

**Dimond Improvement Association
Board of Directors meeting minutes, 5/14/20**

Board members present at start of meeting: Jay Ashford, Zandile Christian, Fran Donohue, Tomasz Fine, Chris Harper, Julie Johnson, Marjorie Jones, Ben Stein-Lobovits, Marion Mills, Daniel Swafford, JoAnn Tracht-Rawson, Victoria Wake. **Arriving later:** Ryan Romaneski. **Guests:** Amauri Collins-McMurray (Council District 4 office), Paul Epstein

Abbreviations used in minutes: BID (Business Improvement District), KDC (Keep Dimond Clean), DB&PA (Dimond Business & Professional Association).

Chris convened the meeting online via Zoom at 7:05 p.m.

1. Agenda approval.

ACTION: Approve the agenda as presented. (Motion: Victoria; Second: Tomasz; in favor, unanimous)

2. Welcome new members. Chris welcomed new board members Marjorie Jones and Ben Stein-Lobovits. Each made a few remarks. The onboarding committee has paired Tomasz as mentor to Ben and Jay as mentor to Marjorie.

3. District 4 report. Amauri reported that the tennis court renovation should be moving forward, but first the city needs to determine how the recently damaged fence will be repaired. A decision has been made not to incorporate a pickle ball court due to noise concerns for the adjacent apartment building. A pickle ball court in Montclair Park is being explored instead. Amauri also reiterated that a proposal for the Dimond BID feasibility study needs to be submitted to the city and go before the city council in order to have the budgeted funds released.

4. April minutes approval.

ACTION: Approve minutes from the April 9 board meeting. (Motion: Tomasz; Second: Jay; in favor, unanimous)

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

Beautification. An email call went out to KDC volunteers to help with weeding overgrown tree wells in the commercial district; 15 of 19 wells in Phase 1 (Fruitvale between the library and MacArthur, and Grand Lake Kitchen) have been chosen by seven volunteers (including the committee); another call will go out to DIA members this weekend for the remaining wells and Phase 2. A vandal is destroying fortnight lilies at Champion Transit Plaza; a police report has been submitted and a post made to the news group seeking information.

Communications. The usual May e-newsletter was issued in late April and featured COVID-19 news and links to newly built COVID-19 pages on the website. The website is now hosted on Amazon, and Ben and Tomasz will build a companion staging site to use when making structural changes.

Economic Development. Marjorie gave an update on the DB&PA's COVID-19 plan to purchase \$10,000 worth of gift cards from Dimond merchants. They have started but there are challenges in getting to some of the merchants. DB&PA plans to give a certain number to DIA for distribution at its discretion.

Grants. 50% checks have been issued to five of the eight awardees in the FY20 round. Some are making tentative plans to move forward, while others are not ready, given the COVID-19 situation.

Keep Dimond Clean. The 2020 KDC Fundraiser will likely start in early June, although not with the usual tabling events or the expectation of donations from individual merchants, given the COVID-19 impacts they are suffering. It is unknown if the volunteer litter pick-ups Saturday and Wednesday will be reinstated by then. JoAnn requested again that another board member work with her and be prepared to take over in her likely absence during the summer. More fundraising ideas are also needed, given the particular challenges this year.

Membership & Volunteer Development. Jay and Chris received a tutorial on the PMP membership software from Tomasz and JoAnn. Jay is continuing to learn more and plans to send a thank-you email to all those who joined, renewed, or rejoined in April. The committee is also working on an outline for a 40- to 60-second DIA membership video, as part of a broader marketing campaign for boosting membership. Board members who have good event photos are asked to send them to Jay and Chris.

Public Safety. Installation of the third set of security cameras is proceeding for a Fruitvale Avenue and Bienati Way location; all permissions have been granted and the equipment is being shipped; installation target timeframe is early June. The committee is also working with The Botanist (MacArthur Blvd. near Cañon Avenue) to understand its camera system and how they can best contribute to the overall safety program of the district.

Head-Royce School. JoAnn reported that the Neighborhood Liaison Committee (NLC) is scheduled to meet online on May 22, and she will attend. The Neighborhood Steering Committee (NSC) is offering "Head Royce Expansion Impacts You" lawn signs to DIA board members who want them. (*Note:* NLC is the city-school-community entity that monitors the school's compliance with its current Planned Unit Development permit; NSC is a neighborhood group concerned about impacts from the school and its proposed expansion.)

CVS issues. JoAnn is seeking confirmation from CVS's Darrell Larson that they have started tri-weekly litter pick-up in the parking lot, promised at a February meeting but still not implemented as of early April.

BID feasibility study. Ryan confirmed with Amauri that the study funds are available through the city's Office of Economic Development. He is now working with the department to draft the proposal required in order to have the funds released; he will be reaching out to other districts currently in BID formation for guidance.

6. Volunteer of the Year presentations. Since in-person presentations aren't possible, Zandile and Daniel will arrange to send the certificates and gifts to the recipients, asking them to send back photos with themselves holding the certificates for the website and the next newsletter. Chris offered to write cover letters, if requested.

7. Strategic Plan process. Jay presented the strategic plan framework he and Marion worked up in the form of a pyramid with the following levels, top to bottom: Vision, Mission, Values, Strategic Goals, and Tactical Goals. Within Tactical Goals were four levels encompassing DIA committees: top level, Economic Development, Public Safety, Grants, Events, KDC, Beautification, and Public Art; supported by the 2nd level, Membership & Volunteer Development; and in turn supported by the 3rd level, Communications; and finally, with all three supported by the 4th level, Executive. Next steps were discussed, including the board crafting Vision and Values, if desired, and confirming or modifying the proposed Strategic Goals. The committees would then develop draft Tactical Goals that are SMART and adhere to the Strategic Goals. (SMART=Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.) Chris will work with the Executive Committee to plan these next steps.

8. Board member recruitment. Ryan presented information on two additional board prospects, Paul Epstein and Kevin Whittinghill. Paul and family have lived in the area for 15 years. He is an

attorney and has previously served on boards. Kevin and family moved to the Dimond a year ago. He is a branding and marketing professional, as well as a producer and performer. Both have a strong interest and desire to get more involved and contribute to the Dimond community. Ryan recommended that both be appointed to the board.

ACTION: Appoint Paul Epstein and Kevin Whittinghill to the DIA Board of Directors, effective immediately. (Motion: Ryan; Second: Fran; in favor, unanimous)

9. Upcoming general meetings. Chris opened the discussion on what form general meetings might take in the next several months. There was a general sense, confirmed by the online board poll Jay conducted in April, that the June meeting on the city's budget should be postponed. Several members felt DIA should hold some type of online gatherings soon, even if attendance were low. Initial thoughts included: Basic updates on the Dimond; COVID-19 expert information; mental health issues during shelter in place; DIA committee-based topics. Next steps were not determined.

10. Board election. Victoria presented a proposal that the 2020 board election be held via online ballot instead of in person, given the COVID-19 restriction on gatherings. For those members without email addresses, a mail-in ballot would be sent. Discussion ensued with various ideas and perspectives offered and some countered. Since there wasn't immediate consensus, Chris asked that Victoria, Fran, and Jay meet with him to devise a plan, which will likely include some form of outreach to expired members to encourage renewals in advance of an election.

11. Circus Bella grant payment. Fran explained that \$1,500 was budgeted in the last fiscal year (ending March 31) as a grant to Circus Bella to support its July 2020 performance at the Dimond Park Picnic. The payment was not made during the fiscal year and, given COVID-19, the picnic will not take place. In April, Robert Raburn, on behalf of the circus, requested that the grant still be made to support ongoing expenses of the organization and with the expectation that Circus Bella would return to Dimond Park in the future. Further clarification was provided and one comment was made, by Daniel, saying DIA is not really in a position to fund activity that won't take place, especially at this time when DIA's own revenue will be greatly reduced due to the pandemic.

ACTION: Shall the \$1,500 grant budgeted in the previous fiscal year to Circus Bella for the July 2020 performance be withheld, given the performance will not take place? And shall DIA remain open to the possibility of supporting, at some level, an alternative Circus Bella event later in the year? (Motion: Fran; Second: Daniel; in favor, 8 [Chris, Daniel, Fran, Jay, JoAnn, Marion, Victoria, Zandile; opposed, 5 [Ben, Julie, Marjorie, Ryan, Tomasz])

12. Oaktoberfest 2020. Chris reported that Daniel, Fran, Victoria, and he had met several times over the past month to discuss this year's event, given COVID-19. It's clear the traditional event will not occur; therefore, DIA will pay Daniel for work to date and tasks to decommission the event. Also, a small fee-for-services agreement will be made with Daniel to develop alternative concepts for 2020 Oaktoberfest observance(s) that fit with the new reality yet keep the Oaktoberfest spirit alive. Chris will send an email to the board with more details.

Adjournment. Chris adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Next board meeting: June 11, 2020

*Minutes submitted by Victoria Wake
Approved 6/11/20*