

**JAPANTOWN TASK FORCE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 17, 2019

6:00 PM – UNION BANK COMMUNITY ROOM
1675 POST ST, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94115

ATTENDEES: Glynis Nakahara, Judy Hamaguchi, Coco Tando, David Takashima, Richard Hashimoto, Jacquelyn Chew, Benh Nakajo, Kenta Takamori, Alice Kawahatsu, Mark Moriguchi, Jon Osaki, Clint Taura, Rosalyn Tonai

ABSENT: Seiko Fujimoto, Sandy Mori, Neal Taniguchi, Beau Simon, Scott Hamaguchi

STAFF: Steve Nakajo, Lauren Nosaka

GUESTS: Caryl Ito, Jessica Sharp, Cayla Sharp, Cynthia Boedihardjo, Jeremy Chan, Rodney Chin, Michiko Yamada, Tomo Hirai, Daryl Higashi, Karen Kai, Robert Rusky

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Vice President Glynis Nakahara. A quorum was acknowledged.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the JTF Board meeting of June 19, 2019.

It was moved by Alice Kawahatsu and seconded by David Takashima to accept the minutes from the May meeting (Attachment A.)

The motion passed unanimously. No public comments.

III. UPDATE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, STEVE NAKAJO

Steve Nakajo reviewed the highlights from the July 17, 2019 Executive Director's report (Attachment B.) Steve announced that he will attend a 2020 Census 6-hour training session on July 25. JTF will appear in front of the SF Rec & Park Capital Committee meeting on August 7 2pm in Room 416 at City Hall, and again at the full Rec & Park Commission on August 15 10am in the same room. As for Cultural Districts, JTF has been given approval for conditional offers to a part-time Program Manager and 3 part time consultants. Two of the consultants are 20 hours a week and the third consultant is 10 hours a week to edit and implement the CHHESS Report. Once the personnel have accepted their offers, JTF will submit the budget to MOHCD for review and approval. MOHCD requested JTF to attending a meeting with their intern to create a matrix for the CHHESS report on July 22. JTF will announce the names of the individuals by the next board meeting. JTF has been working on the Visitor Kiosk and talking to Daniel Bryon of 3-D Investments. JTF is in negotiation with 3-D and working with Maven Properties to build a permanent Visitor Center Space for JTF located in front of the old May's Coffee shop near the exit in Japan Center West Mall. Daniel Bryon wishes to remove the pond areas to make more room for a JTF kiosk. Steve congratulated the Land Use/Transportation Committee for their successful advocacy in helping remove the 2 zipcar spaces on Laguna St.

Public Comments:

- I am concerned over the hiring process of the Cultural District positions since there was no outreach and no public announcement.

- Are there any plans to use the existing mobile kiosk as part of the permanent space in the Japan Center West Mall?

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Land Use/Transportation Committee

(Glynis Nakahara/Kenta Takamori)

1. Newera @ 1700 Post.

Glynis Nakahara reported that there is a Recommendation to the Board by the committee that JTF writes a letter to the landlord of 1700 Post indicating our willingness to continue working with Newera to ensure a robust community engagement process that identifies and addresses community concerns. Since the recommendation was made by the committee, there is new information. For background context, the discussion and recommendation were a response to the business proposal landlord who requested an indication of collaboration and support in order to move forward with the leasing. However, since that time, the landlord has realized that the community vetting process will take much longer; it could be 2 years before that happens. Because of this, he is no longer requesting a letter and LUT is withdrawing the recommendation.

Kenta Takamori requested a new motion as an individual board member, which states, "I move that the Japantown Task Force adopt a policy to decline all future requests for a letter or statement that indicates support, whether it be in written or verbal form, from any business with a Cannabis Permit from the City of San Francisco, or from any business with an intent to obtain a Cannabis Permit." However, since this particular motion was not on the agenda, the Board cannot vote on it. It must go back to the committee to be approved for the next month's agenda. In the meanwhile, the Board looked at it.

Public Comments:

- JTF has a lot of influence what happens at City Hall. The commenter feels that cannabis needs to be strongly vetted because the outlet would be at the entrance of Japantown. Many cultural districts are looking at Japantown since Japantown is the template for cultural districts. If the first cannabis outlet opened right at the entrance of Japantown, what is that saying about other cultural districts? The cannabis outlet is in the wrong location and other locations need to be considered.
- Japantown is relatively friendly to new businesses. If cannabis makes this their home, there will be an opportunity for this business to sell to others. There are usually major investors involved. What is their intent long term? They could potentially buy some of these properties. JTF needs to consider this issue. On the other hand, I am happy to see that they are offering to be partners with the community and they want to be a good neighbor. Whatever decisions JTF makes, it will have a long-term impact.
- When I read the proposal, I was offended. The commenter thought, "they are trying to sell Japantown as a tea lounge concept. How do the restaurants, Nihonmachi Parking Garage and various organizations around the plaza feel? The commenter would not want to stand in the plaza with the ambient smell coming out and feels that the cannabis scent is very obnoxious.
- I do not like the smell of cannabis nor use cannabis products but the owners have convinced me that they are very sincere about their wellness center concepts, have thought of ways to deal with the smoke not leaking out, and they are truly making an effort in Japantown. I'm impressed with what they have done.
- Jessica Sharp, one of the business owners of Newera, introduced herself and spoke of her business.
- I am against the cannabis dispensary. I don't want to see cannabis smokers coming out of the building where children are playing or walking around in the Buchanan Mall. I don't like

the smell of cannabis smoke. Are you really sure this is something you want to do in your neighborhood where your parents and grandparents built?

- Jessica Sharp informed that she is building a wellness center, an Asian American inspired tea house, sphere sound room, and teach people to consume cannabis in a healthy way. It's not for everyone. She commented that cannabis is much healthier than alcohol. She is committed to a future that is safe for kids and older people.
- It may helpful for many people who have different health issues but they can do this in the privacy of their own home. It doesn't need to be done in a public area.

B. Peace Plaza Committee

(Jon Osaki/Richard Hashimoto)

1. Meeting scheduled with SFRPD General Manager, Phil Ginsburg on July 30, SFRPD Capital Committee meeting on August 7 2-4pm and SFRPD Commission meeting on August 18 10am. The meeting site for both SFRPD meetings are at City Hall Room 416.

Jon Osaki clarified that the SFRPD Commission meeting is on August 15, not the 18. There will be a Peace Plaza Committee meeting on Tuesday, July 30. The main topic of the meeting will be brainstorming support for the both the Capital Committee meeting and Commission meeting. It is important to have community members come out for the August 15 Commission meeting. The design that goes before the Commission on the 15th is not necessarily the final design; all that is the concept design. Jon asked organizations to provide letters of support by the end of July. The cost of the project is \$22 million but the Peace Plaza Committee is pushing for \$25 million in case there are overruns or unanticipated costs.

C. Cultural Heritage Sustainability Committee

(David Takashima/Coco Tando)

1. Break down JCHESS report to six CHHESS report categories: Cultural Heritage Conversation, Tenant Protections, Arts and Culture, Economic Workforce Development, Land Use and Cultural Competency

Coco Tando reported that JTF was awarded \$230,000 for the Japantown Cultural District and that some parts of the JCHESS is covered in the CHHESS report. Coco thought it would be helpful if the committee breaks down the JCHESS report into the 6 categories of the CHHESS report for the Cultural District Program Manager and Consultants. The 6 categories are Cultural Heritage Conversation, Tenant Protections, Arts and Culture, Economic Workforce Development, Land Use and Cultural Competency. The JCHESS report covers some categories such as the Economic Workforce Development where the JCBD strategy plan was included. But there are not many tenant protection strategies included. Breaking down the JCHESS would be helpful to know where the holes and areas of improvement are. David reported that the committee will incorporate and work with the Land Use/Transportation committee especially housing and transportation issues.

Steve Nakajo informed the Board that once program manager and consultants are approved, there will be a meeting with the co-chairs of Land Use/Transportation and Culture Heritage Sustainability Committees in August. MOHCD is coordinating a mandatory meeting on September 17.

Public Comments:

- If the Bylaws state that any contracts over \$10,000 needs to be approved by the board, then the Board must approve of the contract.
- In the Bylaws Section 9.1 Conflicts of Interest, all contracts must be authorized by the Board if the contract is \$10,000 or more.

V. UPDATE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. Consideration of JTF to be a co-sponsor of the D5 Supervisors' Debate with CHNA
Glynis Nakahara asked the JTF Board if they would consider being a co-sponsor of the District 5 Supervisors' Forum. This will be a joint sponsorship with the Cathedral Hill Neighbors Association

(CHNA). Alice Kawahatsu is the liaison between JTF and CHNA. Marlayne Morgan of CHNA contacted Alice and asked if JTF would like to co-sponsor the upcoming D5 Supervisors' Forum between Supervisor Vallie Brown and Dean Preston. CHNA decided to call it a forum rather than a debate where people are invited to attend, hear both sides of the supervisor candidates and hold a Q&A session. Alice contacted JCCCNC to rent the Issei Memorial Hall room and was able to get the nonprofit rate of \$103. CHNA has generously offered to pay for the room. It will be held in early October in the evening. If board members have specific dates in October, contact Alice at alihakawa@gmail.com

It was moved by Jon Osaki and seconded by David Takashima to co-sponsor the D5 Supervisors' Forum with CHNA.

The motion passed unanimously. No public comments.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VII. NEW BUSINESS

VIII. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements were shared:

Kenta Takamori announced that he is involved in the Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT) in the Lower Pacific Heights. He informed the Board that Japantown isn't on the map but it's really important for Japantown to get on the map since there are many seniors living around Japantown. In order to get in NERT program, Japantown needs to recruit volunteers. The volunteers need to attend 5-6 sessions totaling 20 hours of training every 2 years. Kenta asked the board "What will happen to the community during an earthquake?" Kenta is looking for a core group of people to volunteer for NERT. If anyone would like to join or knows anyone who would like to join, refer them to Kenta. Kenta signed up as the Neighborhood Coordinator. The staging area is Lafayette Park and the Battalion Station is Station 38.

Rosalyn Tonai announced that NJAHS will hold an Outdoor Movie Night to engage young people on August 3 at 8pm in the Peace Plaza. They will be showing Totoro.

Richard Hashimoto asked Glynis Nakahara to announce JCBD's new Street Lamp Banners are out. He attended the Geary BRT CAP meeting. Public Works will demolish the Steiner St. bridge late July. The design phase through Japantown is near completion and will go out to bid soon. The Geary BRT team will be conducting outreach meetings soon.

Jon Osaki announced on August 8, JCYC, NJAHS and JCCCNC are hosting an event called "Never Again is Now: Mobilizing the Next Generation." It will include a screening of Jon's film and discussions facilitated by this summer's Nikkei Community Internship Interns about engaging young people on how to become our future story tellers. It's open to the public at 7pm. at the Presidio.

Alice Kawahatsu announced that July 21 is the SF Anime & Cosplay Festival, August 3-4 is the Nihonamchi Street Fair, and August 25 is Origami Palooza.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Glynis Nakahara at 8:09pm.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: Wednesday, August 21 2019 6-8pm at Union Bank Community Room.