

**Dimond Improvement Association
Board of Directors Meeting, March 11, 2021**

Board Members Present: Jay Ashford, Zandile Christian, Fran Donohue, Tomasz Finc, Chris Harper, Marjorie Jones, Marion Mills, Ryan Romaneski, Daniel Swafford, JoAnn Tracht-Rawson, Victoria Wake, Kevin Whittinghill

Board Members Absent: Julie Johnson, Ben Stein-Lobovits

Guests: Amauri Collins-McMurray, Council District 4 Office; Bret Peterson, Dimond resident

Abbreviations used: OPD (Oakland Police Department); CRO (Community Resource Officer).

The meeting was convened via Zoom at approximately 7:05 p.m.

1. **Agenda approval.**

ACTION: Approve the meeting agenda as presented. (Motion: Chris; second: Jay; in favor, unanimous)

2. **Minutes approval.**

ACTION: Approve minutes from the January board meeting as amended. (Motion: Chris; second: Marion; in favor, unanimous)

3. **Chair's report.** Ryan reflected on the fiscal year that ends this month. He expressed appreciation for all the effort board members put in on the strategic planning process as well as continuing projects and events in the Dimond during the pandemic. He noted that Oaktober2020 was voted the "Best Virtual Craft Beer Event" by the East Bay Express. Other board members chimed in with their reflections and appreciations as well.

After 11 years of service, Fran is leaving the board. A "thank-you and farewell" gathering (in-person, it is hoped) will be organized in the coming months. Victoria is taking a leave of absence from the board April, May, and June.

4. **For the good of the order.**

Victoria reminded the board that one of DIA's grantees, Greacian Goeke, is holding her Spring Fling! family dance online on Sunday, March 21, 2:00-3:15pm. Participants of all ages and abilities are invited to join. She will send an email with the information.

JoAnn brought the board's attention to the unfortunate incident at Umami last month in which two customers got into an argument about masks, followed by one them posting to the Dimond News Group criticizing the business. She encouraged the board to support Dimond merchants in every way they can.

5. **District 4 report.**

Lions Pool. Victoria asked about prospects for reopening the pool, which closed again in January when the City's part-time staff was laid off. Amauri said an effort is underway to determine the financial requirements to reopen.

City budget. Amauri reported that the City will receive \$150-\$190 million from the recently passed federal American Rescue Plan Act. About \$50 million would go to restoring the City's reserves and thereby preserve its credit rating. While the infusion of funds will make a huge difference, the current \$62.5-million budget shortfall is expected to grow to about \$200 million over the next year or two.

Sideshows. Kevin asked if the councilmember had followed up with the Department of Transportation about possible new streetscape elements to discourage sideshows. Amauri indicated that if the community is interested in pursuing environmental design options, a OAK 311 (SeeClickFix) request should be submitted to initiate a staff review and response.

Dimond Recreation Center. JoAnn asked how it was decided to close down Dimond's rec center due to the pandemic and yet keep Redwood Heights Recreation Center open. Amauri said there was a process used to make those determinations. He did not know the particulars but would see what he could find out.

6. City zoning regarding four-plexes. Kevin introduced guest Bret Peterson, a Dimond resident interested in traffic, safety, and housing. Bret gave an overview of a measure before the Oakland City Council authorizing a study of the feasibility and ramifications of allowing the construction of four-plexes in areas now zoned for single-family homes. He hoped the board would consider supporting the study.

ACTION: Convey the DIA board's support for the proposed City Council resolution authorizing a study of zoning changes to allow four-plexes in areas currently zoned for single-family homes. (Motion: Kevin; second: Marjorie; in favor, unanimous)

Ryan will convey DIA's support to Councilmember Thao's office.

7. FYE 2022 Budget. Ryan presented the revised draft budget, explaining the changes that were made based on the committees' expense reductions and further reductions made by the Finance & Administration Committee. The revised draft budget keeps the use of reserve funds to approximately \$20,000. Ryan stressed that reductions do not reflect on the value of the projects and programs, but rather a consolidation of efforts and an assessment of where success can be realized with reduced or no expense.

8. General meeting topics. Jay reported that the Community Care & Improvement Committee met and discussed the topic ideas suggested at the January board retreat. The committee came up with a tentative plan for four meetings in 2021: April/May-- Neighborhood Watch, NCPC 22X, board election; June/July--COVID 19, one-year perspective and vaccine; August/September--Envisioning the future of the Dimond; October/November--TBD. Ryan suggested that a regular date (e.g., first Wednesday or something similar) be reestablished so the board and the community can plan ahead.

9. Board recruitment. Ryan reported that three individuals so far have officially expressed interest in being on the board and that they are being interviewed. Board members then broke into groups of two to brainstorm key messages that could inspire someone to join the board, i.e., the unique value propositions and benefits of serving. The groups then forwarded their ideas to the recruitment committee of Ryan, Julie, Victoria, and Kevin.

10. Volunteer of the Year. Jay will spearhead the nominating and voting process over the next few weeks. The basic guidelines were reiterated: Nominees cannot be current board members and cannot have been recipients in the previous five years.

11. Work in Progress (WIP) reports *(from verbal and written reports).*

Beautification. The 2021 tree-well weeding and mulching project is moving along, with initial focus on Fruitvale Ave. from MacArthur Blvd. to Coloma St., as well as the morea plantings at the Champion St./MacArthur Blvd. corner. Ten sets of volunteers (some solo, some in pairs, and one family) have participated, including four board members. Development has begun on a web-based, self-guided tour of public art installations in the Dimond. The tour will likely include about 16 artworks.

Communications. The February newsletter was published in the new format, which is expected to be easier to produce and read. Board members are encouraged to use [Amazon Smile](#) when purchasing from Amazon. By ordering via [smile.amazon.com](#) and selecting DIA as the recipient charity, DIA will receive a donation.

Public Safety. An in-person meeting with OPD CRO Gustavo Plasencia is scheduled for March 12 in the commercial area. DIA and NCPC 22X representatives will present public safety issues in the Dimond and show the CRO the security camera locations. In email conversation with OPD, it was learned that Brian Cassidy is available to give Neighborhood Watch seminars via Zoom. The suggestion and contact information were passed to the Community Care & Improvement Committee for follow-up.

Adjournment. Ryan adjourned the meeting at 9:02 p.m.

Next board meeting: April 8, 2021

*Minutes submitted by Victoria Wake
Approved 4/8/21*