

**Japantown Task Force Board of Directors Meeting
Agenda**

Wednesday, September 21, 2022

6:00 pm – via Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81642631023>

Meeting ID: 816 4263 1023

Board Members: Interim President Glynis Nakahara, Interim Vice President Lori Yamauchi, Gary Barbaree, Jeremy Chan, Lucy Fisher, Jaclyn Funasaki, Scott Hamaguchi, Richard Jue, Alice Kawahatsu, Steven Santa Maria, Mark Moriguchi, Benh Nakajo, Emily Nichols, Yuki Nishimura, Jon Osaki, Beau Simon, & Rosalyn Tonai

Absent (Excused): Richard Hashimoto, Daryl Higashi, & David Takashima.

Staff: Dr. Emily Murase, Lauren Nosaka, Susie Kagami & Melissa Bailey Nihei.

Guests: Judy Hamaguchi, Karen Kai, Steve Nakajo, Marlon Smith & Ayae Yoshimoto.

I. Call to Order - Interim President Glynis Nakahara

Recognition of a Quorum and Agenda Approval*

Interim President Glynis Nakahara called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

Interim President Glynis Nakahara asked that Consent Calendars items 1 and 2 be postponed to the October board meeting to allow for additional information.

Lori Yamauchi moved, Scott Hamaguchi seconded approval of the agenda.

No public comment.

The agenda was approved unanimously.

II. Approval of Minutes* - Interim President Glynis Nakahara

Minutes of the JTF Board meeting of August 17, 2022*

Emily Nichols moved, Jeremy Chan seconded approval of the August 17, 2022 meeting minutes.

No public comment.

The minutes were approved unanimously.

III. Update from the Executive Director Emily Murase, PhD

A. Report by Director Emily Murase

Emily directed board members to her written report. She shared the final presentations of the Japanese college interns who conducted door-to-door outreach on the Peace Plaza Renovation Project and the Osaka Way/Buchanan Mall Upgrade over a period of about 5 weeks. Team 1, Hidehiro Takai and Momoka Kojima, both of Chuo University, visited 86 Japantown stores, provided 81 flyers, and emailed 47 merchants in follow-up. They visited about 75% of the 113 stores in Japantown. Most who were contacted did not have knowledge about these two projects, which is what we expected. Team 2, Mai Kojima of Japan Women's University and Rino

Sakakibara of Hosei University visited 67 places including non-profits and churches. They distributed 105 posters in and around Japantown and wrote up 67 store descriptions in Japanese and English. I want to recognize Administrative Manager Lauren Nosaka who met with the teams for 30 minutes at the end of each day and did a great job of supervising them.

1. Report by Consultant Steve Nakajo on Connecting Nikkei Farms to Japantown

Steve reported on his activities as a consultant focused on connecting Japanese American farms to Japantown. He worked on the project from July to September. After hitting many obstacles to developing a farmer's market in Japantown, he focused his efforts on promoting Watsonville-based family-owned Hikari Farms which was looking for new customers for organic produce. With the help of Alice Kawahatsu of Konko Church, Steve promoted a pop-up for farm-to-table sales of Hikari Farms produce. He connected the farm with the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California and its signature pickles were served at the Center's signature fundraiser Tabemasho. Steve has facilitated retail space for Hikari Farms in the Kinokuniya Mall. Dr. Janet Nagamine, together with her parents Akira and Hildeko of Hikari Farms, will be guest speakers at the October 3 meeting of the Cultural Heritage Sustainability Committee. Board members were encouraged to attend this meeting.

B. Report by Cultural District Program Manager Susie Kagami

Susie reported that Bon Pop, the community Obon on the Peace Plaza, attracted 200 attendees. The event, organized together with the Nihonmachi Street Fair, involved new partnerships with the Buddhist Church of San Francisco, Ensoza, Genryu Arts, the Japanese American Religious Federation, the Nichi Bei Foundation, and the Japan Center Malls. annual event. She also stated that the approval process for the Cultural Heritage, Housing, Economic Sustainability Strategy (CHHESS) Report for Japantown has restarted. Finally, she reported that KOHO will be planning two events next year, a Night Market and an API Outdoor Film Festival.

DISCUSSION

Discussion focused on the proposed Night Market. Susie reported that it takes about \$100,000 to host a full-fledged night market with diverse food vendors and up-and-coming performers. While the Night Market may be held quarterly, it is likely to rotate to different neighborhood. Therefore, the Night Market in Japantown would likely be held once per year. Board members recalled going to the Chinatown Night Market that was held every Saturday night and suggested considering a smaller, more frequent night market.

IV. Consent Calendar

These items were postponed to the October board meeting.

Any board member may sever an item for the consent calendar for discussion.

*ACTION: To approve all items on the consent calendar without discussion.

A. Approval of Contracts

1. \$25,000 for 2023 KOHO Night Market from Office of Economic & Workforce Development
 2. \$20,000 for 2023 API Outdoor Film Festival from Office of Economic & Workforce Development
- Supporting Document: Contract Approval Request

V. Committee Reports - Committee Chairs

A. Finance Committee

1. Committee Updates from August 29, 2022 Meeting
ACTION ITEM: To approve the FY22-23 Budget Update*

Supporting Document: FY22-23 [Updated Income](#) (no change from August version) and [Updated Expenses](#) (one change: moved \$6,332.65 from Japantenna consultant to KOHO Programs)

Mark Moriguchi reported that the Finance Committee met to review the proposed budget update line-by-line. Board members were provided the budget update in August. He thanked Daryl Higashi for his work reviewing the proposal.

Mark moved, Gary Barbaree seconded approval of the FY22-23 Budget Update.
No public comment.

The FY22-23 Budget Update was approved unanimously.

2. Next meeting: TBA

B. Land Use/Transportation Committee (Co-chairs Glynis Nakahara/Jeremy Chan)

1. Committee Updates from September 8, 2022 Meeting

Jeremy reported on the Housing Element work. He stated that the Committee is awaiting a response to its letter to the Planning Commission that highlighted concerns related to the proposed housing goals.

2. ACTION ITEM: The JTF Board supports the Japantown History Mural Project.*
Supporting Document: [Japantown Mural Overview](#)

Jeremy stated that the San Francisco JACL Chapter has proposed a Japantown History Mural Project and presented to the Committee. Chapter President Judy Hamaguchi reported that she has conducted 30 meetings with various city agencies and community leaders, together with Lisa Brewer, the project manager. Celebrated muralist Crayonne will be the primary artist. The chapter has committed \$100,000 to the project, based on bequests from long-time chapter members Frank Minami, Yo Hironaka, and Greg Marutani. The privately-funded mural will feature portraits of 8-10 prominent community leaders and illustrate 115 years of Japantown history across the currently blank wall of 2200 square feet facing Geary Boulevard.

Gary Barbaree moved, Beau Simon seconded the motion to support the Japantown History Mural Project.

DISCUSSION

Board members stated that it is an exciting time in Japantown, given new state funding for the Peace Plaza Renovation Project. There are five points underpinning the Peace Plaza Renovation Project, including a point about beautifying the Peace Plaza to attract visitors. A board member suggested that Judy connect the mural project to the Peace Plaza Renovation Project, given the shared goal of attracting visitors. Judy responded that she has already met with Jon Osaki and Richard Hashimoto, Co-Chairs of the Peace Plaza Committee. In response to concerns about the Peace Plaza construction, the mural will be composed of removable panels. The artists have agreed to maintaining the mural for its lifetime.

Other board members noted the connection between several public projects, including the Osaka Way/Buchanan Mall upgrade and the renovation of Buchanan Street parks (south of Geary). There will be other opportunities for the public to engage with the mural project, including a meeting this Saturday on the sketch designs and a broader meeting on Thursday, September 29, 6 pm at the JACL Headquarters, 1765 Sutter Street. Board members clarified that the action is to support the project through a letter of support to be included in project materials for the Recreation and Parks Commission.

No public comment.

The motion passed with 1 abstention (Nakajo).

3. ACTION ITEM: The JTF Board supports the half-cent sales tax to fund transportation (Proposition L) on the November ballot measure*

Supporting Document: [JTF LUT - Half Cent Sales Tax 2022 - Overview](#)

Jeremy thanked Lori and Steven Santa Maria for their analysis of the Half Cent Sales Tax.

Steven explained that the tax will fund the Geary Boulevard Bus Rapid Transit, purchase new vehicles, and other transit improvements to benefit not only Japantown but a lot of low-income households and prioritizes equity goals. Jeremy explained that the funding will support priority equity communities, including Japantown and the Western Addition.

Lori moved, Steven seconded the motion to approve the Half-Cent Sales Tax.

No public comment.

The motion was approved unanimously.

Jeremy asked staff to publicize the JTF's position on the Half Cent Sales Tax, and offered to send suggested text.

4. Next meeting: October 13, 2022

C. Cultural Heritage Sustainability Committee (Co-Chairs Lucy Fisher/Gary Barbaree)

1. Committee Update from August 1, 2022 Meeting

Next meeting: October 3, 2022

Lucy reported that Janet Nagamine and her parents will be featured speakers at the October 3 meeting. She encourage board members to attend.

Also, board members should have received an invitation to the unveiling of the renovated pagoda at the Japanese Tea Garden on September 28, 4:30 pm

December 2018

D. Peace Plaza Committee (Co-chairs Jon Osaki/Richard Hashimoto)

1. Update on September 20 press conference with Assemblymember Phil Ting
2. Update on September 20 Peace Plaza Renovation Community Briefing

Jon reported on the September 20 press conference where Assemblymember Phil Ting announced a \$6M state investment in the Peace Plaza Renovation Project. Jon noted that the press conference and the Peace Plaza Renovation Project received considerable media attention, including from KTVU, KPIX, KCBS, *The Standard*, and the *World Journal*. Assemblymember Phil Ting was very pleased with the turnout of community members.

Regarding the Peace Plaza Renovation Community Briefing, Jon stated that there was considerable public feedback at the virtual meeting. The design team listened to every comment. Jon said it was really important to report back to the community since it had been a couple of years since the 2019 Peace Plaza Vision Plan was developed through a broad community-based process. Jon thanked everyone who supported the two events.

DISCUSSION

Board members asked where the recording of the Community Briefing can be found. Susie reported that it will be available at the Peace Plaza Committee website, www.peaceplaza.org, in

a few days. Board members expressed their appreciation for the effort. Other board members asked that the Q&A portion of the Community Briefing be included in the public recording in order to provide the public with a complete record of the proceedings.

3. Next meeting: October 25, 2022

E. Ad hoc Japan Center Malls Technical Committee (Chair Lori Yamauchi)

1. Committee Updates from September 12, 2022 Meeting

Lori reported that the Committee met on September 12 and heard an update on the Housing Element and the comment of the letter from the State of California. The State would like to know how the City is going to produce 82,000 of new housing units by 2031 and required the City to provide specifics on how this goal will be met. If the City does not adopt la Housing Element that complies with the State's requirement by January 2023, the City must complete all rezoning to accommodate the new housing by January 2024. Emily reported on her meeting with Kinokuniya leadership at the New York headquarters in May and affirmed that Kinokuniya has no plans to move from the Japan Center Mall. Edward Thet Tun, the Kinokuniya Building Manager, expressed interest in understanding the rezoning process.

2. Next meeting: TBA

F. Nominations Committee (Chair Benh Nakajo)

1. Final Call for Nominations

2. Next Steps

Benh Nakajo reported that the Nominations Committee sent a memo to the board about the process on July 7. The Committee has contacted board members with expiring terms to inquire about their interest in continuing. The nominating period for board members and officers closed as of today. Benh noted that there is 1 vacancy on the board that has a maximum number of 21 positions. He thanked Committee members Lucy Fisher and Richard Jue for their work.

3. Next meeting: TBA

VI. Update from the Interim President/Executive Committee

A. Board Retreat: Sunday, October 30, 1-5 pm (12:30 pm arrivals, COVID rapid testing; 5:30 pm optional social)

Glynis updated the board on the upcoming retreat, scheduled for Sunday, October 30, 1-5 pm, at the JACL Headquarters building. The retreat will start at 12:30 pm with arrivals and on-site COVID rapid testing. There will be an optional social afterwards. A board member asked about the retreat agenda. Glynis stated that the Executive Board is working with the facilitator to develop the agenda. Board members with ideas should forward them to Glynis or Emily.

B. Executive Director Performance Evaluation

Glynis stated that the Executive Director's performance evaluation will be on the board retreat agenda and an evaluation will be scheduled in January.

C. December Board Activity Survey Results

Glynis reported on the survey results. More board members voted to have a regular December board meeting than board members who wished to cancel it (42% yes; 25% no; 33% maybe). Most board members preferred to move the December 21 meeting to December 14 (50% vs. 25% to keep the existing December 21 date). A majority (60%) of board members voted for a short hybrid meeting followed by an in-person social event.

VII. General Public Comment

Members of the public may address the Board for up to two minutes with respect to each item on the agenda and may speak for up to two minutes regarding matters not on the agenda during general public comment.

No public comment.

VIII. Announcements

1. The [5 Decade Celebration of the Japanese Community Youth Council](#), the fiscal sponsor of JTF, is scheduled for November 12. Emily will be contacting board members to request support for collective donations to a JTF event sponsorship (Gold, \$5K; Silver, \$2500; Bronze, \$1000).
2. Konko Church will be hosting its Garage Sale, 10 am - 3 pm, on Saturday, September 24. While many items have already been collected for the event, there is a need for additional volunteers. Interested individuals should contact Alice Kawahatsu.
3. The Nikkei Pilgrimage to Angel Island is scheduled for October 1, 11 am - 3 pm. Registration has closed. There are already 200 people have signed up and two buses will be coming from San Jose and Sacramento. Non-registered attendees can take the ferry to Angel Island from San Francisco or Tiburon and have lunch on their own. Visitors can see the new Angel Island Immigration Museum with an inaugural exhibition about incarceration during World War II that includes exhibits on imprisoned Germans, Hawaiians, Italians, and Japanese Americans.

The National Japanese American Historical Society Teacher Education Program is seeking candidates for its Denver-based program that will take participants to the Amache National Historic Site. Interested individuals should contact Rosalyn Tonai.

4. The Japanese American Religious Federation will be resuming its signature curry cookoff, 1-3 pm on Saturday, October 22. Tickets for the take-out only event will be available on a presale-only basis.

IX. Adjournment

Glynis adjourned the meeting at 7:19 pm.

*May require board action.

Meeting materials distributed to the JTF Board members are available for inspection and copying during regular office hours at the Japanese American Citizens League Building, 1765 Sutter Street, 3rd Floor, prior to the meetings.

Zoom Invitation:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81642631023> Meeting ID: 816 4263 1023
One tap mobile: +16699009128,,81642631023# US (San Jose)

NEXT MEETINGS: All meetings are 6 pm.

Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Wednesday, December 21, 2022
Wednesday, January 18, 2023
Wednesday, February 15, 2023
Wednesday, March 15, 2023
Wednesday, April 19, 2023
Wednesday, May 17, 2023
Wednesday, June 21, 2023