



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

September 13, 2023

LOCATION:

Residual Sugar Wine Bar, 1684 Locust Street, Walnut Creek.

ATTENDANCE:

Brian Hirahara, Tracy Dietlin, Kathy Hemmenway, Gary Skrel, Cady Marsh, Bonnie Waters, Sue Rainey, Teri Killgore, Peggy White, Loella Haskew, Bob Linscheid, Bob Power, Jennifer Perry, Dan Batlin, Craig Frieders, Linda Tigue, Rolla Ghaben, Chief Jamie Knox, Donna Labriola, Kelsey Wendt, and Connie Ammatuna.

MEETING:

- I. Welcome & Introductions – Brian Hirahara, WCD Board President, BH Development
 - The meeting was called to order at approximately 4:06 pm.
- II. Board Action – Brian Hirahara, WCD Board President, BH Development
 - Approval of July Meeting Minutes – The July meeting minutes were unanimously approved by the Board of Directors.
- III. Public Comment
 - Chief Knox reported that WCPD applied for a \$1.2 million retail theft state grant. Approximately a-third of the grants were approved; unfortunately, Walnut Creek did not receive funding. Unsure of how demographics came into play. San Ramon was awarded a grant (yet have fewer homes & businesses), however, Walnut Creek did not. The Governor's Office did contact the Chief. WCPD is looking to expand its future applications and will reapply next year. There are 20 chair members that are a part of their governing board, but they are very cryptic in the way they score and give out the money. There are large agencies like San Francisco and Los Angeles that got the lion's share of the money. We need to continue to put pressure on our assembly members regarding the problems. Because of Covid, there was a backlog – but they are starting to get caught up.
 - Chief Knox is continuing to look for suspects involved with the summer restaurant break-ins, although believes this was a 'one-off occurrence'. WCPD is using more technology during investigations. There was a similar "method of operation" with how they were burglarizing the stores. WCPD have warned businesses not to have large amounts of cash on hand. In general, crimes rates remain down, year over year.
- IV. President's Report - Brian Hirahara, WCD Board President; BH Development
 - Properties recently sold include the former Nearon property from Extreme Pizza to Ramen Hiroshi. A teachers pensions purchased these locations. The Charles Schwab building on N. California is still for sell.
 - WCD staff has been very busy with events, however, they are still working on developing the early stages of the organization's vision plan.
- V. WCD Staff Report – Kathy Hemmenway, Executive Director, WCD
 - Thank you to Peggy White for organizing the summer reception for the DRAA, Chamber, WCD & East Bay Leadership Council Board of Directors. All organizations would like to make that an annual event.

- Thank you to City Council members who participated as guest hosts for the Moveable Feast program during Arts Around August.
- The season dates for Walnut Creek on Ice will be December 15 to January 15. Sponsorship are still available – contact Kathy if you'd like the deck emailed to you. Staff is grateful for the Council's support for waiving the Civic Park rental fees for the rink & Oktoberfest, as part of the approved 2-year budget cycle.
- The WCOI committee is interested in developing a long-term plan for the ice rink. Kathy H. acknowledged the commitment of Committee Chair, Neil Gerstner, who has been involved with the rink for 15+ years as volunteer & strong supporter of the program.
- 501c3 Application - we are going to table the Board vote as staff re-groups on the overall purpose & activities for the proposed organization. The question was asked of the Board to consider if they'd want to move from a 501C6 to a 501C3 OR operate two separate non-profits?
 - The staff is currently completing the application on its own, but we will be speaking with an attorney to review the application before its submitted.
 - Craig Freiders has experience working on the development of a 501c3 and he still has all his paperwork which would be happy to share with us.
 - Bob Linscheid & Peggy White offered to help advise & Bob would also be happy to share his paperwork.
- Diablo Magazine co-op advertising campaign – new partnership with WCD. A unique opportunity to provide to WCD members. WCD has a template that businesses can insert their content into for the weekly A-List newsletter (22,000+ subscribers). More details will be shared with WCD members along with an application process.
- Donna Labriola shared that the Broadway Plaza Concert series profit is \$11K. We purchased Proud Water, as part of a new partnership to sell at upcoming events as an additional revenue source. Net profit from WC First Wednesday this year was \$22,500 with approximately 3,800 attendees. This event did not provide a profit in 2022.
- WCD's Intern, Karli Trapani, is leaving to go to UC Davis. We are working on securing a new intern.

VI. City Council Report – Loella Haskew, Mayor Pro Tem, Walnut Creek City Council

- The Park+Rec Department has recently announced that a new \$5K matching grant program for murals has been established.
- Pickleball teams recently attended a City Council meeting to discuss alternate court locations recommended by a Pickleball Task Force and the PROS Commission due to the continued growth of the sport & its impact on local courts & neighborhoods. Teams have expanded from 70 to 700 people.
- The City's Housing Element Proposal has been submitted to the state. Revisions to the application have cost over \$1,000,000.00 in staff time. It has delayed projects that should have been completed on time, due to the extra time dedicated to this effort.

VII. City Staff Report –Teri Killgore, Assistant City Manager, City of Walnut Creek

- The second phase of the Locust Street construction has been delayed. Central San has targeted a start date in October & last approximately six months. The entire project, including the City's repaving & sidewalk work, will likely be completed in the summer of 2024.
- Collette Hanna, the Economic Development Manager's last day is Friday, September 15. She has taken the position as Executive Director of The Alliance for Community Development.
- Questions have been asked of staff as to why the city canceled the Walnut Festival? The city didn't cancel the event, the group stated that they were unable to secure enough volunteers to run the event. Unsure if it will return next year. In general, the availability of volunteers is limited.
 - Kathy H. shared that WCD is looking for over 400 volunteers for the Oktoberfest event (October 13-14). Kelsey distributed volunteer registration sheets asking meeting attendees to sign up for a shift. Donna mentioned that volunteers from Community Day on October 14 will assist with Oktoberfest setup & cleanup.

- VIII. WC Chamber of Commerce & Visitor's Bureau Report – Bob Linscheid, CEO, WCCCVB
- Visit Walnut Creek is bringing a half-marathon to Walnut Creek on March 2, 2024. They are requesting 900 hotel rooms. Also taking place in March 2024 are College Notes (Leshner Center) and the East Bay Women's Conference.
 - Shadelands is going through a re-branding & are engaging with consultants to assist with the process.
 - The 2025 Art & Wine Festival will have to relocate from Heather Farms Park due to the community center & pool renovations. They are looking at different locations including downtown. Kathy H. has been involved in initial discussions with Bob L. & his staff.
 - The Chamber Board of Directors recently met to review their strategic plan. Partnerships between community stakeholders is a great strength while some of the challenges include volunteer support at events. They are looking at how Lafayette manages & recruits their volunteers for their art & wine event.
- IX. Macerich/Broadway Plaza Report – Tracy Dietlein, Senior Marketing Manager, Broadway Plaza; WCD Vice-President
- Chanel is now open. Lifetime Fitness did not open last month – they are opening next Friday. Pinstripes, Mel's and a few others are slated to open in 2024. Selfie World is closing at the end of the month.
 - The Maker's Market Faire will be held this weekend.
 - There will be a health & wellness fair on November 30th. The program will include yoga classes, aerialist, a Zen tent hosted by WCD & vendor booths - come out for a fun day!
 - An event on October 7th will be held for new and expecting moms.
 - Spooktacular Stroll/Boo Bash will take place on October 27th.
 - Received many positive comments about how great the Broadway Concert series and that the residents really enjoyed the event.
 - Shoplifting is trending down at 11%. The police department has been very responsive. Lululemon thieves were recently arrested when trying to return stolen merchandise.
- X. DRAA/Leshner Center for the Arts Report – Peggy White, Executive Director, DRAA
- The Women in Country music festival is taking place September 22-23. They look forward to hosting a variety of great entertainers and up-and-coming stars. LCA & DRAA have been exploring different ways to market this event.
 - Walnut Creek continues to try to make a big impact as a regional destination including a access to the arts, shopping and restaurants.
 - The Headliners Series will be back next year & the season was recently announced.
- XI. Board Announcements – Open opportunity for the Board Directors to share business news.
- Bob L. is working with Barney Fonzi to have the next edition of the visitor's guide. It's been a great addition to Visit Walnut Creek's marketing outreach.
 - A big thank you to Jim Telford & Residual Sugar for hosting today's Board meeting.
 - The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:04pm.

Next Meeting:

November 8, 2023

Walnut Creek Downtown Association Mission Statement

Lead and collaborate with our members, partners and community to promote and enhance downtown Walnut Creek.

www.walnutcreekdowntown.com