

**Dimond Improvement Association
Board of Directors meeting minutes, 7/9/20**

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

Abbreviations used in minutes: BID (Business Improvement District); KDC (Keep Dimond Clean); DDA (Disposition and Development Agreement).

Chris convened the meeting online via Zoom at 7:09 p.m.

1. Agenda approval.

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

2. Chair's report. Chris congratulated all board members for their wins in the recent board election. He also thanked the KDC team for coordinating a successful fundraiser.

3. June minutes approval.

ACTION: Approve minutes from the June 11 board meeting. (Motion: Ben; Second: Jay; in favor, unanimous)

4. District 4 report. Amauri gave updates on the following Dimond issues:

Dimond tennis courts. The city should begin the resurfacing of the courts by late August. The same contractor will be doing work at several city-owned tennis courts. The collapsed fence will also be repaired.

Bombera. On July 28, the City Council will be asked to extend the Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA), which has expired. The DDA is the property sale contract between the new owner and the city.

Gateway Park. A request has been sent to the 311 manager. She is looking into the delay on replacing the electrical box at the garden and installing a new irrigation controller, both damaged and inoperable since November.

Street paving. The city is looking into the poorly finished paving done by EBMUD on MacArthur Blvd. between Coolidge Ave. and Maple Ave. when they were working there. Also, issues with tree roots on some of the streets adjacent to Laguna Ave. have led to a delay in the city's repaving schedule in that area while the situation is reviewed by one of the city's arborists.

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

Beautification. Volunteer weeding of tree wells in the commercial area continues, with 33 completed so far. An extension has been requested on the Keep Oakland Beautiful grant for Bienati Overlook. Tricia and Tom Christopher continue to struggle to get the city to follow through and replace the destroyed electrical box at the Gateway Park (MacArthur & Lincoln) so irrigation can be restored; their efforts began last November.

Communications. The committee welcomed Amy Johnson, freelance writer and marketing professional, as its newest member. Unfortunately, super volunteer Carol Lonergan will be moving, and a replacement moderator for Dimond News Group is needed. Kevin has created a DIA Facebook page, and Mailisha and Amy volunteered to regularly post. Board members are encouraged to “like” the page and share with their neighbors and friends. Ben and Tomasz finished setting up the staging site to facilitate making significant changes to the website. The first Google Ads have been running with modest response. Victoria will be gathering ideas and articles for the August newsletter.

Dimond Public Art. The committee plans to meet to discuss the graffiti problem with Pam Consear’s postcard mural at Loard’s Ice Cream; among the possible solutions could be moving the mural to a different location.

Grants. The committee welcomes Marjorie as its newest member.

Keep Dimond Clean. As of July 2, the fundraiser has surpassed its \$6,000 goal, bringing in \$7,196 so far. Huge credit goes to Kathleen Russell and JoAnn for coordinating the campaign, as well as Zandile, Paul, and Karen Marie Schroeder for their roles and efforts. Board members who sent out the appeal to their neighbors and friends made a big difference, too. Paul has reached out to CVS, Safeway, and Farmer Joe’s via email, hand-delivered letter, and phone call to see if they could donate to the fundraiser; none of the stores has responded.

Membership & Volunteer Development. Jay and Chris completed the membership recruitment video, incorporating most of the board members’ feedback. In June, 20 members either renewed or newly joined, bringing the active member tally to 73, up from 55-60 at the beginning of the month. The committee welcomes Fran as its newest member.

CVS issues. JoAnn learned that CVS has not contracted for the promised three-days-a-week litter pick-up because the new quote they received from the Bay Area Clean Team was twice as much as an earlier quote given to DIA. She recommends that DIA intervene in the negotiation so this long-sought regular clean-up can start happening.

Next general meeting. The committee has met twice and is reaching out to speakers for a program centered on the city budget, similar to the program originally planned for April. The general meeting will be fully remote, using Zoom. Although August was initially targeted, it’s more likely to happen in September.

6. Oaktobefest 2020. Chris and Daniel presented several concept proposals that Daniel has developed for possible alternative Oaktobefest event(s) this year. They included Virtual Oaktobefest, Dimond Dine-Out Series, Dimond Oaktobefest Dine-Out, and Restaurant Walk. There is also a fifth alternative of “no event.” Key to any event would be the objective of benefitting Dimond businesses. Discussion followed. Chris asked that a small committee form to work with Daniel to further explore the feasibility of concepts that seem doable and desirable. Kevin volunteered, and others are encouraged to join.

7. Board election results & officer nominations. Chris reported that 34 votes were cast by members, including 33 through the online ballot and one via regular mail. All 15 candidates were elected. Moving to the election of officers, Victoria has sent an email to all board members, inviting them to make nominations for Chair, Treasurer, and Recorder via a google form that keeps all nominations anonymous. Nominations will close early next week. Victoria will then contact each

nominee to determine if she/he accepts or declines the nomination. An online election will then be held and the winning candidates will take office immediately.

8. Business Improvement District proposal. Ryan presented a draft letter to the city requesting disbursement of the \$20,000 allocated in the 2019-2021 city budget to conduct a feasibility study for a Business Improvement District (BID) in the Dimond. A BID, also referred to as a Community Benefit District, is a local taxing entity that provides a stable funding source to deliver tailored services, such as business promotion, neighborhood cleaning and beautification, and public safety. The feasibility study will look at how a Dimond BID might be designed and gauge the level of support among those property owners who would be assessed to fund it. The letter, which includes a timeline and cost breakdown of the study, will trigger the process to release the funds following City Council approval. There was board consensus that the letter should be sent and the effort moved forward. Ryan and Daniel are already approaching key individuals who might serve on the study's steering committee.

9. Membership video. Jay presented the completed 1:35-minute video that the Membership Committee has produced. Everyone agreed that it will serve as a great membership recruitment tool. The committee will now move to an implementation plan to make good use of it.

Adjournment. Chris adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Next board meeting: August 13, 2020

*Minutes submitted by Victoria Wake
Approved 8/13/20*