

**Dimond Improvement Association  
Board of Directors meeting minutes, 12/12/19**

**Board members present at start of meeting:**, Jay Ashford, Zandile Christian, Chris Harper, Marion Mills, Robert Raburn, Ryan Romaneski, Daniel Swafford, Victoria Wake. **Absent:** Fran Donohue, Tomasz Finc, Julie Johnson, JoAnn Tracht-Rawson. **Guests:** Amauri Collins-McMurray (Council District 4), Marjorie Jones (DB&PA).

**Abbreviations used in minutes:** BID (Business Improvement District); DB&PA (Dimond Business & Professional Association).

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Chris convened the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

**1. Agenda approval.**

ACTION: Approve the agenda as adjusted by the chair. (Motion: Marion; Second: Ryan; in favor, 8; opposed, 0; abstain, 0)

**2. November minutes approval.**

ACTION: Approve minutes from the November 14 board meeting. (Motion: Daniel; Second: Marion; in favor, 6; opposed, 0; abstain, 2 [Robert, Victoria])

**3. Council District 4 report.** Amauri highlighted the following:

- The council office will hold a community meeting at the Dimond Library on January 16, 6pm to 8pm, to gather public input for the Dimond Park tennis court renovation project.
- The nomination period is open for District 4 Local Heroes; the awards event will take place February 22 at Laurel Elementary School.
- The city's cannabis tax will be lowered from 10 percent to 5 percent, and the city budget will likely be cut to account for the lost revenue; a list of possible cuts includes the Dimond District's \$20,000 BID feasibility study; a decision is expected in February.
- The council office aims to issue its newsletter in the first two weeks of each month; the office does not post the newsletter or other updates on community list serves, so it would be appreciated if DIA can disseminate the information on the Dimond News Group.

**4. Grants program.** Victoria and Jay briefly presented the final draft guidelines and application, which had been sent to the board for comment earlier. Daniel reiterated his perspective that the grant-making should be spread out over the year, but the committee had determined that a defined application period would enable us to compare a number of projects at one time. He also suggested that we leave the option of not awarding all funds in this round, given that we may not receive a sufficient number of quality applications; the committee agreed and will include language to that effect.

ACTION: Approve the 2020 DIA Community Grant Program Guidelines & Application. (Motion: Ryan; Second: Jay; in favor, 8; opposed, 0; abstain, 0)

Chris asked who would like to be considered for the grants evaluation committee. Jay, Marion, and Victoria volunteered; Fran also expressed interest earlier. Chris will ask absent board members if they are interested. He will then appoint a four-person committee in the coming week, taking into consideration Daniel's suggestion that a non-board, community member be included.

**5. Dimond Lights wrap-up.** Ryan reported that the event was very successful. All artist vendor tables were sold, 32 in all. About two-thirds of the artists were new this year. One hundred breakfasts were served, and all cookies were sold. Social media publicity reached 11,000, with 4,000 “clicking through” and many responding and engaging. Thirty people signed up to receive the DIA newsletter, enticed by a raffle prize of a homemade Kris Kringle doll. Total costs were \$2,000, offset by \$1,400 in table fees, breakfast donations, and cookie sales. Everyone agreed Bjornson Hall was a great venue.

**6. Work in Progress (WIP) reports** *(from written & verbal reports).*

*Beautification.* 200 daffodil bulbs were planted at the library, entrance to Dimond Park, Sequoia School, Bienati parking lot, and five planters. In the coming weeks, a new street tree will be planted on Fruitvale Ave. next to the Shell station, replacing the ornamental pear tree that died.

*Communications.* The November newsletter was issued 11/22, edited and produced by Carol Lonergan; 158 people opened it and 42 people clicked through on various links. JoAnn did the publicity for Dimond Lights. She was working to make use of Google Ad Words as well, but was delayed by glitches; she hopes to employ the publicity tool for DIA’s next event. Tomasz is resolving spam issues with the website’s “Contact the Board” form. He also trouble-shot a mysterious issue with membership expiration notices not being sent out to 11 members.

Victoria will send a recruitment pitch to members, seeking a new co-moderator for DNG, a social media guru, and additional member(s) for the committee. Tomasz set up Google Analytics to track website traffic; he will share data with the board in the future, including how events like Dimond Lights bring more people to the site.

*Keep Dimond Clean.* Zandile showed the framed certificate from Oakland’s Public Works Department, honoring KDC for 10 years of successful community litter pick-up. She will ask if the library would display it in the community room. Another thought was to display it at La Farine.

*Membership & Volunteer Development.* JoAnn sent the committee a contact list for expired members, suggesting that the committee do an email outreach to encourage rejoining.

*Head Royce School.* JoAnn will attend the Neighborhood Liaison Committee meeting on December 13. She will be stepping back from this role next year and asks if another board member can volunteer.

*February 4 general meeting.* Ideas were offered for subject matter, including another merchant mixer, history, and homeless issues. No decision was made or ad hoc committee formed.

**7. Board retreat.** Chris will send out a Doodle poll soon to determine the best date in January for the retreat. He may also send out a survey to gather board members’ thoughts. His aim is to start the FY21 budget process before the retreat and finalize the budget at the March 2020 board meeting.

**8. Oaktobefest 2020.** Chris will meet with Cali of DB&PA in the next two weeks to initiate discussion of next year’s event. The question of holding a one-day vs. a two-day event will need to be answered soon. Daniel said that sponsors and vendors are more interested in two-day events, and that overall ticket sales definitely drop with only one day.

Regarding merchants’ experience, Daniel said some have better than usual sales, some have less, and some have about the same. Zandile remarked that merchants who make the most of the opportunity for increased visibility seem to do well.

**9. Theft incident at KDC tabling.** There was a brief discussion about this September incident at Farmer Joe's, reiterating what was decided at the November meeting.

**Adjournment.** Chris adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

**Next board meeting.** January 9, 2020

*Minutes submitted by Victoria Wake*

*Approved 1/9/20*