



**Adams Avenue Business Association
Minutes - Board of Directors Meeting
February 1st, 2022 @ 8:00am
Abbreviated minutes due to COVID-19**

Members Present: Mikey Knab, Dave McPheeters, Ryan Altman, Doug Generoli, David Harding, LT Lanham, Nicky McGreevy, Phil Linssen, Mick Ward, Russ Vuich, Derith Mason, Lisa Johnson

Staff: Scott Kessler, Executive Director, Julia Sanchez, Assistant Director

Zoom Guests: Sean Elo-Rivera, Gary Weber, Brett Weise, Dave Dennis, Latrell Crenshaw, Jenny Hall, Geof Lippert, Sean Karafin, Steve Kader

A. Call to order : 8:02am by Mikey Knab

B. Introductions:

C. Additions/Deletions to Agenda:

D. Announcements/Public Comment –

Public Comment: Geof Lippert- would like to become a Board member. **Dave Dennis-** Would like to become the new Community Liaison as a Board member. Possibly start a blog about the Avenue. Scott -Thank you both for your introductions, we will get to the board vacancies a little further down the agenda. Thank you.

E. Guest Speakers: Sean Elo-Rivera – Thank you, Mikey, it is great to be here! I represent the 9th District, once redistricting kicks in, I will also be representing Normal Heights (District 3). Scott – Council President, when does the redistricting change go into effect? **Sean Elo-Rivera –** November. We are looking forward to a smooth transition. We have done a lot since taking office, not enough but, a lot. We passed a \$4 million dollar budget last year that invested neighborhood services and good governance, including over \$10 million dollars for small business relief. A number of programs were created to help steward businesses, small businesses in particular, and our residents throughout the pandemic, emergency rental assistance for businesses. All of this with the goal of trying to mitigate the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, and with a goal of trying to create a structurally balanced city government. At its core, our job is to provide basic services, and that means that residents and business owners should not have to wait a year to have a streetlight fixed, shouldn't have to report potholes multiple times before it's fixed. The things that the government is promising to you, should be delivered. Doing better is not going to happen overnight, not necessarily going to be easy, I do believe that part of doing better is breaking down the walls of City Hall in such a way where you all have a better understanding of what decisions are being made, and how to engage in that decision-making process, so that you can understand why decisions are made when they are made. The City is currently in the process of hiring an Independent Budget Analyst (IBA). This an important position, created 15 years ago in the wake of some of the financial crises in the City of San Diego, and it's really important as City Councils' way of ensuring the numbers that the Mayor and city staff put forward to us, actually add up. The funny business of the past (when it came to the budgeting) doesn't occur anymore. The previous IBA announced her retirement last summer. Our office thought it was critical that the next IBA would be someone the community can trust so, we opened up that process and created multiple opportunities for community members, like yourself to weigh in on what sort of skills and experience that an IBA should have. Really quickly, I'll just note that the core concern of our office remains with housing and homelessness, we have made some positive progress on this front, not enough. Brett is our go-to person on both, homelessness and housing, and encourage you to connect with him if you are looking for some of the details. (Brett's email bgweise@sandiego.gov) The environment is another huge concern of ours, when we put out our budget survey and received it back from over 500 community members, the environment or what we refer to as clean and healthy neighborhoods, came in as the number one priority from folks in terms of budget allocations. I mentioned briefly the budget process, we are early in the next fiscal year's budget cycle, our budget memo is available online. Expediting the city's hiring process and ensuring competitive pay so that are sufficient city staff to do the work that you call upon city employees to do, again, you shouldn't have to wait for that stuff to get done. We shouldn't allocate sufficient funds to fund the streetlights that need to be replaced in our district only to find out that there aren't enough city employees to do that work, which is what happened this last budget cycle. On the topic of streetlights, we have made another

budget request to increased support there. We have also put forward a prioritization of another \$10 million dollars to be allocated to the Small Business Relief Fund to folks who are being impacted by all the changes occurring in the world. Finally, we have requested a return to pre-pandemic levels of funding for community project, programs and services. There are funds that the City Council office has used to help support community events, non-profit activities, public art projects, and supplies for libraries, we want to make sure that funding is allocated once again. I am going to stop for questions. I will hand it over to Mikey. **Mikey** – Please click to raise your hand, and I will call on you in order. **Scott** – Thanks Sean for attending, it's great having you here, you are one of the most powerful elected officials in the city so, it's great to have a rapport with you. I want to compliment you on moving more money to streetlights, we've sometimes waited a year lately to get our streetlights fixed. In a district like ours, a maintenance assessment district, our property owners on Adams Avenue are paying for the additional energy charges. I also want to point out that the BID system has always depended on a program called Small Business Enhancement funds (SBEP). We receive a management grant, about \$18,000 a year. Another portion pays for relief for police and fire for our special events, up to 90%. This funding has been steady-stream for 25 years. We've all depended on it and the signals we have gotten from the Economic development lately is that it is year-to-year and we may not be able to depend on this funding. It's such a small chunk of change for the Economic Development Dept. I encourage you to help us support continuing funding for SBEP. This last year, EDD replaced our SBEP money with one-time Federal Cares money. Just last week in a discussion with management, they said they don't know if that's going to be available next year. 20 % of our budget comes from our member's assessments and we raise the other 80% ourselves (\$400,000 a year). We plough all that all back into Adams Avenue. We don't understand why the leadership of the city has continued to make us insecure on a year-to-year basis whether we are going to have money to operate our program. **Mikey** – Was there a question in that? **Scott** – No. **Mikey** – Sean do you want to respond to that? **Sean** – Scott, please keep us in the loop on how those conversations go. **Mikey** – Thank you. Derith is next. Anyone else who has questions, please click the reactions button. **Derith** – This is not associated with the Avenue. I live on Circle Dr. There has been ongoing construction, and only one streetlight that has been out forever. On the Get it Done app, it says that my streetlight can be anticipated being fixed in 261 days! I have spent \$500 installing motion lighting on my house to shine on the street. 261 days just seems like a lot of time. How do I get the sped up a little bit? **Sean** – Derith, I wish I had a short answer for you. This is exactly what I was referring to earlier, some of the structural problems in the city. Streetlights are a huge priority for us, we have several places in our district that streetlights are a problem. District 9 is incredibly diverse. Once we secured funding for streetlights, we realized the city was not equipped to do the work, that is unacceptable. Unfortunately, until we start to address some of these structural issues, in terms of bringing city employees up to parity with other local jurisdictions, we're going to continue to see unexpected levels of waiting for what all of us should consider basic city services. **Mikey** – Sean, I want to give you a little personal privilege moment here, because there are some apartment owners on this call, and if you want to talk about the city's budget and how to make sure we can pay people fairly, we might want to talk about where we're wasting money. The people's ordinance is something that you have a strong conviction about and, I think there might be a moment to get some support from this group. **Sean** – Thanks for that, Mikey. The People's Ordinance has been on the book for 100 years, it has tied the hands of the city in terms on how we collect trash, recycling, and organics and what is charged for that. Right now, as it stands, almost all single-family homes and a very small number of apartments, if they receive city trash collection do so without a charge, as a result we have a \$50 to \$70 million dollar impact on our general fund, and it's an impact that no other City in the County of San Diego, and no other major city in California must deal with. We are going to look to amend the ordinance that prohibits the city from charging a refuse collection fee, but to me it's the perfect example of the kind of disingenuous governance that has occurred in the past in San Diego. The cost of failing to charge that fee is how we end up in a situation where a resident like Derith is waiting 260 days to have a streetlight fixed, because we have gaping holes in our budget that previous administrations and councils were simply not honest enough, or creative enough to be honest about. So, Mikey, we would be happy to circle back to present specifically on that or provide some more information on that. But the bottom line is if you own a business if you own an apartment building in San Diego, you are likely paying for a refuse collection and, you are subsidizing a bunch of folks who are not, you are also paying for the impacts of failing to have that money brought in because of the lack of services that are provided to you. Every San Diegan will benefit in the amendment of that ordinance. **Mikey** – Thank you so much. David Harding has his hand raised. **David H.** – In doing my own home-improvements, I have had challenges going through the building department, a lot of unnecessary steps. It seems like there are a lot of opportunities to streamline things, to reduce bureaucracy. **Sean** – It has been hard to have new housing built under the conditions you just described, and the City is understaffed. As for code enforcement, we have put a request for additional code enforcement officers. **Mikey** – Any other questions for Council President Elo-Rivera? **Mikey** – Gary Weber is next. **Gary** – I encourage you, Council President, to work with and not against the communities. **Sean** – I come from a background in organizing. I agree with the importance in engaging with the community and building towards a future that works for everyone. **Mikey** -Time for one last question. Russ. **Russ** – It took 9 1/2 months from the city to get a permit for

a home remodel. Russ went on to detail other complaints about historic review and suggested privatizing a part of DSD. **Sean** – Explained to Russ that he understands the frustration that he has been through, and the city needs to work on these issues.

Officer Jenny Hall – There was an attempted carjacking on January 13th, 2022, at Rite Aid at 6: 50pm. Victim was threatened with a bat, suspects got away. We are hoping the security cameras got some good images for the detectives. Scott and Kim (Emerson) thank you for the graffiti cover-up.

F. Action Items

1. **Approval of December (year-end FY'21) Financial Reports M/S/P** – Generoli/Altman – 10 members present, 10 yes
2. **Approve December Minutes M/S/P** – Altman/Mason – 10 members present – 10 yes

G. Discussion Items

1. **AABA meeting schedule Scott** - March Board meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 1st, **Annual Breakfast meeting** rescheduled for Tuesday, March 29 **David H-** That is the week of SDUSD Spring Break, can we move it one week ahead? **Scott** – We can move it to March 22nd, **Annual retreat** scheduled for Tuesday, April 5th 4 hours, 8:00am to 12:00pm, All meetings in-person, if possible, otherwise by Zoom.
2. **Board Vacancies/retirement - Scott** – We have 4 board members retiring, Ashley, Mikey, Shayna, and Phil. This gives us 4 open spots on the board this year, we will be voting in new members during the Annual Meeting on March 22nd. Two of the retiring members are Executive committee members. I would now like to have Dave Dennis and Geof Lippert introduce themselves. Dave D. – I am a 30-year resident of Normal Heights, if elected, I would like to start a blog called ‘What’s new on the Avenue’ as a way to interact as a community liaison. I would like to hear from the Board on how else I can help the AABA? **Scott** – Thanks Dave! Dave’s partner, Jackie Springfield, was an early member of the AABA’s SIP program and chose the colors for the current Normal Heights sign! **Geof** - I started working at Home Start in October 2021 as Director of Housing. We have a number of women that we serve who are in our various programs, receiving job training. It’s a very empowering for these women I hope to serve on the Board to bring attention to the great work that Home Start does, especially in the community of Normal Heights. I hope to leverage relationships for the benefit of Home Start and the AABA.

H. Committee Reports

1. Promotions/Business Planning & Development Committee – *Shayna & Ryan*- Refer to Scott’s staff report.
2. Finance/Executive Committee - *Doug & Dave*- Doug – Good on year-end financials. If we cannot do events, we will have to dig into savings. We are planning to have events. Scott’s been redoing the budget every month for the last two years. We are also looking at a monthly market.
3. Executive Committee – *Mikey*- Insurance rates might go up for AABA after the stage dive lawsuit. The AABA was able to break even last year, thanks David! The Annual Breakfast meeting is now rescheduled for March 22nd. Adams Avenue Unplugged is scheduled for Saturday, April 30th. Scott will reach out to venues to see who is in this year.

I. Staff Report Scott – We had a successful Holiday on the Avenue event in December, approximately 300 people attended to play in the snow. Holiday Tree was kept lit all through December. Kaleidoscope Mural- Business Association is leading the fundraising drive for a new mosaic mural in Adams Park. There’s \$27,500 raised in the Normal Heights Urban Arts account so, we are halfway to our goal of \$50,000. TOT grant- The grant is due end of this week and we will submit. Brigg’s lawsuit has settled, and we are waiting for the final agreement to sign. We have made a staff change in the MAD personnel and hired a Denise Jackson do our daily litter abatement and she’s doing a great job. The AABA got our BID contract extended till the end of the FY with the City. There’s been a lot of new graffiti on the Avenue. Ewe had artists spend a weekend restoring the murals on the utility boxes that were tagged.

J. Adjournment at 9:43am __. M/S/P –Knab - 10 members present, 10 yes

Next meeting: March 1st, 2022 - 8:00am

Respectfully submitted, Julia Sanchez