



GASLAMP QUARTER ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MINUTES

Wednesday, March 26th, 2025, | 3:30 PM
San Diego Marriott Gaslamp Quarter

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

1. Call to Order – Directors Present

- Carlos Becerra
- Aron Langellier
- Josefine Jandinger
- Lucy Burni
- Josefine Jandinger
- Joe Santos

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

1. Call to Order & Opening Remarks

Michael Trimble welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order at 3:36 PM. He reminded everyone that the meeting was being recorded solely for accurate minute-taking and will not be shared publicly. By remaining in attendance, participants consented to the recording.

Carlos Becerra (Board President) acknowledged quorum and officially opened the March Board Meeting.



2. Non-Agenda Public Comment

Maria (Gaslamp Hostel):

- Voiced concern over the **TOT (Transient Occupancy Tax)** increases effective May 1, which raises the tax to **13.75%**.
- Highlighted the confusion surrounding prepaid reservations via third-party vendors (Expedia, Booking.com).
- Stated hotels are unable to get clarification from the city regarding whether guests who prepaid before May 1 would still be subject to the higher tax.
- Requested the Mayor's office provide clear definitions on "prepaid" to avoid guest complaints and negative ratings.

Michael Trimble:

- Confirmed he reached out to Fred at the Lodging Association for clarification.

Francesca Ramirez (Hilton Hotel):

- Clarified that hotels are liable for the tax regardless of how or when guests booked.
- Shared that their team is working with tax attorneys and the city to clarify details and communicate to guests.

3. Liaison Reports

San Diego Police Department (SDPD)

Officer Jake:

- Noted a decline in nighttime fights but shared concern over disturbances from rideshare pickups on 5th Ave.
- Proposed **redirecting rideshare pickups to 4th & 6th Avenues** using a commercial loading zone conversion model (similar to West Hollywood).
- Encouraged feedback from the business community.

Carlos Becerra & Chris Lott (AC Hotel):

- Expressed concerns that redirecting pickups could hurt hotel operations and impact guest experiences.
- Chris highlighted a \$100K impact from a similar previous restriction.

Jake (continued):



- Mentioned possibility of working with the City Council and rideshare companies to create designated pickup zones.
- Expressed openness to feedback and confirmed willingness to collaborate.

Joe Santos (El Chingon):

- Suggested a “PIN” verification system (like Austin, TX) where riders and drivers confirm rides with a code in designated zones.
- Emphasized the benefit of removing confusion and conflicts among customers.

SDPD Vice Unit

Vice Representative

- Announced a pilot program empowering the bike team to issue citations for entertainment violations (e.g., overcrowding, excessive noise, fights).
- Emphasized goal of preemptive enforcement to prevent late-night incidents.
- Mentioned Saint Patrick’s Day was relatively calm, likely due to rain.

Economic Development Department

Sean:

- Provided update on the budget process:
 - Economic Development Committee approved the budget on March 5.
 - City Council vote scheduled for April 14 at 2 PM.
 - No major issues anticipated.

Downtown San Diego Partnership

Clayton:

- Announced the **March Walkabout** (March 28 in Cortez) and **East Village Cleanup** (March 23).
- Provided Clean & Safe stats:
 - **4,089 total service tickets** in February.
 - **984 unsheltered individuals** counted (17% increase from previous month, 7% decrease YoY).
 - 90.4% of tickets resolved.
- Confirmed full rollout of **Big Belly trash receptacles** in Gaslamp.
- Confirmed continued coordination with the County to address top mental health/criminal offenders.



Office of Assemblymember Tasha Boerner Horvath

Chris (Legislative Representative):

- Shared updates on three bills:
 1. **AB 87 (Density Bonus Clarification):** Ensures bonus housing incentives apply only to residential, not visitor-serving developments.
 2. **AB 1055 (ADU Residential Use):** Enables local agencies to require proof of residential use to streamline housing development.
 3. **AB 1017 (Electric Capacity Reporting):** Requires IOUs (e.g., SDG&E) to publicly report electric distribution capacities to increase transparency.

Office of Senator Webber Pearson

Jason:

- Discussed state budget volatility tied to federal allocations.
- Shared **Real ID deadline of May 7, 2025**—required for domestic travel.
- Offered to help constituents schedule DMV appointments.

4. Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the February 26, 2025 meeting minutes:

- **Motion by:** Steve
- **Seconded by:** Fran
- **Passed:** Majority vote with **Carlos Becerra abstaining**

5. Marketing & Events Update

Presenter: Jenna (McFarlane Promotions)

Craft Cocktail Reboot

- Moving program off the app and onto the **Gaslamp website** for easier user experience.
- Level requirements lowered:
 - **1 drink = instant prize (at venue)**
 - **3 drinks = T-shirt (pickup at Sugar Bear)**
 - **5 drinks = high-level prize**



- Redeem codes via QR system integrated into venue check-in.
- Launching in early May with staff training videos and simplified instructions.

Cinco de Mayo 2025 (May 3, 11 AM – 7 PM)

- Expanded footprint: **5th Ave between F & G** now included.
- New elements: **Chihuahua races, lowriders, kids' zone, expanded lucha libre matches.**
- Sponsorships secured:
 - **\$35K** (pending) with Jumex Hard Nectar
 - **\$15K** Anheuser-Busch
 - **\$5K** USA Foods
- New: Businesses can sponsor a luchador and compete in the “Gaslamp Showdown” for a year-long champion belt.

Other Promotions

- **Pickleball Nights Trial Run** scheduled to test street feasibility.
- **Coffee Shop DJ Pop-Up** set for **August 2**, targeting early-day audiences.
- **Seasonal Photo Op Installations** coming (Independence Day will be the first).
- **Digital Billboards:**
 - Craft Cocktail, ShamRock, Opening Day, Easter graphics completed.
 - Exploring merchant spotlights on billboards and website.

6. Operations Report – Michael Trimble

Bollard & Promenade Update

- Letter sent to Mayor and District 3 staff explaining FY25 crisis and requesting resolution on reimbursement and future plans.
- Open questions remain about meter revenue, 20-minute loading zones, and lack of long-term city plan.

City Parking Reform

- Major revision to **Council Policy 100-18** impacting parking rates, Sunday parking fees, and Community Parking District revenue.
- GQA requested maintaining a **25% revenue share** (vs. 15%) and **multi-year contracts**.
- City plans to **modernize parking rates**, currently inconsistent across neighborhoods.
- GQA paid \$1.3M in FY25 for FRED shuttle despite doubts about its value in Gaslamp.



7. Social Media & Communications Update

Alma Ascencio, Social Media/Digital Marketing Manager

- **#1 in engagement** compared to peer neighborhoods.
- Highlight: Viral Reel featuring immersive “Le Petit Chef” experience at Hilton.
- Trending content includes:
 - Rooftop spots
 - Spa experiences
 - Baseball season dining
 - Spring and nightlife vibes
- Using **keywords on video content** instead of relying on hashtags to improve algorithm reach.
- **April focus:**
 - Padres season
 - Spring menus
 - Teasing Cinco de Mayo
 - Content creator collaborations
 - Bilingual and Hispanic radio ads
- **Chihuahua & Luchador showdown** campaign being launched across platforms.

8. Open Discussion

Josefine Jandinger:

- Suggested rethinking billboard strategy to focus more on actionable calls-to-action like “Where to Eat Tonight” rather than craft cocktails.
- Proposed merchants pay to participate in billboard or banner promotions for visibility.

Chris Lott (AC Hotel):

- Requested better coordination for street closures.
- Stated Shamrock’s unannounced closures caused a **triple revenue hit**: lost occupancy, ADR drop, guest complaints.
- Urged future events shift south toward the Convention Center to distribute impact.

Michael Trimble:

- Acknowledged concerns and agreed to meet offline to refine Cinco layout and minimize hotel impact.
- Confirmed event hours adjusted to **11 AM – 7 PM** to support dinner traffic and simplify load-out logistics.



9. Adjournment

Carlos Becerra adjourned the meeting at 4:47 PM.
