

DOWNTOWN ACTION ORGANIZATION (DAO) Board Member Meeting Minutes
Santa Rosa Metro Chamber Board Room
February 20, 2019

Present: Natalie Balfour, Zach Berkowitz, Sonu Chandi, Raissa de la Rosa, Joe Dietzen, Charles Evans, Hugh Futrell, Michael Hyman, Sue Kade, Rick Mossi, Tom Robertson, Doug Van Dyke, Sara Woodfield

Absent: Andrea Ballus, Bernie Schwartz

Santa Rosa Metro Chamber Staff: Janet Rogers

1. Call to Order

Chair Natalie Balfour called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Public Comments

Sue Kade, La Vera Pizza suggested that public restrooms be placed in the square. She noted that there are no public restroom near the square.

3. Conflicts of Interest or Abstentions

There were no conflicts of interest or abstentions.

4. Consent Items

- 4.1 January 16, meeting minutes
- 4.2 January financials update

Motion to approve consent items as presented, seconded and unanimously approved.

5. Streetplus Contract Update

Natalie reported that staff uniforms have been ordered and expected delivery is March 1st with start date of Monday, March 4th. Streetplus is currently conducting interviews for Operations Manager and Safety and Service Officers. The contract with Streetplus is still being finalized.

6. DAO Committees

6.1 Marketing/Communications Update

Sonu reported that the Marketing/Communications Committee's current focus is to make businesses aware of what is taking place in the downtown; Streetplus activities, events and road closures. One of the first items to take place is sending a letter to the downtown property owners updating them on the progress of the DAO and the hiring of the Streetplus staff. The letter will include a request for their email to continue communication with the property owner. After the Streetplus staff has been on the streets for approximately 30 days a press release will go out to announce their arrival. The committee is also currently working on a 60 day and six-month plan. Efforts are being made right now to work on an internal communication plan.

6.2 Design and Improvement Recommendations

Hugh provided a handout that described recommendations from the Design and Improvement Committee. The handout described the financing mechanism for each of the projects.

The recommendations are as follows:

- Install four crepe myrtle trees which were part of the original master plan
- Expedite northern art work. This is currently budgeted by Art in Public Places Committee
- Install Asawa fountain
- Clarify baseline maintenance by city
- Square upgrades
 - Additional planting (light pole flower pots)
 - Wayfinding signage (this would be evaluated by the Marketing & Communications Committee)
 - Moveable large planters and related planting

Discussion- it was suggested to also consider additional lighting up and down 4th St. Also, to look at purchasing benches that are divided in the middle.

Motion to approve the recommendations from the Design and Improvement Committee as presented and authorize up to 60k for these improvements. seconded and unanimously approved.

7. Parking Rate Changes

The Executive Committee has concerns about the new proposal that was presented by the Parking Department at the February Downtown Subcommittee meeting. The proposal recommends raising the parking meters from \$1.50 to \$1.75 per hour as well as changing zones in the downtown from “value” to “premium” rate areas. Included in the recommendations is to decrease the cost of parking in some of the garages. It was suggested that an evaluation of the parking budget be reviewed from top to bottom. Hugh reminded the board that the topic for today was only to discuss the proposal from parking and that the decision on the review be delayed. A motion was made to:

- There be no increase in premiums rates from \$1.50-\$1.75 per hour at this time
- That certain non-premium rates be rolled back, and free parking on Sunday's and holidays in the garages
- Metered parking only enforced until 6pm

It was recommended that a petition be created to gather signatures in support of the DAO parking recommendations. It was also suggested that meetings be set up with council to make them aware of the recommendation coming forth. Tom Robertson offered to work with Sue Kade to create the petition to inform the downtown businesses of the situation and work with the city to schedule councilmember meetings. The parking proposal is currently set for the March 12 council meeting. It is important that the Board attend as well as members of the downtown community.

If the Council is not willing to approve the recommendation, we ask that action be delayed giving downtown stakeholders additional time to gather data and do a financial analysis of the Parking Department's proposal.

Motion was approved as presented, seconded and unanimously approved.

8. Future Agenda Items

Timothy Hassler asked that the Board review the large events that take place in the downtown, how often they occur and how often the major streets are closed. He also stated that it is a negative impact on business and people do not want to come downtown due to these events. He also suggested that an ad hoc parking committee be created to address the parking issues. Sue Kade asked that public toilets in the square be considered for a future agenda item.

12. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:20am.