

LDA Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2024
Meeting Via Zoom

Board Members Attending: Alysia Gritz, Vincent Phua, Jain Williams, Joanne Wong-Lam, and Zinzi Zareef.

Executive Director: Daniel Swafford

Call to Order: President Jain Williams

Welcome and Introductions

Review of Agenda

Approve March 2024 Minutes: Motion made to approve by Jain; seconded by Vincent, all in favor.

1. D4 Councilmember Ramachandran Office – Iris Merriouns, Chief of Staff

● D4 Updates

- April 16th City Council Meeting – Going over \$177 Mil. deficit challenges. Focus on business corridors.
- Forming a coalition with other cities, i.e. Berkeley, since missed State Grant safety funding.
- Captain Bassett moving out of Area 4 to Investigative Unit.
- Grant of up to \$100K from Federal Covid era hardship funding for small businesses that were open before 2019. Specifically for District 5, however District 4 businesses can apply if demonstrable hardship experienced since they serve a county wide population. Iris to send application to Daniel. Deadline April 22nd.
- OakDOT Town Hall – new OakDOT Director Josh Rawan
- Timeline for City Budget discussion:
 - Late April review and list of priorities to be formed.
 - May 2nd-9th – public comment from businesses encouraged and Daniel will help coordinate comments with Iris so that Laurel business owners are represented. Urgent not to lose City services, police officers, etc.
 - Early-Mid June Adoption by City Council.

2. LDA Business

- Ambassador – Annual Report to go out today with newsletter highlighting success of Ambassador pilot program.
- SLOW Laurel Traffic and safety – DOT MacArthur Project – waiting for new Director to be in place.
- BID Renewal 2025 – RFP sent out to six consulting firms with deadline of April 30th. Will circle back with a plan to connect with property owners.
- LDA Treasures Financial Report – \$354,283.00 current balance which includes \$84K received out of the \$90K Ambassador grant.

3. Laurel Security

- D4 Merchant meeting – mostly Dimond District merchants with a few Laurel merchants attending. Daniel connected with Taco Bell regional manager, and managers of WingStop and Precita Preschool. WingStop reports decreased robberies after installing bullet proof window counter.

4. Events and Promotions

- Live in the Laurel 2024 – Starts this Saturday April 20th at Degrees Plato, May 18th, June 21st Make Music Day, July 20, Aug 17, Sept 21, and Oct 19.
- Laurel Street Fair, August 10th – Good response from vendors and sponsors. Received larger grants of \$24K from CA Arts Council and another one TBC of around \$20K-24K. Nothing from City Grant this year.

5. Business Attraction and Land Use

- Follow up with longer term vacancies.
- Kao Saelee is close to opening a lounge next door to Joe's Modern Thai. Yeah Kao!

6. Open Forum

- May 2nd – Oakland hosting Small Business Workshops and Daniel hosting safety panel workshop, including the Ambassador Program service provider Nate Cook

Next meeting Monday, May 15, 2024, 6-8 PM via Zoom