



GASLAMP QUARTER ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MINUTES

Wednesday, June 26th, 2024, | 3:30 PM

San Diego Marriott Gaslamp Quarter located at 660 K Street 8th floor.

Present Board Members	Absent Board Members	GQA Staff
Carlos Becerra Cindy Blair Francesca Ramirez Joe Santos Jeffrey Burg Laurie Peters Aron Langellier Josefine Jandinger	Josefine Jandinger Lucy Burni Kim Shattuck Howard Greenberg Stephen Sherman	Alma Ascencio Michael Trimble

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

- Carlos Becerra
- Jeffrey Burg (45 minutes late)
- Joe Santos
- Aron Langellier
- Josefine Jandinger

Minutes Not Approved: No Quorum- Approval was postponed to the next meeting.

Michael Trimble: Welcomed everyone to the June Board of Directors meeting of the Gaslamp Quarter Association.

Carlos Becerra: Hello, everyone.

Michael Trimble: The meeting was called to order at 3:37 PM. Then proceed to the non-agenda public comment section. If anyone from the public would like to speak on any subject, this is the opportunity.

Robert Romero: As many of you may know, I represent the Tivoli Bar & Grill, which has been here for 70 years and is one of the oldest establishments in the area. One of our major concerns is the lack of cooperation we receive regarding the homeless population, which has been affecting businesses in the vicinity. We have had ongoing issues, especially with the encampments moving from Market Street to



our area on 6th Avenue. Despite working with other property owners, we continue to face problems with individuals from the Padre storage facility across the street, where people are spending the night and causing disturbances. These individuals often engage in drug-related activities, which has been problematic for us. We have documented evidence and have reached out to various officials, but the situation remains unresolved. As the construction of a new 37-story building on the Padre facility progresses, we anticipate further challenges. We hope the city will address these issues as they impact not only our business but also the overall image of the city.

Michael Trimble: Thank you, Robert. I will connect you with the new owners to discuss strategies for addressing these concerns.

Captain Sharkey (San Diego Police Department): Good afternoon. We are considering reviving walking patrols in the Gaslamp Quarter and adjusting the bike team's hours to improve visibility and response. We are aware of the challenges and are working to reorganize the department to enhance efficiency. This includes restructuring our command to provide better support and oversight. If the community needs additional walking patrols, please let us know how we can assist. We are committed to addressing the issues and appreciate your support.

Michael Trimble: We are behind you and appreciate your efforts. Please let us know how we can support these initiatives.

Captain Sharkey: If there are any other questions or if further assistance is needed, feel free to reach out.

Robert Romero: We will also file a letter to ensure our street and sidewalk areas are protected, which should help manage the situation.

Captain Sharkey: We will address any concerns and provide support as needed.

Michael Trimble: Thank you, Captain Sharkey, and thank you all for your contributions today. I'd also like to welcome Clayton and Alonzo from the Partnership, who have brought their entire team.

Clayton (Downtown Partnership):

Clayton highlighted several upcoming events and updates:

- The next Walkabout will take place on Friday in the Marina District, meeting at 8:22 at 9:00 AM. This event occurs on the last Friday of every month and, despite not being in Gaslamp, provides a valuable opportunity to meet neighbors and address community issues. Clayton noted that these events are enjoyable and beneficial for meeting ambassadors and neighborhood representatives.
- For May, the safety team responded to 2,900 safety ticket requests, with 2,400 of those requests coming through the app. They resolved 87% of these requests directly and referred the rest to the city police and other community agencies.
- On the maintenance side, the team handled just over 1,300 maintenance requests and resolved 93.1% of them.



- Monthly observations of the unsheltered population in downtown showed a count of 826 individuals across 235 blocks. This represents a 2% decrease from last month and a 61% decrease from the same time last year.
- The unsheltered team has been working with over 130 clients at safe sleeping and camping sites and has provided case management for more than 600 clients.
- A new initiative called "Fitness in the Gaslamp" is scheduled for the last Sunday of each month, with a workout session sponsored by Fitness scheduled for July 7th at 9:30 AM.

Alonzo (Downtown Partnership): Alonzo provided an update on the security services:

- The Downtown Partnership has taken control of its security services as of May 1st. This decision followed an RFP process, and lessons learned over the past three years. By managing security in-house, they aim to improve service quality and employee benefits.
- The team is in the process of hiring, with new employees expected to start soon. There are plans to have six full-time employees dedicated to Gaslamp.
- Alonzo mentioned ongoing improvements, including sidewalk restoration and power washing using new equipment. This \$100,000 investment is expected to take about two months to complete.

Michael Trimble: addressed the timing of power washing and requested coordination for areas with high foot traffic. He also expressed interest in adding more Big Belly trash cans to reduce street litter.

Alonzo (Downtown Partnership) Alonzo acknowledged the request for additional trash cans and discussed potential fundraising efforts and collaborations to support this initiative.

Robert Romero: Suggested that businesses could contribute to funding for additional trash cans and highlighted that advertising on the cans could help raise awareness.

Michael Trimble: agreed that collaborating on this issue is essential and noted that a planning session for the fiscal year 2025 will include discussions on this and other initiatives.

****Gaslamp Quarter Association Business****

The meeting moved on to Gaslamp Quarter Association business:

- The minutes from the May 29th meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Jeff Burg and seconded by Cindy Blair. However, due to the lack of a quorum, the approval was postponed to the next meeting.

Michael Trimble: Highlighted the importance of gearing up for FY25. The Gaslamp Quarter retreat, scheduled for July 11th, will involve the Board of Directors and city leaders brainstorming to improve the next fiscal year. Topics for discussion include strategic planning, financial stability, board member engagement, infrastructure, marketing, and promotions. City leaders, including the mayor and candidate Larry Turner, will participate. Members are encouraged to submit questions for the mayor by mid-next week. Trimble also introduced three new board members: Rick from the Tavern, Chris Lott from the Pally Hotel, and Vania Renato from Whiskey Girl and Double Deuce.



Michael discussed the upcoming retreat on July 11th, where various strategic topics will be addressed. He emphasized the importance of gathering questions for the mayor and city officials to make the most of their visit. Michael also noted ongoing advocacy efforts and provided a summary of FY24 accomplishments, including successful events and initiatives. He mentioned challenges such as the promenade project and homelessness and stressed the need for continued advocacy and collaboration to address these issues.

Alma Ascencio: Reported growth in social media engagement, with a 30% increase in engagement and a 282.4% rise in video views compared to the previous fiscal year. She detailed her efforts in creating original content and connecting with both micro and macro influencers to promote local merchants. Alma also highlighted successful social media campaigns for events like Cinco de Mayo and Comic-Con and her work on SEO and digital marketing. Her initiatives resulted in significant improvements in audience reach and engagement, including a strong presence on the first page of Google search results for nightlife and dining in San Diego.

Michael Trimble: Showcased the new mobility campaign and the updated transportation page on the website. The campaign, funded at \$180,000, aims to provide comprehensive information on various transportation options to the Gaslamp Quarter, including parking, transit, and ride-share services. A 60-second promotional video will be used across multiple platforms, including Google, Hulu, and Spotify, to support the campaign's launch in FY25.

Alma Ascencio: Concluded her report by emphasizing her continued efforts in managing social media and digital marketing, with a focus on creating engaging and original content for the Gaslamp Quarter.

Laurel McFarlane:

Outlined the upcoming goals and initiatives for the next year, focusing on several key areas:

1. Building Campaign:

- Collaborated with a specialist to map out various parking options, including buses and trolleys.

2. Marketing and Promotions:

- Holiday street banners and activation events for Gaslamp.
- The filming for the interactive map is nearly complete, with minor adjustments needed for a dynamic appearance.

3. Events and Promotions:

- Continued focus on capturing fun events in Gaslamp throughout the year.
- Utilized graphics for year-round promotion on Google and social media.
- A successful program involved promoting restaurant food photos on banners, which also increased merchant participation.

4. 4th Avenue Entertainment District:

- Promoted through the website, Google ads, and influencer participation.
- Aimed at enhancing visibility and engagement with local businesses.



5. Event Recaps:

- Taste of Gaslamp: Sold 792 tickets, generating \$31,000 in net revenue.
- December Market: Despite rain affecting one day, the market was successful, with an increased promotional budget and local influencer partnerships.

6. Cinco de Mayo: Aimed to expand the event to two days next year and explore additional attractions such as Wiener dog races.

7. Upcoming Promotions:

- Gaslamp Craft Cocktail Crawl: A scavenger hunt-style event encouraging patrons to visit participating bars, with a points system for rewards.

8. Pickleball Event:

- Considering a November event with VOLO to ensure guaranteed court bookings for increased participation.

9. Future Planning:

- Potential new events include a Halloween festival and further holiday-themed promotions.

10. Permit Assistance: Offering support for merchants to secure permits for liquor promotions and events.

Michael Trimble: Highlighted the progress on the mobility program and marketing efforts for Gaslamp Quarter.

- Introduced a new interactive map and video campaign, focusing on various transportation options.
- Plans to roll out the mobility marketing campaign in FY25, including multi-format advertisements.

Kevin Commotion:

- Beginning in July, Commotion will implement a deep cleaning initiative throughout the Gaslamp Quarter, starting with one block and progressing sequentially. This will include patios and all areas.
- Although a deep cleaner was suggested, the current plan is to start from one end and work towards the other, repeating as necessary. Sweeping will continue in the mornings to manage trash before peaking downtown activity.
- There is a concern about limited coverage by Clean and Safe, which seems to lack sufficient cleaning presence, especially during peak hours. The proposal includes requesting Clean and Safe to adjust their schedule to focus more on mornings or collaborate with Commotion's efforts.
- The city is behind schedule on curb painting, with a three-month delay. Commotion suggested prepping areas before painting to avoid uneven results.
- Bollard caps have been problematic due to vehicle collisions. Commotion proposed placing large olive trees with media decals around the streets for potential seating areas, moving them off to the side during off-hours.

Michael Trimble:

Clean and Safe Issues:



- Trimble noted dissatisfaction with Clean and Safe's performance, including the timing of power washing and the overall amount of cleaning. There is a call for more accountability and adherence to schedules.
- The Clean and Safe program has faced issues with reduced power washing and inconsistent service. Trimble emphasized the need for better coordination and oversight.

Joe Santos:

Coordination and Security

- Santos highlighted the need for improved security coordination and the importance of increased accountability.
- There are discussions about hiring a security guard and possibly building a patio to improve office security and functionality.
- The issue of inadequate cleaning and the need for better coordination were emphasized, with suggestions for taking action to address these concerns.

Michael Trimble:

Digital Upgrade and Advertising

announced that the advertising kiosk contract has been signed for three years, valued at approximately \$934,000. This contract will include a pilot for digital upgrades to the kiosks, potentially increasing revenue and improving services.

- The updated tracker for space applications was shared, with details on enforcement actions for businesses like Panevino and Gaslamp Burger.

Updates:

- There was discussion about the progress of various businesses and their compliance with permits. Enforcement actions are underway for non-compliant businesses.
- Santos shared challenges with outdated procedures and difficulties in obtaining necessary signatures due to international issues.

Michael Trimble:

FY25 Budget Review and Discussion

- Overview: Trimble provided an overview of the FY25 budget, comparing it with FY24 projections. He noted that the budget is flexible and can be adjusted throughout the year. Key revenue sources include associate memberships, grants, kiosk and web advertising, and various events.
- Revenue Highlights: Revenue streams such as the parking grant are significant contributors. The budget includes adjustments for increased insurance and rent costs.
- Tax Savings: Trimble highlighted a successful reduction in taxable exposure from \$84,000 to \$15,000 through strategic financial adjustments with auditors.
- Event Performance: Detailed analysis of event profitability showed significant gains from the Taste of Gaslamp and losses from the Holiday Market and Pet Parade. Trimble emphasized the need for strategic planning to improve event profitability and minimize losses.

Discussion Points:



- Event Planning: There was a consensus on the need for earlier planning of events to avoid last-minute stress and expenses. Discussions included the possibility of improving events like CINCO and the Holiday Market.
- Revenue Generation: Suggestions were made to better engage sponsors and improve revenue strategies. There was a call for a dedicated role to focus on building relationships with sponsors and enhancing event profitability.
- Advertising and Marketing: Trimble expressed the importance of increasing the marketing budget to promote events effectively and drive more revenue.

Carlos Becerra:

Event Evaluation and Recommendations

- Becerra reflected on the successes and challenges of recent events, suggesting that while some events may not be profitable, they contribute to community engagement. He recommended a more proactive approach to event planning and exploring additional revenue opportunities.

Aron Langellier: Langellier provided historical context on event successes and challenges, noting past successes and current challenges in maintaining high attendance and profitability for events.

The meeting concluded with a motion to approve the FY25 budget as a stopgap measure, with further discussions scheduled for the 11th. The motion was carried unanimously.

Christian New Business Owner:

Introduction

- Business Introduction: Christian, owner of Hot Houston Chicken, introduced his new restaurant. He announced the soft opening on July 24th and the grand opening on July 27th. Christian invited attendees to the soft opening to sample the menu.

Adjournment: Carlos Becerra called for the meeting to be adjourned at 5:43 PM. He thanked everyone for their hard work and support.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT – Carlos Becerra adjourned meeting ended: 2 hours 15 minutes.