



City of San José
Small Business Advisory Task Force
September 19, 2019

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES & SUMMARY
Thursday, September 19, 2019

Call to Order & Orders of the Day

PRESENT: Chair Hon. Chappie Jones, Vice Chair Dennis King (arrived 3:20 PM), Members: Mason Fong, Allie Lopez (call-in), Helen Wang, Mason Fong, Nancy Avila (arrived 3:14 PM), Ken Kelly, Alternates: Ray Mueller (arrived 3:30)

OTHERS PRESENT:

Christopher Hickey	Public Works
Victor Farlie	Office of Economic Development
Dhez Woodworth	Office of Economic Development
Rick Bruneau	Finance Department
Lisa Taitano	Finance Department
Christopher Domingue	Finance Department
Eric Warnars	Finance Department
Hannah Yu, <i>Alternate</i>	Taiwanese American Chamber of Commerce, Associate Member

ABSENT: Carl Davis Jr.

STAFF LIAISON: Raania Mohsen.

Vice Mayor Chappie Jones convened the Small Business Advisory Task Force Committee at 3:05 pm in Conference Room T-1854 at City Hall, 200 E. Santa Clara Street, San José, CA 95113.

Public Comment

There was no public testimony on the floor.

Consent Calendar

A. Approve the Draft Minutes for the Regular Meeting of August 15, 2019

Documents Filed: Draft Minutes for the Regular Meeting of August 15, 2019

Action: Motion made by Member Ken Kelly to approve the Minutes and seconded by Member Helen Wang. The Draft Minutes was unanimously approved. (5:0:4. Absent: Avila, Davis Jr., King, Mueller).

Old Business

A. Review of Public Works Department Memo & Recommendations Re: Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (Christopher Hickey)

Documents Filed: DBE Staff Recommendations
Citywide Contracting Program Upgrade Memo

Christopher Hickey led the discussion on the review of Disadvantaged Business Enterprise. He noted that out of the seven recommendations, they are able to implement five of them. Public Works is working on hiring a trainer to facilitate mentoring and outreach. A member of the public had previously asked if Public Works had taken any action to follow-up with those who had expressed no interest in participating, to which Christopher responded that they had not followed up with those who had not attended, but they have sent out about 12,000 follow up emails and reached out to about 6,000 businesses. Task Force Members made the following suggestions/inquiries:

1. What is the timeline for the data privacy recommendation? It was noted that this would need to be a cross-departmental effort and the timeline is to be determined.
2. What is the timeline for the match-making mentorship program? It was noted to that it would take about one year to develop. They would need time to reach out and build relationships with larger businesses that expressed interest in this program.
3. It was suggested to implement a program in which there is a small business match-up, referring to how small minority businesses are often faced with linguistic and cultural barriers. A small business match-up could alleviate these barriers by allowing for cultural mentoring.

Christopher addressed the consideration of Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), Women-owned Business Enterprise (WBE), and Other Business Enterprise (OBE) programs, and explained that there is not yet enough information on these programs, except for Los Angeles' example.

B. Subcommittee Report on Language and Cultural Competency Barriers

Subcommittee Member Ken Kelly noted that the subcommittee has conducted four meetings, and that he and Member Allie Lopez had met additional times to work on the report. The full report will be provided at the next meeting.

New Business

A. Request for Task Force's Feedback Re: City's Business Amnesty Program & Outreach (Rick Bruneau)

Documents Filed: Business Tax Amnesty Program Presentation

Rick Bruneau provided background information on the Amnesty Program. The application period includes October 1, 2019 to March 27, 2020, and the covered tax period includes October 1, 2016 to March 27, 2020. Some goals of the program include

encouraging businesses to comply with the business tax, education on the availability of exemptions, and allowing delinquent businesses an opportunity to pay the principal tax owed. Out of 80,000 total accounts, about 5,000 are delinquent. The outreach of this program will include mailing approximately 60,000 notices informing never-registered or delinquent taxpayers of the program, radio public service announcements, newspaper ads, flyers, and postings on the city's homepage. Initial flyers will be provided in English and there will be a link on the flyer to translations in Vietnamese and Spanish. As a secondary source for language barriers, a language line solution will offer in person/phone translation if a language other than Spanish and Vietnamese is needed.

The Task Force provided the following recommendations/suggestions:

- a. It was noted that communities that do not speak English might view this as a threat, not a benefit. The language of the flyer should be clear and softened in terms of the enforcement of the program.
- b. In addition to Vietnamese and Spanish, Chinese translation should also be included.
- c. The word for "amnesty" may not exist in other languages, and should be reworded to "debt-forgiveness" or "fee-forgiveness".
- d. Include information on what the collected tax money will be used for, and provide information on what the general tax fund is. It is important for business owners to know the benefits of paying their share of the tax.
- e. Since outreach to small businesses is occurring, this would be an opportune time to share the City's resources available to small businesses, e.g. Business Ally Program, Business Owner Space, etc.,

B. Briefing on Upcoming Council Study Session addressing Small Business Displacement (Victor Farlie)

Documents Filed: Update on the Small Business Anti-Displacement Strategy

Victor Farlie provided an update on the City's Small Business Anti-Displacement Strategy and the upcoming study session. The date of the Council Study Session was revised from Friday, September 27, 2019 to Tuesday, October 1, 2019, 3:30 pm. The staff report and memo will be released Friday, September 27th. He highlighted some key points, including a strategy developed to answer the following questions:

How are small businesses being impacted by the potential of displacement?
How do we make the best use of existing programs?
How can we reassure that we are being efficient?

The strategy calls for extensive consultations with businesses and technical assistance providers; businesses want to see something of practical value. Looking at new services, small businesses may or may not have experience with the law. The City is collaborating with Start Small Think Big, which assists by making referrals to small businesses and

providing pro bono legal advice. Key components of this strategy include improving access to information and exchange between small businesses and city hall:

How does the City go to them?

How do we relay information in a way that is appealing to them?

Victor noted that the City will be executing this strategy and working with businesses along the Alum Rock Corridor, where a BART extension will be constructed soon, as a pilot program. BART will influence the thinking of landowners and businesses in the area. In the future, the Small Business Advisory Task Force should consider collaborating with VTA on the BART extension and impacted corridors; VTA will be creating a stakeholder group, and maybe members will want to participate. The city is attempting to be proactive and will provide a 800-toll-free number for translations.

Announcements:

- Ray Mueller noted that the census released information from 2017 Business survey.
- The Rainbow Chamber of Commerce is holding an event at the Tech Museum on Wednesday, September 25, 2019.
- Helen noted a Cyber Security Seminar on October 5, 2019 sponsored by Santa Clara County.

C. Meeting Schedule and Agenda Items

The next regular meeting will be October 10, 2019 at 4:00 pm, San Jose City Hall, 18th Floor, T-1854

D. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:34 p.m.



Hon. Chappie Jones, CHAIR

ATTEST:
ADVISORY TASK FORCE SECRETARY



RAANIA MOHSEN, DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF