



**City of San José**  
**Small Business Advisory Task Force**  
**April 9, 2020**

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**VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES & SUMMARY**  
Thursday, April 9, 2020

Consistent with the California Governor's Executive Order No. N-29-20, Resolution No. 79450 from the City of San José and the Santa Clara County Health Officer's March 16, 2020 Shelter in Place Order, the Task Force meeting was not physically open to the public and Members participated via teleconference from remote locations.

Members of the Public were noticed to submit comments during or before meeting via zoom or email to [raania.mohsen@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:raania.mohsen@sanjoseca.gov)

**Call to Order & Orders of the Day**

PRESENT: Chair Hon. Chappie Jones, Vice Chair Dennis King, Carl Davis Jr., Mason Fong, Ken Kelly, Allie Lopez, Bettie Owen, Helen Wang

ABSENT: Nancy Avila

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Nga Nguyen, Annie Tsai

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Miguel Galarza       | Yerbe Buena Construction                                      |
| Gerry Keller-Brenner | Internal Revenue Service                                      |
| Mimi Hernandez       | Alum Rock Santa Clara Street Business Association             |
| James Duran          | Alternate Member, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Silicon Valley |

Chair Hon. Chappie Jones convened the Small Business Advisory Task Force at 4:00 pm virtually via teleconference.

**Public Comment**

There was no public testimony or emails received.

**Consent Calendar**

Documents Filed: Draft Minutes for the January 10, 2020 Regular Meeting  
Draft Minutes for the February 13, 2020 Regular Meeting  
Draft Minutes for the March 30, 2020 Special Virtual Meeting

Action: Upon a motion by Task Force Member Kelly, seconded by Task Force Member Davis Jr., and carried unanimously, the Task Force approved the Consent Calendar. (8:0:1. Absent: Avila.)

## **New Business**

### **A. Review of City's response for Small Businesses to COVID-19**

#### Documents Filed: Office of Economic Development Overview for Small Business Advisory Task Force

- Dhez Woodworth provided overview of what businesses are saying to the City regarding the impacts of COVID-19.
  - Small businesses are anxious
  - Small businesses are aware of what is available, but it is still hard to tie everything together
  - The City is trying to get more information ASAP and facilitate programs available to provide more certainty
  - People are concerned about if they are considered to be essential
  - Businesses want a walk-through process for how to complete loan paperwork and to understand how it works
  - Businesses also want more information on how to restructure their business models to survive during and after COVID-19.
- Vic Farlie provided overview of how the City is responding, communication highlights, and other key measures.
  - The City is responding quickly and has had to reorganize a lot of things as new information and updates develop everyday
  - City has created centralized point of contact for business and this has been pivotal to provide response efficiently
  - Mobilization of team → proactive outreach
  - Looking to ramp up outreach in other languages and want to produce all communication as a minimum (Spanish and Vietnamese translations are available and Chinese soon to be completed)
  - Accessing capital through the federal programs is the most important need right now for small businesses.
  - Two main programs: EIDL and PPP; the City is partnering with organizations like SCOPE and SVSBDC to provide technical assistance for business owners.
  - PPP is administered through banks; sole contractors and self-proprietors (50,000 in SJ) can apply to PPP beginning April 10
  - Within the PPP you can commit to some of funds to pay rent through June 2020
  - SJ has over 27,000 commercial tenants
  - SJ created a fund for small businesses (\$1.5 million) that will allocate 140 grants
  - Other forms of communication and assistance is being provided through chambers, webinars, business associations, etc.
  - The City has escalated communication by sending out key messaging daily, email to 38,000 businesses providing updates on key measures and guidance.
  - Business tax amnesty- council approved to extend the program to June 20, 2020.
- Questions from Task Force Members and meeting participants provided the following additional feedback:

- City Council has endorsed the County's Commercial Rent Moratorium, which runs until May 31, 2020; rent is not forgiven but it is deferred; rent becomes payable after the day the moratorium ends
- Tenant has 120 days to pay what is owed (this means that tenant has from May 31- September 30 to pay rent)
- All outstanding rent MUST be paid by September 30
- It is recommended for tenants to have discussions with their landlords and reach a compromise on payment terms
- The County determines which businesses are essential or nonessential.
- The Governor signed an executive order that enables local jurisdictions at a city and county level to introduce moratoria.
- The ordinance introduced covers tenants across whole county; County ordinance will prevail unless the city adopts a more protected approach to the tenant.
- Landlord cannot charge penalty or interest fee on rent that isn't paid until the end of the moratorium; the ordinance is completely clear on that and very broadly written (no fees or late charges can be introduced).
- Regarding the Silicon Valley Strong Fund for small businesses, it is a regional fund that will be available across the county and not just for San Jose businesses.
- The City has no plans as of right now to match funds as other cities.
- To assist small micro businesses who struggle applying to the available loans, the City is working with key partners and highlighting new grant opportunities, e.g. Facebook will allocate grants to disadvantaged minority groups and target those most in need.
- Concern brought up by one of the meeting participants: businesses owned by minorities and people of color are more at risk to lose business and in need of aid; keep messages simple and direct.
- The City is aware of minority owned microbusiness and their circumstances and is trying to develop effective lines of communication and identify and target these businesses in order for them to survive.

Chair Jones announced continuation of agenda items 4(C) Review of 2020 Priorities and Workplan and 5(A) Bylaw Amendments for Discussion to future meeting.

#### **B. Review of Member Organizations' Response to COVID-19**

- Vice Chair Dennis King shared concerns about misinformation and predatory websites; there are now over 500.
- Current sentiments include a profound sense of sadness knowing that the viability of businesses are at stake.
- Unless funds are released immediately, many businesses will not survive.
- Be kind to your neighborhood businesses
- It's still about survival, not yet recovery
- Member Carl Davis Jr. shared a new tool Virtual Chamber Services that can help promote products and services for small businesses and chambers of commerce; he expressed interest in sharing this with the SBATF in more detail at the next meeting.

#### **C. Revised Schedule of Meeting- *adding May 14, 2020 meeting***

Document Filed: Revised 2020 Schedule of Meetings

Action: Upon motion by Vice Chair King, seconded by Member Lopez, the Task Force approved the revised schedule of meetings (7:0:2. Absent: Avila, Fong)

### **Announcements**

- Chair Jones expressed thanks to the Task Force for submitting letter to Council on Emergency Paid Sick Leave Policy; the Council was not able to support due to the Federal Act's narrow exemption.

### **Adjournment**

Action: Upon motion made by Vice Chair King, seconded by Member Davis Jr., the Task Force adjourned the meeting (7:0:2. Absent: Avila, Fong)

Meeting was adjourned at 5:22 pm.



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Hon. Chappie Jones, CHAIR

ATTEST:  
ADVISORY TASK FORCE SECRETARY



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RAANIA MOHSEN, DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF