



GASLAMP QUARTER ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MINUTES

Wednesday, June 28th, 2023, | 3:30 PM
San Diego Marriott Gaslamp Quarter

Present Board Members	Absent Board Members	GQA Staff
Carlos Becerra Josefine Jandinger Laurie Peters Cindy Blair Kim Shattuck Aron Langellier Joe Santos Jeffrey Burg Stephen Sherman Lucy Burni	Howard Greenberg Sumeet Mikey G Wayne Partello Bruce Getz	Alma Ascencio Michael Trimble

1. Call to Order – Directors Present

- Carlos Becerra
- Aron Langellier
- Josefine Jandinger
- Jeffrey Burg

Zoom

2. Minutes approved by: Executive Board- All in favor Carlos, Aron, Josefine (seconds)

Michael Trimble: Welcome, Alonzo. Thank you for joining us today.

Alonso Vivas: Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone. One of our primary focuses is Comic Con. Ensuring that the Gaslamp Quarter remains clean and safe during the event is a top priority for us. We'll have additional staff working throughout the Comic Con days to ensure the entire area looks its best. Our commitment extends to the day after Comic Con, making sure everything returns to its pristine state. So, that's our foremost goal.

We're also collaborating closely with the city to report any issues with vendors in the district to the appropriate departments. This leads me to my next update, Michael. As many of you are aware, especially Michael and some board members, we've been vigilant about monitoring food vendors in the Gaslamp Quarter. We had seen a decline in hot dog vendors for a few months, but just this past weekend, our team counted over 10 individuals selling hot dogs in the area. We'll continue reporting these incidents. If anyone knows of hotspots that need monitoring, please inform us so we can promptly notify the city of any illegal vending in the district.



Michael Trimble: Before we continue, we've noticed a significant increase in vendors around Petco Park. After the games, they seem to migrate to the Gaslamp, and I'm sure the police department has something to say about that; it's becoming a real issue.

Alonso Vivas: The presence of vendors around the ballpark has been fairly consistent, with no significant decrease. However, it's worth noting that the Gaslamp Quarter itself had a period when we didn't observe many vendors. Now, they are making a comeback. It's possible that some of these vendors are relocating from the area across the street, particularly around the Marriott and 7th and K area. They're setting up both across the street and right in front of the gates at Petco Park. We've also received reports of vendors setting up on 10th Ave. So, it's possible that some vendors from that side of the street are moving over.

And as for my final update, unfortunately, we've experienced an increase in incidents involving assaults on our staff. These incidents occur when we proactively engage with individuals who are either drinking in public or causing disturbances in the Gaslamp Quarter. Regrettably, some of our team members have been assaulted. I want to emphasize that we're reporting these incidents to the Police Department in real time. Those are my updates, and I'm happy to address any questions.

Michael Trimble: Alonso, I'm not sure if you're aware, but this pertains to the email we sent out last Friday regarding the "Dine and Dash Guy." We appreciate your prompt dissemination of that information to our members. Could you clarify the best method for us to share such information with you for efficient distribution?

Alonso: Certainly. I'll provide the information in the chat. We have an info email address that is monitored by our entire team. When you send an email to this address, it not only reaches me but also all of our supervisors, directors, and managers. This ensures that the information doesn't get lost. Additionally, if you'd like to share this info email address with anyone who wants to receive our mass emails, please feel free to do so. By contacting us at info@improvedtsd.org, we'll add them to our distribution list.

Michael Trimble: What is that email address, Alonzo?

Alonso: The email address is info@improvedtsd.org.

Michael Trimble: Does anyone have any questions for Alonzo? Alright, thank you, Sir. We appreciate your time today.

Michael Trimble: I see Captain Turner. Actually, Captain Peterson is on the line. I just wanted to introduce him, and then, of course, in regard to PD's presence in the Gaslamp Quarter and some of the issues we've been having. Captain, can you hear me?

Captain Peterson: Yes, I'll let Officer Turner and Lieutenant Hallahan speak first, and then I'll provide my thoughts on a few matters.

Lieutenant Hallahan: We have observed an increase in violence. Fortunately, our bike team has been very effective in its staffing. Some issues have arisen, so I'd like to share and take questions if there are any. Officer Turner is more hands-on than I am, and I supervise him. He can handle 95% of what community members need, which is a great resource for everybody. I step in for the other 5% to assist him. But Turner, Larry does an excellent job of doing what he can.

Everyone will be on 12-hour shifts, so we'll have more patrols out there on a day-to-day basis. This will last the entire weekend leading up to the 4th of July. Regarding the crime, much of it has involved violence, including a couple of shootings and stabbings, mainly involving homeless individuals. Personally, I'm here to answer any questions.

Michael Trimble: Well, I know that we were vendor-free from December through last weekend.

Lieutenant Hallahan: Yes, that's when we initially took action. We targeted and made it our goal to prevent them from setting up. Then it became more about informing them that they couldn't set up here. The process on the city side isn't entirely clear, but they didn't seem to face any consequences.



Cindy: I have a question about that. When I left Petco Park the other night after the game, the hot dog carts were right there, and about 10 to 15 feet away was a traffic cop.

Lieutenant Hallahan: The traffic police are there to maintain peace if the crowds become unruly. They are staffed specifically for events like that and aren't part of our division's assets.

Jeff Burg: Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think you're referring to traffic controllers. They're not police officers, so they don't issue citations or make arrests. They wear police uniforms but are essentially traffic controllers. They're not officers.

Lieutenant Hallahan: Yes, they're what I call our STC. They are civilians.

Michael Trimble: I know that before you guys intensified your efforts in November and throughout the holidays, the city was planning to support you with impoundment as your primary enforcement tool. So, I'm hoping we can still get some support.

Lieutenant Hallahan: We'll do whatever we can. We understand that we need to prioritize our actions based on the severity of each call.

Josefine: We're seeing more of them. There are children.

Michael Trimble: As unbelievable as it may sound, yes. There are even 8-year-olds.

Lieutenant Hallahan: I've seen videos of them, and it's certainly a challenging situation. Regarding violations, it's quite tough in California, as there have been significant changes in juvenile laws. Juveniles are now typically only detained for violent acts. That's the reality now.

Michael Trimble: Well, I know that they've assaulted members of our community, threatened general managers at door fronts, and even though it's an 8-year-old, they could potentially harm someone.

Lieutenant Hallahan: That's correct. Don't hesitate to call the police.

Michael Trimble: Thank you, Captain. Does anyone have any questions? Malik, how are you? Welcome back.

Malik: I was here earlier today with a Council member Whitburn, discussing a couple of matters. I've also had a conversation with the mayor's office, and they plan to discuss how to allocate more officers to address the issue after the 4th of July. At the moment, the situation is somewhat tense due to this, and they are also exploring another initiative where they pair a code enforcement officer with the police. This collaboration would involve officers going out and issuing citations to individuals. Aside from these developments, I don't have any further updates.

Michael Trimble: Thank you. We'd like to extend our gratitude to Councilmember Whitburn once again for his time today; it was highly valuable, and we truly appreciate it.

Malik: He's enthusiastic about discussing priorities with all of you. We're genuinely thankful for your support with the ordinance and are committed to continuing our support.

Michael Trimble: We are grateful. Margaret, do you have any updates? I'd like to give you the floor for a moment.

Margaret: Thank you so much, Michael. I'd like to introduce Lauren, one of our interns, who's joining us via Zoom today. I have a brief update to share. Our bills are currently progressing through the Senate. All the assembly bills have moved from the Assembly to the Senate, which was quite an interesting transition this morning. Assembly Member Verner also participated in a press conference with members of the renters, which happens to be the Assembly's smallest caucus,



consisting of only four renters. They discussed some of the bills they're proposing this session and their legislative priorities. This event took place from 10 to 11:30 this morning.

Regarding the budget, I intended to report on our district budget grants, but it seems the numbers I have are inaccurate. I'll provide the correct information later. Lastly, there's a Senate bill that might interest you, SB 43, co-authored by Big City mayors, including Todd Gloria, who chairs the Big City Mayors' Coalition, and sponsored by Senator Susan Eggman. This bill seeks to modify the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act and expand the definition of "gravely disabled" to include individuals with substance use disorders or mental health conditions, allowing for involuntary commitment when necessary for their safety and that of others. It was heard yesterday in the Assembly Health Committee and passed unanimously to the Assembly Judiciary Committee. That's all the updates for now, but I'm happy to address any questions.

Michael Trimble: Is that related to the care court Senate bill?

Margaret: It's more closely related to conservatorship.

Michael Trimble: So, it passed the Senate. What does that mean for San Diego?

Margaret: While it has cleared the health committee, it hasn't received final approval from the governor yet. Once the governor signs it into law, I can provide more details on how it will be implemented. This is particularly exciting for San Diego, as we're among the first in line for care court implementation.

Michael Trimble: Great. We had Council Member Whitburn here, and we discussed Prop 47 and its impact on policing. He mentioned Assembly discussions about either overturning Prop 47 or finding ways to empower our police force. Do you have any updates on this?

Margaret: I recall three assembly bills related to amending or overturning Prop 47. One aimed to lower the threshold from 900 back to 450, while the other two sought to increase penalties. However, two of these bills didn't make it out of committee. The status of the third one, as of my last check a couple of months ago, was progressing, but I haven't received further updates. I'll follow up with you on this matter.

Michael Trimble: Any update you can provide on Prop 47 would be greatly appreciated.

Margaret: Certainly, I'll send you an email with any updates on Prop 47.

Michael Trimble: Do you have any comments or questions? Thank you, Margaret, for your time. Now, let's move on to the board business. I'm seeking a motion to approve the minutes from the May 31st Board of Directors meeting. Is there someone who would like to make a motion? Jeff will make the motion. Is there a second? Carlos seconds it. All in favor, please raise your hands. It appears we have unanimous approval. Oh, Cindy abstains, and Lori abstains as well.

As this is a recap meeting for the general public, and there are no members of the public present, Jenna, I believe we can skip the marketing update. We're well-informed, and our main goal was to keep the public in the loop, which we've accomplished. Let's move on and dedicate the remaining time to discussing open issues. These include establishing a clear direction for staff's plans in FY24, reviewing the budget, focusing on illegal vending, maintaining cleanliness, enhancing board participation, and ensuring accountability among merchants. We're implementing Walkabouts and issuing notices of violations, and we'll collaborate with you all to create a monthly schedule. We'll continue our efforts to enforce rules and keep the promenade development on track. Additionally, we need to hold the city accountable for infrastructure responsibilities.

Now, let's talk about the budget. Carlos and I discussed our contract with the current website provider earlier today. We have a 90-day notice period in the contract, and we've been internally discussing our satisfaction with their services and potential improvements. Based on feedback I received through Carlos; we're considering reopening the bidding process to explore other options for gaslamp.org. Does anyone want to share their thoughts on this matter?



Furthermore, Alma has substantial expertise with WordPress, and I believe she can assume some of the responsibilities currently handled by the marketing agency. In fact, she has already taken on more than we may realize, ensuring that changes are executed in a timely manner.

Alma Ascencio: Yes, I assumed responsibility for website changes and updates because, with Formula Marketing, tasks were being completed three days after assignment, leading to delayed responses to changes. I took it upon myself to ensure that merchant listings and any other modifications were executed promptly and efficiently.

Carlos Becerra: Perhaps this is for the board's consideration. It would be beneficial for us to understand the services they are currently providing. This way, we can all have a clear understanding of what they should be doing. If they aren't meeting our expectations, we should identify the areas in which they are falling short and discuss this further. What are your thoughts on this? We need to determine if we are comfortable with their performance or not. Once we have clarity on that, we can decide whether to open the opportunity for other providers to bid on the work. For instance, we can consider this scenario: We're currently engaged with a company that is not meeting the GQA's needs. They take too long to make changes, while Alma can make them promptly and with fewer errors. We must identify our requirements and ensure accountability for the company we're paying for services that appear to be lacking.

Michael Trimble: They do offer creative services, but they rely on our direction. Essentially, we provide the creative concepts, and they implement them. They took our previous website and redesigned it in a new format, also managing its functionality from the backend. They did make some improvements, such as adding a map function, which enhanced the website's usability. However, I believe there are other companies that can offer automatic updates at a lower cost than what we're currently paying for website updates.

Alma Ascencio: Concerning the website's content, I've been handling all requests, changes, and updates. I've also been creating new pages, landing pages, adding events, and making any necessary adjustments. It's more efficient for me to handle this directly. I'm also in communication with GoDaddy to optimize our services, address page errors, and resolve plugin issues. I'm responsible for both content and page creation, and this approach is quicker and more effective.

Cindy: Are we discussing the three-line items, including hosting, maintenance, and web services?

Michael Trimble: Yes, that's correct. They charge us approximately \$1,500 for those services.

Cindy: Out of these three items, which one are you specifically concerned about?

Michael Trimble: I'm primarily concerned about the website development fee, which amounts to \$20,000 annually.

Alma Ascencio: I started handling tasks like creating pages, blogs, and holiday roundups because they were going to charge us extra for these services. I prefer not to pay for something I can manage more effectively myself. They tend to deviate from instructions, requiring constant oversight due to recurring errors.

Michael Trimble: I propose that we consider alternatives and refrain from opening up bids, at least until the end of this 90-day period. During this time, we can clearly define our needs and preferences before considering another company.

Alma Ascencio: Currently, our server is hosted with GoDaddy, and I recommend revising all our services with them.

Michael Trimble: Well, once we vote on everything will go from there.

Factors that every district had to endure included a 20% reduction in revenue, which was indeed a substantial setback. Additionally, while kiosk advertising remains intact, web advertising has seen an increase, but the banner program experienced a slight decline due to the loss of Brown-Forman. However, we managed to secure a significant contract with Infinium, although it's not on a monthly basis. Nevertheless, we are actively promoting banner sales, which I see as an opportunity for growth. I believe our associate membership can also see an uptick. Personally, I require more time to focus



on revenue-generating activities. I'm not sure if Carlos mentioned the idea of reviewing our bookkeeping, but it's something worth considering.

I'd like to highlight that the Sunday artisan market is on track to generate a net profit of \$120,000, which is a positive development. Similarly, Taste of Gaslamp generated \$22,000, with an additional \$1,000 from special events and partnerships. These figures are outside the scope of our discussion. As for the new Bollard Labor contract, I don't have any details at the moment, but it would be beneficial to receive regular updates as things evolve.

In conclusion, our revenue has declined, but factors beyond our control are responsible for this. However, I see significant growth potential. For example, the kiosk advertising contract is up for renewal on December 31st, and I've already initiated discussions about the monthly fee and its potential for the next five years. Even if it remains unchanged, that's a potential profit of one and a half million dollars, or \$312,000 annually. So, there are ample opportunities to increase our earnings.

As I mentioned to Carlos, one of my main concerns is the administrative workload that consumes my time, preventing me from focusing on more critical tasks. I've discussed the possibility of engaging one of Mary, our bookkeeper's employees, to provide assistance with tasks such as bill payments, invoicing, and general administrative and bookkeeping duties. I would still maintain oversight, but this arrangement would free me up for other essential activities. Have you considered this proposal?

Michael Trimble

A topic we discussed yesterday, you know, was the possibility of increasing our budget by \$10,000. I understand that if we proceed with this, and I get you twice a week in the office, you will come back to me with an estimate. I just suggested, would this arrangement be feasible? Could you provide additional services for me? If we go ahead with this plan, it would be beneficial for both of us. We wouldn't have to wait for me to complete everything before handing it over to you. Currently, things are running smoothly, but it's about prioritizing our daily tasks. I'm sure you all have support for managing bills; Mary, who works in Old Town and doesn't come to the office anymore, could be beneficial in this area. She is open to the idea.

Carlos Becerra: So, we were planning to wait for her to provide her estimate on what it would take to implement this arrangement. Once we have that estimate, we can circulate it, along with the other information we discussed earlier or behind closed doors, for approval.

Michael Trimble: Yep, that sounds good.

The other matter I'd like to bring up is Laurel's contract, which expires at the end of this year. We've had a successful relationship with McFarland Promotions, and I plan to review her contract to explore the possibility of an extension. I'll also seek feedback and input from everyone. I personally support continuing our relationship, given our long history with McFarland Promotions. She's familiar with the neighborhood and our needs, making her a reliable partner. While this isn't an immediate concern, I want to make everyone aware of it.

Regarding expense reductions, our D&O expenses have decreased significantly due to the resolution of the lawsuit. Taxes are expected to remain stable, likely similar to last year. While certain costs, such as rent and storage, may increase, maintenance costs should remain consistent. We did mention the cell phone expenses, and Carlos and I will discuss this further. Additionally, this budget figure needs adjustment. To summarize, we should approve a preliminary budget with the understanding that it can be updated on a monthly basis if necessary. It will need to be updated after our discussions about the website, bookkeeping, and cell phone expenses. Carlos mentioned that the website will take 90 days to come into effect, and this budget is an annual figure.

Michael Trimble: Working with Mary will also help me provide more timely financial information on a monthly basis, similar to what Jim used to do. Jim was often absent in the past year, and I want to return to providing more real-time budget updates on a monthly basis for everyone's benefit. Thoughts. Questions. So, does someone want to make a motion with some amendments to this budget so we can at least have a working budget?



Carlos Becerra: I will make a motion to move forward with this preliminary budget. Pending further board review.

Jeff Burg: I make a motion, and discussions regarding to be determined as we move forward.

Michael Trimble: All right, with a unanimous vote in favor, the motion is passed. I will distribute these numbers to everyone shortly to facilitate finalization. Our upcoming meeting is scheduled for August, and as usual, we will not have a meeting in July. Carlos, would you like to adjourn the meeting?

Carlos Becerra: The meeting is adjourned at 4:54 PM.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT – Carlos Becerra adjourned meeting

Meeting ended: 1 hour 57 minutes.