



GASLAMP QUARTER ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MINUTES

Wednesday, December 6th, 2023, | 3:30 PM
Gaslamp Hilton San Diego

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

1. **Call to Order** – Directors Present

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

2. **Minutes not approved by: Executive Board- No Quorum**

Michael Trimble: All right, everybody, let's take our seats to get this ball rolling. Rest of the board, please take your seats so we can get started and I can hand it over to our chair, Carlos Becerra.

Carlos Becerra: Welcome, everybody. Thank you. And let's start the meeting here at 3:35 PM on December 6.

Michael Trimble: Welcome, everybody. Thank you so much for attending the December GQA board meeting. Since we have a quorum, we're going to start with the non-agenda public comment. If anyone from the public would like to speak, I'll give each person 2 minutes to do so. If there is anyone who wants to speak, please raise their hand. I see one, go ahead, please.

Public Comment 1: Expressing our frustration downtown. We don't have any ordinances. Laws have been passed. People are setting up camp in front of our fine dining restaurants. The stench of these hot dogs is permeating the air. A few days ago, I was in the corner of 5th and there were 14 illegal hotdog members. And they're doing this in front of more than a dozen police officers. People's businesses and livelihoods are in danger. We're just hoping that our collective voices will help make a difference.

Michael Trimble: Well, we are definitely on a mission for that one for sure. Thank you. Anyone else for public comment?



Public Comment 2: Thank you, Michael. The Association for standing up for legal businesses as a legal hot dog business, we've been doing it at the Civic Center Plaza for 23 years. And honestly, with all due respect, I feel that the mayor has just turned a blind eye with a deaf ear. We've come to him. We told them we've been assaulted by these illegal not only our vendors, but I feel that these group of individuals are immigrants that shouldn't be here for certain reasons. They got into our van a few weeks ago. We called the police. No one comes. I know that they keep saying it's going to be heard. It's going to be heard. It's been four years. I called the other day and spoke to the district 3 and they're telling me ohh not till January or February. And then that was when it'll go into effect. So, a lot of businesses are suffering just like we are. Just the environment and the people that come to do their conferences here, that's an embarrassment to sending. there's no help. There's a lawsuit, but that's not going to fix it. This needs to stop, and we need to fight you guys until the mayor hears us.

Michael Trimble: Thank you. Your voice is very important, and it's a major priority for the association to get this one to the finish.

Public Comment 2: As the Hispanic person and so with legal defense. I can tell you this. I'm a small person. But I got a big voice and I'm not going to stop so. I have a lot of people behind me, not just the associations.

Michael Trimble: Absolutely. Thank you. Thank you so much. Any other public comment? All right, we're going to move on to liaison reports. Clayton, we'll start with you from the downtown partnership.

Clayton: from the Partnership really quick, the Clean and Safe team is really proud to partner with the GQA for the holiday market. They're cleaning, security and using our trailer to help bring in the canopies for that as well. So really excited to be part of that. Also, as we transition the holiday season, they've been installing poinsettias on 5th and J. So hopefully you're starting soon. So, our new numbers from November haven't come out yet.

Michael Trimble: Thank you. Appreciate it. Captain Peterson, Senior Police Department, floor is yours.

Captain Peterson: Just a couple of things. We're putting together operations planned for New Year's Eve. Obviously, that takes a lot of overtime beyond our regular bike team staffing on. And before I forget my team, we were able to get a grant from The Gary Sinise Foundation. So, we were able to acquire 25 new fully outfitted bicycles via grant. That was about \$75,000.

Michael Trimble: Thank you so much. We'll keep the fight going. Rhiannon, I see you from the foundation...

Rhiannon: Thank you for your sponsorship of the fallback Festival in November, you know really great day or hundreds of kids and the families came down and San Diego, thank you. Upcoming in the holiday season, we have some extra holiday hours. On Thursdays, the museum is decorated. We're exploring Victorian holiday traditions. So, stop by. And then we're looking into the new year, and we have a fun new exhibit opening at the end of January that tell you more about it but thank you.

Michael Trimble: I don't see anyone from District 3 or the mayor's office, so we'll move directly into our first special presentation.

Michael Trimble: Summer Stephan, thank you so much for joining us. We look forward to hearing your presentation.

Summer Stephan: Hello, everybody I'm Summer Stephan, San Diego County's District Attorney. Thank you for inviting me here. Michael, you've been advocating on this topic, specifically about illicit street vendors. I want to assure you that after hitting multiple walls, Michael brought this issue to our attention at the District Attorney's Office. Normally, the District Attorney's office wouldn't be involved in misdemeanor crimes handled by the city attorney. However, we've taken on this issue creatively through our Consumer Fraud and Protection team. We're exploring ways to tackle illegal business practices and unfair competition. We're also looking into labor trafficking and wage theft violations. Threats or acts of harm fall within our jurisdiction as well. We're committed to addressing this issue creatively and globally through our various units.



We want to gather the names of witnesses here because threats of harm fall under our purview. We're exploring legislative action and other solutions to address these challenges.

Michael Trimble: Would you like us to compile a list of witnesses?

Summer Stephan: Yes, everyone who's comfortable can provide their contact information to our assistant director of Business and Community Affairs. We want to approach this issue innovatively, similar to how we've tackled other complex cases. We're exploring partnerships and leveraging technology to address homelessness and its intersection with public safety and crime. We've gathered data on cases involving homelessness and criminal behavior, highlighting the need for innovative solutions. We're implementing a prototype app to match individuals with suitable shelter options efficiently. We're seeking support for this initiative from the mayor and council to ensure its success. This app will provide transparency and help us understand the gaps in our current resources. Ultimately, we aim to expand this initiative to include transitional housing and mental health treatment options.

Michael Trimble: Thank you for presenting these solutions. We're fully supportive of your efforts.

During the board meeting, Michael Trimble introduced Tony Kaleo and Reema from the DSD and the Spaces as Places group as the second presenters. Their presentation focused on discussing the details regarding parklets in the Gaslamp border and across San Diego.

Tony Kaleo, after being introduced expressed his perspective on the reliance on government in meetings and task forces, highlighting the challenges associated with this dependence.

As Tony Kaleo began his presentation, he delved into the topic of the Spaces as Places program.

Tony Kaleo provided an extensive overview of the Spaces as Places program during the board meeting. He introduced himself and clarified the focus of his presentation, which was to discuss the transition from Temporary Operation for Businesses during COVID to the implementation of parklets in the Gaslamp border and throughout San Diego. Tony shared a quote from Ronald Reagan, highlighting the role of government in problem-solving.

Drawing attention to the reliance on government in meetings and task forces, Tony emphasized the program's objective of providing outdoor dining options to support businesses' survival. He expressed the need for proactive solutions.

Acknowledging the audience's familiarity with the Spaces as Places initiative, Tony thanked the attendees, particularly Summer, for their participation.

Tony outlined the program's inception and objectives, emphasizing its role in enhancing outdoor dining experiences. He discussed collaborating with the planning department to develop the Spaces as Places program within the broader framework of promenade and outdoor sidewalk initiatives.

Addressing potential challenges and interpretations of the program's code, Tony shared insights from heated debates within the planning department. As the city engineer responsible for signing the program's documents, he stressed the importance of his approval for its implementation.

Delving into the specifics of the Spaces as Places program, Tony outlined location requirements, including considerations for curbside parking and proximity to intersections. He also highlighted restrictions related to speed limits, curb colors, and the prohibition of parklets in alleys.

Furthermore, Tony provided updates on ongoing efforts to accommodate bike lanes within the program, emphasizing collaboration with the bike coalition and the city's mobility program. He emphasized the program's adaptability to future developments, ensuring alignment with long-term city plans.



In summary, Tony Kaleo's presentation elucidated the purpose, development process, and operational details of the Spaces as Places program, underscoring its significance in supporting businesses and enhancing outdoor dining experiences in San Diego.

During the meeting, Tony Kaleo addressed concerns raised by business owners about liability, insurance requirements, and the permitting process for parklets in San Diego. He acknowledged the challenges posed by risk management and insurance companies, which demand high coverage limits and increase costs for businesses. Tony emphasized the importance of following the city's design guidelines and safety standards to mitigate risks associated with parklets.

There was a discussion about the differences between obtaining permits for sidewalk cafes versus street parklets. Tony explained that while sidewalk cafes have been granted permits in the past, parklets on the street present additional challenges due to safety concerns and the need to preserve traffic flow. However, he highlighted the city's efforts to implement safety measures such as wheel bumps and barriers to ensure the safety of parklet users and pedestrians.

Tony also addressed questions about the permitting process and provided information about the number of permits issued and applications in progress. He assured business owners that the city is working to streamline the process and reduce costs, particularly for businesses on 5th Ave. He emphasized that the parklet spaces should remain open to the public when the business is closed but acknowledged concerns about issues such as homelessness and illegal activities affecting parklet usage.

In conclusion, Tony encouraged business owners to take advantage of the parklet program while ensuring compliance with safety regulations and city guidelines. He reassured them that the city is committed to assisting businesses in navigating the permitting process and addressing their concerns about liability and insurance requirements.

several points of discussion during this meeting:

1. **Insurance Requirement:** discussion regarding an insurance requirement imposed on businesses. Tony Kaleo questions the legality of this requirement and requests to see the specific code section that justifies it. The cost of insurance, particularly an umbrella policy, is mentioned, and there's frustration over the significant financial burden it poses to business owners.
2. **Project Approvals and Process:** Various attendees express concerns and seek clarification on the approval process for their projects, particularly regarding permits, inspections, and adherence to regulations. Questions arise about the flexibility of inspections and the possibility of starting construction before securing permits.
3. **Challenges with Structures:** There's a discussion about structures and the complexities involved in their approval and inspection process. Questions arise about the feasibility of making modifications to existing structures and the extent of inspections required.
4. **Communication and Transparency:** Attendees express frustration over communication issues, delays in responses, and perceived lack of transparency in the process. Concerns are raised about the time taken to receive approvals and the need for clearer guidelines.
5. **Appealing to Higher Authorities:** Suggestions are made to escalate concerns to higher authorities, such as the mayor's office, to address the challenges faced by business owners, especially regarding insurance requirements. The need for advocacy and collective action to effect change is emphasized.

Overall, the meeting highlights the challenges and frustrations faced by business owners in navigating regulatory requirements, particularly regarding insurance, permits, and inspections, and underscores the importance of clear communication and advocacy to address these issues.

Action Item: Michael Trimble to follow up with Tony Kaleo.



Summary: Tony Kaleo expressed appreciation for Michael Trimble's involvement, highlighting his dedication and professionalism. Michael Trimble thanked Tony and committed to follow up with him.

Agenda Item: Approval of Minutes and Board Updates

Michael Trimble: Let's proceed with the minutes. I'm seeking a motion to approve the minutes from the October 25th Board of Directors meeting. Can I have a motion to approve? Carlos motioned, and Mikey seconded. All in favor? Any abstentions? Since we don't have a quorum, we'll have to defer approval to the next meeting.

Board Updates:

Michael Trimble: I'd like to inform everyone that Bruce Getz will be taking a sabbatical and will be stepping off the board due to family issues. We value Bruce's expertise and hope he can return soon. Regarding quorum requirements, even with Bruce's absence, we still need seven members present to achieve quorum. If we lose one more member, we'll face challenges maintaining quorum.

Mikey G: We need to address absenteeism to ensure we can maintain quorum. It may be necessary for members who are no longer fully committed to resign.

Michael Trimble: Agreed. With elections approaching in the new year, it's an opportune time for transitions. I'll reach out to Bruce, but if anyone wants to contact him, he's still interested in remaining involved.

Carlos Becerra: We should ensure any bylaw provisions regarding temporary board members are clear before making decisions.

Michael Trimble: Thank you. Regarding the kiosk contract renewal, Howard and I are negotiating with Big Outdoor California for a five-year term. We're focusing on digital space and first right of refusal for kiosk conversion. The contract expires on December 31st, and we're finalizing details with the attorney. I propose that Howard and I continue working on the contract, with input from the Executive Board before finalization.

Action Item: Michael Trimble and Howard to continue negotiations on the kiosk contract renewal, with input from the Executive Board.

Summary: The board discussed the need to address absenteeism to maintain quorum, potential resignations, and ongoing negotiations for the kiosk contract renewal. Michael Trimble proposed involving the Executive Board in contract finalization before the December 31st expiration date.

Agenda Item: Executive Committee Approval for Kiosk Contract Renewal

Mikey G: I propose that the Executive Committee be granted authority to approve the kiosk contract renewal without full board approval. Alternatively, we could convene a special board meeting before year-end to review the contract.

Michael Trimble: That sounds reasonable. We could also consider a 30-day extension on the existing contract while we finalize negotiations. Any thoughts?

Stephen: Can we take immediate action on this or consider a 90-day extension? Allowing time for everyone to review the language would be beneficial. An extension on current terms and conditions could be approved in the meantime.

Michael Trimble: We're close to finalizing the contract. An extension seems practical for now.

Carlos Becerra: I move to approve a 30-day extension on the existing contract, allowing the Executive Committee to make the final decision.

All in Favor: Aye.



Michael Trimble: Motion carried. I'll bring the finalized contract to the Executive Committee for review before year-end. We'll notice a special board meeting if necessary.

Agenda Item: Mobility Campaign and Holiday Market Updates

Laurel McFarlane: We've been navigating challenges with the mobility campaign, particularly regarding the use of funds and approval for marketing materials.

Michael Trimble: I've been advocating for clarity on the policy interpretation. We're making progress, but it's been challenging.

Laurel McFarlane: We're also preparing for the Holiday Market, featuring various attractions and promotions, including a tree lighting ceremony, pet parade, and expo booths.

Michael Trimble: We'll continue working on the mobility campaign and explore opportunities for sponsorship and promotion.

Summary: The board approved a 30-day extension on the kiosk contract while negotiations continue. Updates were provided on the mobility campaign challenges and preparations for the Holiday Market. Michael Trimble and Laurel McFarlane will continue addressing these matters and seek opportunities for collaboration and sponsorship.

The conversation revolves around various operational aspects of the Gaslamp Quarter, including cleanliness, security, vending ordinances, and financial updates. There are discussions about the effectiveness of cleaning efforts, issues with vendors, interactions with the city regarding compliance, and plans for future events.

Key points from the conversation include:

1. **Cleaning Operations:** There are discussions about the effectiveness of cleaning operations in the Gaslamp Quarter, including the use of blowers, sweepers, and personnel. Issues with the reporting system for cleanliness and interactions with the Downtown Partnership who are responsible for cleaning are raised.
2. **Vending Ordinances:** There are concerns about hot dog sellers, causing disturbances and hygiene issues. The conversation touches upon potential solutions, such as creating designated areas for vendors and enforcing vending ordinances more effectively.
3. **Security and Safety:** The need for effective security measures is emphasized, including addressing disturbances caused by individuals in the area.
4. **Financial Updates:** Financial updates regarding the Gaslamp Quarter Association are discussed, including the impact of contracts and revenue sources, such as kiosks.
5. **Upcoming Events:** Plans for upcoming events in the Gaslamp Quarter, such as holiday markets, pet parades, and mini-golf tournament, are mentioned.

Overall, the conversation reflects ongoing efforts to address various operational challenges and maintain the vibrancy and cleanliness of the Gaslamp Quarter while also ensuring the safety and satisfaction of visitors and residents.

The meeting was adjourned by board chair Carlos Becerra at 6:00 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT – Carlos Becerra adjourned meeting.
zoom meeting ended: 2 hour 43 minutes.