest.* Daniel is wrapping up the financials from the event. There will be a meeting of the Oaktoberfest Finance Committee on December 21.

*Dimond Lights.* Julie reported that, due to expected rain, the event will be postponed to Saturday, December 17. Fourteen vendors have signed up. There have been challenges with the Fire Department permit, probably in light of the Ghost Ship fire.

*Community mixer.* Daniel gave an update on plans for the joint DB&PA, DIA, and Oaktoberfest event on December 14 at Hive, which will feature community input on Dimond issues and priorities, remarks by police and council representatives, and introductions of new business

owners in the area.

*Champion Transit Plaza.* Victoria reported that the repairs to the kiosk are complete. It was decided that Robert and Victoria will each keep one of the three new keys and that one will be placed with the DIA general equipment and supplies. Victoria emphasized that it is important that only certain cleaning products be used on the plexiglass; three bottles have been purchased, one each for Robert, Victoria, and Phil Caskey to keep. Anyone seeing graffiti on the plexi should contact one of them to remove it.

*Crime and safety.* It was remarked that there have been more broken windows in the commercial area lately and that there's a big need for the community, and specifically the merchants, to be more engaged with the police officers assigned to the area. David noted that vandalism is no longer treated as a crime per se if the damage is less than \$950 and only results in a fine for the perpetrators. Carol will have a public safety table at the December 14 mixer.

*Dimond Printers sign.* Julie reported that the rescued sign is still on the property of her employer and that the company would like to see it moved as soon as possible. Board members were encouraged to come up with ideas for where to store it until it can be installed in the district.

**7. Panhandling at freeway ramps.** Marion and David reported on the Homeless & Panhandling Committee's proposal to enlist the public's support in reducing the persistent panhandling at the I-580 on- and off-ramps at Fruitvale Avenue. After some discussion, it was agreed that the committee would review its proposal again with Caltrans and CHP staff to ensure their concurrence. This item would then be brought back to a future board meeting.

**8. Fruitvale Ghost Ship fire.** Board members talked about the tragedy and how important it is to support the arts community in Oakland in tangible ways that ensure its continued presence and vibrancy in the face of shrinking affordable living and work spaces. It was suggested that the Dimond Public Arts committee members bring ideas to the Board retreat on how DIA can help.

**9. Commercial area trees.** Marion, Tom, and Victoria reported on progress looking into mulching of tree wells in the commercial area and planting a small number of new trees to fill empty wells and replace dead or inappropriate trees. They will ask for landscaper bids on digging out about 2.5 inches of soil in the wells and applying 2 inches of mulch. They will work with the Sierra Club's tree-planting program to determine feasibility in seven locations and any associated costs; the latter may be minimal because the area qualifies for free trees under a state grant. The committee asked for and received a sense from the board that this direction is supported.

Victoria also reported on the Oakland Urban Forestry Forum (OUFF), a volunteer coalition that is working to improve the city's tree program. A statement of request developed by OUFF urges the City Council to restore the Tree Services Division's funding to what it was in 2007, before the recession, and to develop an urban forest management plan. OUFF is seeking support for the request from organizations and groups around the city.

**ACTION:** Approve signing on to the Oakland Urban Forestry Forum's statement of request to the City Council regarding increasing the Tree Services' budget and developing an urban forest management plan. (Motion: Victoria; Second: Robert; in favor, unanimous)

**10. Board retreat.** Joey led a discussion to generate ideas and priority topics for the January 22 Board retreat. She and Craig will coordinate putting the agenda together. Victoria reported on the initial results of the pre-retreat survey, which she will send out to the board. Julie will generate a basic printout from QuickBooks of all expenditures and income for 2016, and send this to the board by January 17. The retreat will be held at Craig's house from 1pm to 5pm, with potluck to follow.

**11. Other business.** Carol volunteered to take the lead in finding a location for the February 1 General Meeting. Board members suggested various venues to explore. Joey will help and Karen Marie Schroeder was volunteered in absentia to help as well.

**Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned by Joey at approximately 9:15 p.m.

**Next board meeting:** January 12, 2017

*Minutes submitted by Victoria Wake*