

Dimond Improvement Association

Board of Directors Meeting - January 13, 2022

Board Members Present: Victoria Wake, Ryan Romaneski, Chris Harper, Alex Park, Lindsey Berking, Erica Perez, David Gross, Jay Ashford, JoAnn Tracht-Rawson, Bret Peterson

Board Members Absent: Marjorie Jones, Tomasz Finc, Julie Johnson, Ben Stein-Lobovits, Zandile Christian, Kevin Whittinghill

Guests Present: Matthew Napoli, Councilmember Thao's office

The meeting was convened at 7:00 p.m.

1. Agenda approval.

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

2. Minutes approval.

ACTION: Approve minutes from December DIA board meeting. (Motion: Victoria Seconded Alex; in favor, 8; abstained, 1)

3. Chair's report. Ryan expresses gratitude to committees who have worked to assess progress to date, and a general thanks to the Board for everyone's willingness to login and show up over Zoom in service to our community.

4. For the good of the order. Victoria mentions that the holiday party was wonderful and expresses a big thanks to Ryan for putting it together for us. Alex seconds that, thank you to Ryan. Ryan shouts out to Kevin for making sure we stay on top of the redistricting efforts and updates, even while abroad, ensuring that we have timely information. They have eliminated the map we had the most concerns with, and will be making some tweaks to the maps we supported (F3). There will be two more meetings this month. Victoria gives a shout out to Zandile for her patience and good humor for nearly a year of waiting for us to find a replacement for her as KDC

Coordinator. She gave us plenty of lead time, but we haven't accomplished that, so we want to acknowledge what a good sport and what a good member she is for staying on and keeping at it on our behalf. Jay mentions that he's aware the city will be pulling the dedicated Neighborhood Services Coordinators from some neighborhoods, and wonders if the same will happen in 22X. Victoria mentions that 22X has not had a dedicated NSC for quite some time.

5. District 4 report. Guest Matt Napoli updates that we're planning to do Local Heroes in February. Email him if there's anyone you want to nominate. No updates on the intersection improvements (such as Botts' dots) for Fruitvale and MacArthur and Coolidge and MacArthur intersections. The office is working on legislation aimed at affordable housing, getting guns off the street and deterring illegal dumping but it's all in the oven for now. Bret asks if there's anything in the works for tackling wildfire prevention at either the city or county level. Matt says yes there are really two things: One is the vegetation management plan they're currently working on, and the idea of creating a wildfire prevention assessment district, which is a special tax district that goes toward maintaining vegetation to lower wildfire risk. The second thing is a joint powers authority between several municipalities which would get together to coordinate wildfire prevention efforts. Victoria asks about the status of taking suggestions from the community on additional street segments for repaving in the 5 year paving plan. Matt says they just submitted the streets that were chosen a few days ago, and he will share it via Ryan. They got about 5 streets with the 1.4 million dollars they had. Criteria for prioritization were streets that connected main roads, parks, rec centers, or schools. Victoria asks when Local Heroes nominations are due and when the event will be. Matt says the event will be in February and nominations are due in early February. Renia Webb Rwebb@oaklandca.gov is organizing the event, so you can send her your nominations.

6. Board Committee Progress Reports. Ryan wants us to set aside some time as we head into the planning and budgeting process. We need to increase the visibility across the Board on how each of our committees are

doing relative to the goals they have set for this year, so we can provide meaningful feedback as they start to share draft goals for next year. A chance to do some level setting across the goals. Thank you to committee chairs for providing an overview on the goals and progress from last year.

We will have each Committee Chair speak to their progress overview slide, successes and challenges and then there will be a chance for the group to ask questions about what worked, what didn't work, and why.

We will close out each section by asking the committee chairs to reflect back on the feedback that has been put forth. In other words, "feedback on feedback" to reflect back and honor the feedback that has been provided.

Victoria shares the Beautification Committee successes and challenges. We had 6 goals, and of those 6 goals we had resounding success on 2 of them. The KDC fundraiser raised 44% more than last year and far exceeded the goal and the Virtual Public Art tour was launched in December. We also made progress on one major public art project that had stagnated and that is moving along now. Where we didn't meet our goal is the recruiting of a robust volunteer team and a replacement for the KDC coordinator. On the Beinati Overlook, the challenge is that there's really one part that has to be done first (the chainlink fence) which involves the county and has been complicated to navigate.

The main reason for our challenges is that this committee covers a lot and we're spread too thin between public art, litter, and greening. Three major committees were rolled into one last year, and these are three committees with a lot of work, some of them involve daily work. JoAnn adds that fundraising for KDC is a big responsibility as well. Ryan asks what the Chairs think may be a root cause for our lack of volunteers. Victoria thinks it needs to be a really well organized program with branding, recognition, and a social aspect, which requires a real marketing plan. The way it is now is possibly too casual and doesn't feel as rewarding and significant as it should. Chris wonders if it had that when Kathleen ran it with her marketing background. Victoria mentions that we have the talent and ability to do it with the marketing know-how on the Board now, it's a matter of dedicating

the time to it. Victoria thinks it's something all of us should start to do to build that momentum. If we can engender that enthusiasm for in-person volunteering in ourselves to be involved more, it would be a big boost.

Jay shares the Community Care and Improvement successes and challenges. Jay admits CCI was not as ambitious as Beautification in terms of number of goals. On the success side, there were 3 very successful meetings, and the group made progress on some of the 2020 grants despite considerable headwinds. The Diamond Gateway project was completed, and some benches in the park were repaired, for example. On the challenges side, there was a lack of time and capacity to manage the 2020 grants to completion, let alone launch another round of grants in 2021 given the challenges around in-person events at the moment. Jay says it may make sense to synergize with other committees on community events, as it may not make sense for events to be the jurisdiction of one committee only. Ryan wonders if it makes sense for us to have an events committee. Events take a ton of time and while we were able to have a few events in the summer months when it was easier to be outside, but those were a lot of work for a small group of people. There's an open question, which is "who should be owning events?"

Ryan asks how many grants have not been closed out? Jay says 3 or 4.

Ryan shares that the Economic and Business Development Committee has had the most active year it's had since he joined the board in 2017. We met consistently and organized a number of activities. Each of them was driven by the time and sweat equity of a few individuals. Kevin really drove our online marketing for promoting a number of restaurants. Lindsey has been the primary driver of the facade improvement grants, and Bret has been leading the events. We also secured funding for the BID feasibility study grant. As for challenges, we ended up de-prioritizing partnering with the DB&PA, mostly because that group didn't really exist for the past year. We're also struggling with our goal of building relationships with key stakeholders, which limits our success in being able to organize those folks around some key initiatives. The committee ended up doing more events than anything, which was unexpected but a way to take advantage of the

warmer summer months to energize the commercial area. Bret adds that he likes the idea of at least two people forming a little subcommittee who are copied on every email and sharing the load, otherwise it can lead to burnout. Victoria adds that some way of measuring our success or progress would be useful and helpful for morale.

Erica shares that she's been standing in for Tomasz as Chair of the Membership and Outreach Committee. The committee had four goals in 2021 and successfully accomplished a couple of them. In the success column, the committee has produced a vibrant and engaging bi-monthly newsletter. We also had a goal of increasing social media engagement and website traffic. The website continues to get 300-600 visits every month, which isn't a huge increase from previous years, but we saw some nice spikes around events and fundraising drives. We also had a goal of increasing membership to 150 members by the end of the year, which we marked as partially complete. Jay did a great job of putting together the membership campaign, which we got to 96. We also had a goal of increasing volunteerism, which we marked as a missed goal. Tomasz being on maternity leave meant we didn't get to the task of getting volunteer names and email addresses into a CRM, and there were other in-person Covid related challenges around increasing volunteerism.

Also worth mentioning that while we didn't hit the number goal for the membership drive, Jay did a great job of running the campaign, and created a template for us to use for future drives.

Another challenge of meeting the membership goals may be related to the branding issue Victoria mentioned. We may need to try making the "why" of membership more clear to Dimond residents. Another challenge was providing clearer, more accessible information about how to volunteer. We also struggled to get interns interested in volunteering to help out our social media campaign. JoAnn mentions maintaining the website is an ongoing responsibility and a lot of work that isn't reflected in these goals. Jay also mentions that the membership database involves monthly maintenance as well.

Bret updates the Board on Public Safety Committee successes and s on behalf of Kevin. The one thing we're counting as successful is the reporting of actual crimes and issues, and that's based on the survey that went out, as we finally got some data on community concerns. We're hoping to have a report written up to be sent to Councilmember Thao's office and other places. We've stayed on top of raising concerns about sideshows and illegal fireworks to Thao's office as well. We're all also self training on how to use the security camera software we have. In the "partially completed" column, we haven't been able to build as much of a relationship with our CRO, Officer Plasencia. OPD is obviously stretched pretty thin, but we don't get a lot of response to emails.

Victoria adds that the Public Safety Committee has made a lot of progress in terms of making our presence really known to the city, to departments, to OPD and the Councilmember's office in a formal way. The disappointment comes in that all the letters, and the communication through all channels has not produced much in results. The city does not seem to care or feel they have any obligation to be responsive to the community, and it's really disheartening.

Ryan commends the team for the work on the survey. The participation was huge, and it's been really impressive to see a group that's so engaged in attacking this from many angles. There seems to have been a single focus on camera installations in the past, and the past year has been a great example of a more holistic approach, building relationships, and tackling issues that are important to people.

Bret adds that if there are ideas for how to improve safety, to let him know. We are organized in our reporting to 311 and complaining at the same time. If there are other suggestions for things we can do, send an email, public safety is for everyone.

7. Board Retreat Agenda and Pre-Work. Coming out of this meeting, this year we are going to zoom out a little bit and have committees think about their work plan first so that we can name and elevate the work we need to do and plan, even the work that doesn't necessarily make it into a goal.

Ryan will be sending out a planning template and asking teams to think about the projects, programs and activities that we anticipate taking on next year, and then think of 1-3 goals associated for each one. At the board retreat, we'll have a chance to present, discuss and get feedback on the work plans and the goals. Coming out of the retreat, we'll ask you to finalize those goals and then finalize the committee budget.

8. Discussion: January Board Retreat Ryan shares the objectives of the retreat are to build trust across the board through opportunities to learn from, and with, each other and have fun.

There will be some team building, and then we'll cover some big topics. One of which is member and volunteer development. Ryan will be reaching out to some folks to gauge their willingness to lead or facilitate some sessions.

Currently scheduled for January 30th, Ryan wants to get a pulse check to gauge everyone's comfort level with an in-person event. Chris suggests testing, or perhaps a hybrid model similar to how schools are running currently. Erica suggests masks, but unmasked indoors she's not as comfortable with. Bret agrees. Bret asks where it is, Ryan updates that it was to be in the library but now it's not, so the location is to be determined, possibly at Ryan's house. Jay suggests the Dimond Rec Center. Ryan wonders about food - perhaps a BYO picnic would make folks feel most comfortable. He also asks that anyone who isn't comfortable and doesn't want to share here, feel free to email him.

9. January Board Retreat Ryan shares all of the strategic priorities for the organization currently, and asks the group if we want to focus and invest more of our time and energy into just a few of these goals. He asks the group to discuss in breakout groups: What prioritizing specific goals would mean or how might that impact the rest of our planning?

Breakout groups:

Erica and Victoria discussed hesitation over prioritizing any one of these goals over the others. Erica says a priority should perhaps be recruiting

volunteers as that is blocking us from accomplishing many of our other goals, but it doesn't feel good to prioritize over public safety, for example. They also felt that inclusivity should be part of what we do across the board.

David and Jay also discussed the idea of inclusivity not necessarily needing to be a stated goal on its own but more informing everything we do. Similarly, growing volunteers and membership maybe doesn't need to be its own goal. Jay mentions the pyramid model from last year. Goals at the top and then primary aspirations and a cascading relationship up. If we wanted to look at enabling factors, maybe that's how we prioritize.

Alex and Bret discussed not wanting to drop anything outright since everything is important, but maybe there are other ways to think about the goals since there are a lot of goals that work in relation to other goals. Maybe thinking about ways to better integrate each of them.

Chris and Lindsey felt that the goals are very broad and there aren't specific action items on them. There are a finite number of person hours within the board, maybe volunteerism needs to be prioritized since that's blocking us from reaching our other goals. In the process of prioritizing goals, we could be more clear about differentiating between values versus goals that can be more specifically worked on.

Ryan clarifies that we may be mixing up the terms goals and priorities and causing some confusion.

For the last 15 minutes, we discussed events in our breakout groups: How should we manage the work associated with events?

Chris and JoAnn feel we should approach events by making sure that every event has at least two or three managers. Maybe having that group or committee being able to partner with another committee.

Alex and Erica feel we should possibly have a dedicated committee that works more ad-hoc so if there's no event coming up they don't need to meet, but when there is, there is a dedicated team.

Bret and Jay think events should be planned way in advance. Every event needs to have two coordinators who are cc'ed on every email and co-controlling the information. There should also be a committee chair involved. The mural dedication event was a great example of a cross committee event where more than one person is responsible.

David and Lindsey feel it might make sense for individual events to be tied to the committee that came up with them, or if a new committee is created, another one should perhaps be eliminated.

9. WIP Reports. *(from written reports)*

Beautification: Victoria and Tom met with artist Andrea Bacigalupo about the art piece ("Ellipse") she would like to donate to the Dimond; several potential sites were explored and the committee will discuss further at its January meeting. Julie has found a company to move the Dimond Printers sign to The Crucible.

Public Safety: We have published our survey results in the DIA newsletter. Next steps are further promotion of the survey and developing advocacy goals based on the data.

Adjournment at 9:02

Minutes written by Lindsey Berking. Minutes approved 2/10