
**SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, January 23, 2023

4:30 P.M.

City Hall, Room 400

1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102

SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSIONERS

Sharky Laguana, President;

Miriam Zouzounis, Vice-President;

Tiffany Carter, Lawanda Dickerson; Rachel Herbert; Cynthia Huie; William Ortiz-Cartagena;

1. Call to order and roll call

Meeting called to order at 4:31pm

Present: Carter, Dickerson, Herbert, Huie, Laguana, Zouzounis

Absent: Ortiz-Cartagena

2. SF Travel Presentation (Discussion Item)

Joe D'Alessandro, CEO of SF Travel, gave a presentation introducing the organization's history, mission, current programming, and potential opportunities for future collaboration. SF Travel showed sample materials and videos they use to draw international tourism. They also provided an update on their small business spotlights, neighborhood features, etc.

Commissioner comments:

President Laguana: The ad clips have amazing music!

Commissioner Carter: Would like to see more black businesses on the website. The presentation had great diversity.

Vice President Zouzounis: how do we pitch to you? SF Travel would love help with developing content and to hear from small businesses.

President Laguana: Are you seeing changes in international tourism market – shift from a focus on Fisherman's wharf to other neighborhoods? Yes, some countries are not as open to travel as others. There are visa challenges as well. But some international travelers want to get out and explore cultural things.

SF Travel: We need help advocating and telling the story that SF is open. We need good press.

3. Introduction and Discussion with District Attorney Brooke Jenkins (Discussion Item)

District Attorney Brook Jenkins spoke with the Commission about ongoing challenges that small businesses face with the San Francisco – heard many concerns about the impacts of graffiti, theft. She learned that SF didn't currently prosecute graffiti charges so her office is working on that. She wants to work with small businesses to ensure that they have a liaison or personal connection to call and speak with, not just main phone line. Illegal vending is a challenge given parameters of state law, and it needs to be further discussed. The Mission is concerning re: illegal vending and prostitution. Under her watch, SFPD started addressing public drug use – after 5 occurrences a person would be cited/referred for treatment. That turned out to be too high of a threshold so now it's after 3 occurrences.

Commissioner Comments:

Commissioner Dickerson: What about Bayview violence? Several instances where members of the public have come in asking for help/safety after violence. DA Jenkins noted that she typically talks about violence in a separate bucket from small business issues, but they do have overlap. It's unacceptable to write off neighborhoods like the Bayview noting that they have always had crime. It's not ok. She also spoke about the conflicting narratives around whether people want additional police or fewer police in their neighborhood. The DA's office is trying to work with community orgs to do engagement with youth.

Commissioner Carter: Wouldn't necessarily open a business in the Bayview, even though she's from there, given the violence. Noted that there are victims of color across the board. She doesn't necessarily want more police, but would rather have community policing. DA Jenkins spoke to the need to have greater diversity in prosecutors, PD, etc. Recruiting needs to happen early. The Mission neighborhood has done a good job of getting all departments together to prevent passing the ball to a different entity.

Commissioner Herbert: You have the hardest job in the city. I think we need to see greater collaboration between departments, and we need more police officers.

Commissioner Huie: You came to this role out of responsibility and understand representation matters. Thanks! Asked about victim services in language, and culturally appropriate services. DA Jenkins noted that her staff serve a diverse group and they are trying to diversify staff as well.

Vice President Zouzounis: How do we elevate small business concerns to you? IE problems with security alarm policies, etc. DA Jenkins noted that she needs to hear from a collective of people about what's important.

President Laguana: Thanks for coming in. It's so important to hear from all our commissioners and the nuance of their situations relating to public safety. DA Jenkins: crime patterns change – now most drug dealers come from outside of SF. Car break ins are very lucrative. Now organized retail theft is a growing problem. We need more investigatory resources.

Public Comment: Janet Tarlov, CDMA Legislative Committee, Glen Park Merchants: spoke about the need to address the ability of SFPD to enforce animal feeding that has hindered neighborhood stores.

4. Office of Small Business Budget Update and Priorities (Discussion and Action Item)

The Commission heard an overview of the Office of Small Business budget priorities.

Commissioner Zouzounis: clarified that the Commission will not be voting on line-item budgets. Director Tang; correct, an exact budget is not ready so this is approval of priorities.

Motion to approve: Laguana

2nd: Carter

Aye: Carter, Dickerson, Herbert, Huie, Laguana, Zouzounis

Absent: Ortiz-Cartagena

Motion passes.

5. Small Business Commission Officer Elections – President (Discussion and Action Item)

President Laguana announced his departure from the Commission and thanked several people with whom he worked closely: Mark Dwight, Kathleen Dooley, Manny, Stephen Adams, Irene Yee Riley, and each of the current commissioners, former Commission Secretary Dominica Donovan, and former OSB Director Regina Dick-Endrizzi, Director Tang, and Commission Secretary Kerry Birnbach.

Commissioner comment: Commissioners thanked President Laguana for his work and spoke about their work together. President Laguana nominated Commissioner Huie for President.
Commissioner Dickerson seconded the nomination. Commissioner Huie spoke about her goals if she were to become the new president.

Public comment:

Dominica Donovan: Thanked President Laguana for his work
Dontaye Ball, owner of Gumbo Social: Thanks President Laguana for his work

Motion for Commissioner Huie as next SBC President: Laguana

2nd: Dickerson

Aye: Carter, Dickerson, Herbert, Huie, Laguana, Zouzounis

Absent: Ortiz-Cartagena

Motion passes. Commissioner Huie thanked the Commission and her family for their support.

6. Small Business Commission Officer Elections – Vice President (Discussion and Action Item)

Commissioner Huie nominated Commissioner Zouzounis to be Vice President. President Laguana seconded.
Commissioner Zouzounis noted that she would be honored to serve.

Motion to nominate Commissioner Zouzounis for Vice President: Huie

2nd: Laguana

Aye: Carter, Dickerson, Herbert, Huie, Laguana, Zouzounis

Absent: Ortiz-Cartagena

Motion passes.

7. Approval of Draft Meeting Minutes (Discussion and Action Item)

Director Tang noted one edit, changing “Ivy Lee” to “Iris Lee”

Motion to approve meeting minutes with suggested edit: Laguana

2nd: Carter

Aye: Carter, Dickerson, Herbert, Huie, Laguana, Zouzounis

Absent: Ortiz-Cartagena

Motion passes.

8. General Public Comment (Discussion Item)

No members of the public requested to speak

9. Director’s Report (Discussion Item)

Director Tang discussed the new flood grant – applications are now being accepted. Also noted the Jan 31st deadline for restaurants to review their contracts with third party delivery apps.

Laguana: Are there any updates on the City’s effort to secure an SBA disaster loan? Tang: not yet

Herbert: Clarified the delivery fee cap changes Jan 31st.

Zouzounis: Requested assistance to figure out her business’ account with third party delivery services.

10. Commissioner Discussion and New Business (Discussion Item)

Zouzounis: would like the Commission to explore the False Alarm fine that can prevent a business from reporting potential break ins to police out of fear of being fined for a false alarm.

11. Adjournment