

**JAPANTOWN TASK FORCE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 2019  
6:00 PM – UNION BANK COMMUNITY ROOM  
1675 POST ST, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94115

**ATTENDEES:** Sandy Mori, Alice Kawahatsu, Jacquelyn Chew, Benh Nakajo, Judy Hamaguchi, Neal Taniguchi, David Takashima, Glynis Nakahara, Richard Hashimoto, Scott Hamaguchi, Mark Moriguchi, Coco Tando, Clint Taura, Rosalyn Tonai

**ABSENT:** Seiko Fujimoto, Beau Simon, Kenta Takamori, Jon Osaki

**STAFF:** Steve Nakajo, Lauren Nosaka, Nikki Yoshikawa

**GUESTS:** Tomo Hirai, John Ware, Lucy Fisher, Mary Louise Fleming, Steven Pitsenberger

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by President Sandy Mori. A quorum was acknowledged.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes of the JTF Board meeting of March 20, 2019.

It was moved by Mark Moriguchi and seconded by David Takashima to accept the minutes from the February 20 meeting (Attachment A.)

The motion passed unanimously. No public comments.

**III. UPDATE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, STEVE NAKAJO**

Steve Nakajo reviewed the highlights from the March 20 2019 Executive Director's report (Attachment B.) He gave a report on deliverables and collaboration with First Voice. Mas Koga's show had 140 attendees and Akira Tana and Mark Izu's shows were sold out with a maximum capacity of 60 people. Matthew Goudeau, Director of Grants for the Arts, attended Mark Izu's performance. He encouraged the board to attend SFBATCO's Hapa Voices on April 20 at JCCCNC 4-5pm. He acknowledged Alice Kawahatsu for coordinating the kiosk and thanked the board members who volunteered at the kiosk. Steve reminded the board that Suite 520 is on a limited basis. After Cherry Blossom Festival is over, the suite goes back to 3-D. 3-D wants JTF to sign a lease for Suite 520 for 1-3 years but it is difficult to sign the lease since we do not have stable funding. Steve mentioned that JTF staff submitted a proposal for San Francisco 2020 Census Community Outreach & Educational Grant. JTF will be outreaching the census to seniors, monolinguals, and all community members. The 2020 Census is online based. Steve Nakajima is writing the proposal for the Cultural Districts. Japantown is one of 6 cultural districts in San Francisco. It is due April 26.

Nikki Yoshikawa reported that Benkyodo was approved as the Legacy Business on April 10. Soko Hardware will have their first hearing at the Historic Preservation Commission on May 1 and their Small Business Commission hearing on May 13. Nikki is working on Yasukochi's Sweet Shop, and will talk to Rich Hashimoto about Kinmon Gakuen's application and Kenji Taguma on Nichibei Weekly's application.

Nikki Yoshikawa gave an update on JCBD.

The key highlights are:

- The Greater Marketing Committee met on April 8. Street Banners will be up on May 1 and a new website will be up in the fall. The committee is looking at 3-D project mapping, hiring a marketing and PR consultant.
- JCBD will have a Recology DPW meeting on April 25, 4pm. The topics are service time, illegal dumping, homelessness, and trash receptacles.
- The video surveillance is in phase 3. Phase 3 includes Kinokuniya, West Mall and East Mall and it will be completed by the end of the Cherry Blossom Festival. Phase 4 will start with Buchanan Mall, New People, and Buchanan parking lot entrance ways in early May.
- JCBD will interview Tyra Fennell from Imprint City for some JCBD tasks.
- 3-D hired a new property manager and will hire a new security company.

#### IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

##### A. Land Use/Transportation Committee

(Glynis Nakahara/Kenta Takamori)

###### 1. Wireless Facilities

Glynis Nakahara reported that there is a wireless cell tower for cellphones on 1788 Buchanan St. There is an existing pole that has a wireless facility on top of it. The committee decided to not make any recommendation since there weren't any protests, most people don't notice it and many retail establishments will need 5G connections. There are wireless cell towers at multiple locations but the committee doesn't know where it is.

###### 2. Small Business Streamlining Legislation

The committee will be discussing the Small Business Streamlining Legislation at the next meeting on May 9 at Union Bank. The legislation is to amend planning code, address all the vacancies and provide technical fixes or improvements to planning permit.

###### 3. SB50

SB50 is the reincarnation of Scott Weiner's bill and the whole point of these bills is to address the housing shortage in California. SB40 is to expediate the development process. The committee will be looking at the SB50 and SB40 on May 9. President Sandy Mori noted that Supervisor Gordon Mar lead a vote to oppose SB50 as it is now with a vote of 9-2. SB50 is to increase housing along the transit corridors such as Van Ness or Geary. There are opportunities for people to build along the transit corridors because of the close transportation.

##### B. Peace Plaza Committee

(Jon Osaki/Richard Hashimoto)

###### 1. Recommends to JTF Board to authorize the Peace Plaza Executive Committee to approve the basic design concept for the Peace Plaza, if necessary

Rich Hashimoto reported that the Peace Plaza design concept needs to be approved by the Peace Plaza Committee. Sandy Mori informed the board that Rich, Alice and she went to a Historic Preservation Commission informational meeting lead by Michael Degregorio on April 17. Michael explained the 3 community meetings, the different design concepts, RHAA design advisors, and charrette meetings. There was no one particular design that the community consented on. So, if SF Rec & Park needs approval of a design concept quickly before a Peace Plaza Committee meeting, the committee is recommending to the JTF Board to authorize the Peace Plaza Executive Committee to approve the basic design concept for the Peace Plaza if necessary. JTF needs to be ready to give support letters when asked. There will not be a 4<sup>th</sup> community meeting to bring back the final design yet. Sandy is concerned that Michael requested letters of support from the community to take to the Rec & Park Commission in May. The board commented that nothing should be approved until everyone sees the final design concept. The next Peace Plaza Committee meeting is April 23, 5pm to discuss these issues. Rich will contact Michael to bring more details to the next meeting. A board member commented

that the board needs to weigh in on this issue as it is very important and JTF should have a special meeting if the design concept needs to be approved quickly.

It was moved by Scott Hamaguchi and seconded by Jacquelyn Chew to authorize the Peace Plaza Executive Committee to approve the basic design concept for the Peace Plaza, if necessary.

The vote passed with twelve in favor and two opposed.

## 2. Other Updates

### C. Cultural Heritage Committee Takashima)

(Seiko Fujimoto/David

#### 1. Approval of New Co-Chair Coco Tando

David Takashima reported that Seiko Fujimoto has decided to step down as co-chair due to other commitments. Seiko will still participate in the committee. The committee is asking the board for approval to appoint Coco Tando as a new Co-Chair.

It was moved by Alice Kawahatsu and seconded by Glynis Nakahara to approve new Co-Chair Coco Tando.

The vote passed unanimously.

#### 2. Approval of Committee name change to Cultural Heritage Sustainability Committee

David reported that the committee would like to change the committee name to Cultural Heritage Sustainability Committee based upon Steve Nakajima's report "Japantown's Culture Heritage – Fragile and Endangered." The committee envisions to keep Japantown alive, appreciate Japanese culture, expand and preserve Japantown.

It was moved by Mark Moriguchi and seconded by Clint Taura to approve of committee name change to Cultural Heritage Sustainability Committee.

The vote passed unanimously.

#### 3. Recommends to JTF Board to support and endorse the work of the Friends of the Japanese Tea Garden and submit a letter of support to the Friends

David reported that representatives of the Friends of the Japanese Tea Garden attended the February committee meeting and explained the status of the garden and potential funding for infrastructure problems with the pagoda. SF Rec & Park has put the Japanese Tea Garden as their priority to fix it. The committee recommends to the JTF board a letter of support for the Friends of the Tea Garden.

John Ware narrated the history of the tea garden restoration plan starting in 2005 and explained that Jack Hirose's donation helped restore the tea house and bridge. However, the pagoda has not been restored yet. Golden Gate Park will have their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the Japanese Tea Garden will celebrate their 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020. The total cost of the restoration is 2 million dollars. SF Rec & Park is committed to 85% of the funding and the Tea Garden will raise funding for the 15% left, which is \$300,000. John added that they will start a pledge campaign and have a surcharge of one dollar for non-SF residents to raise money. Steven Pitsenberger commented that he would like to have a stronger connection between the Tea Garden and Japantown by including events and businesses participate in the tea garden. Lucy Fisher & Mary Louise Fleming introduced themselves to the JTF board.

It was moved by Neal Taniguchi and seconded by Rich Hashimoto to approve the recommendation to the JTF Board to support and endorse the work of the Friends of the Japanese Tea Garden and approved a letter of support to the Friends.

The vote passed unanimously.

4. Update on potential funding for the Japantown Cultural District

David reported that the hotel tax will be available for funding. Japantown is one of six Cultural Districts. The six districts are Japantown Cultural District, Calle 24 Latino Cultural District, SoMa Pilipinas – Filipino Cultural District, Compton’s Transgender Cultural District, Leather & LGBTQ Cultural District and African American Arts & Cultural District. Each district will be able to receive up to \$230,000 in the first round and \$300,000 in the second round. It is a great opportunity for Japantown and Steve Nakajima is writing up the proposal due April 26. JTF can utilize the funding for rent, staffing and programs. There will be nine cultural districts in 2020.

**V. UPDATE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

President Sandy Mori reported that Steve Nakajo met with city hall representatives to keep them informed of Japantown and emphasized that Japantown needs the Peace Plaza. Sandy was asked to sit on the Mayor's Housing Bond Work Group, specifically on Senior Housing. This proposed \$500 million bond for the Nov 2019 ballot will need a 2/3 voters' approval to be passed.

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

**VIII. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

**IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The following announcements were shared:

Steve Nakajo was asked by Jon Osaki to announce “A J-Town Celebration for Jeff Adachi: A gathering of Community and Friends” on Saturday, April 27, 2-4pm at JCCCNC” and the Official San Francisco Premiere CAAMFEST Alternative Facts at Roxie Theater May 18 at 4:40pm.

In May, the Asian American Heritage month is coming up and Sandy Mori will be the public service recipient for the Ed Lee award. The ceremony is May 1. The press conference will be held on April 26 at city hall.

Steve invited the board to the 1906 earthquake anniversary at Lotus Fountain.

Rosalyn Tonai announced that NJAHS will have their Annual Awards Tribute Honoring: Dr. Satsuki Ina Lane Nishikawa SF State Strike Alumni on Saturday, May 4, at The Open Square-Futures Without Violence Building.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by Sandy Mori at 8:18pm.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: Wednesday, May 15<sup>th</sup> 2019 6-8pm at Union Bank Community Room.