

DOWNTOWN FRESNO PARTNERSHIP
Marketing & Business Development Committee

Thursday, June 4, 2020
8:30 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.

845 Fulton Street
Downtown Fresno Partnership

MINUTES

- **Present:** Angela Vasquez, Beth Wilkinson, Yahaira Figueroa
- **Staff:** Jimmy Cerracchio, Danny Griffith, Courtney Ramirez
- **Public:** N/A

I. **Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order at 8:35 AM.

II. **Approval of the April 2, 2020 minutes**

Vasquez moved to approve minutes from April meeting; seconded by Wilkinson; motion carried.

III. **COVID-19 Updates**

The DFP Staff is partially back in the office, as needed in order to leave room for ambassadors who are in the office more regularly. The events staff is running the Market on Kern, and there is still a lot happened. We are sending out updates to the public and businesses, sharing grant info including the City of Fresno's save our small business grant and county program. The DFF grant program had great results, which we'll update everyone on in this meeting. We are in the process of updating our website with which stores are open, as the status seems to be changing regularly every day, though we haven't seen any phase 3 date yet.

Jimmy explained that the DFP is talking with businesses as well about their needs. There is a need for outdoor dining, which the city passed an ordinance on. We are working with Tara Lynn Gray of the Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce who is on the Mayor's recovery team, in order to convey considerations of our businesses – including how to use public space. We are looking into expanding the pilot parklet program to do an expedited application, lowering building requirements for outdoor seating, and easing requirements outdoor dining on a normal sidewalk and more. We are seeing if there are streets that can be closed for a block or half a block like Tampa Bay, Florida has been able to. Unfortunately, the California ABC is not allowing beer gardens to be open and they need to follow state guidelines rather than city. We are asking the city to petition the state for this. We are also asking the city to allow retailers to do sidewalk sales, allow people to increase their capacity for their business without crowding interiors. Our merchants will be doing a letter to the city.

Yahaira Figueroa from the City of Fresno emphasized that the small business grant was still taking applications until Friday, June 5th at 11 pm. The Mayor's Department of Economic Development has been canvassing old school. There is \$2 million to spend. Please check in with businesses about this. They are follow closely with what the state is doing and will use that as an indication of when they are ready to go to the next phase. The city has also launched Bounce Back Fresno with resources.

Danny shared that the Downtown Fresno Foundation grant had 80 applications and 31 grants (though 10-15 didn't meet the criteria). The Central Valley Community Foundation, Chase, Fresno Grizzlies and Wells Fargo. Winners were selected by a committee consisting of 2 DFP board members, 2 DFF

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board members, Danny, and Jimmy. The committee scored applications that met the criteria. Approximately 65-70 were evaluated via committee through a metric so it wasn't random. The metric included taking into account those who were negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, those who have contributed to Downtown Fresno and those who have found ways to creatively operate during the crisis.

Danny shared that they were also able to secure an additional \$10,000 specifically for Chinatown. He worked with Jan Mnamo to develop a program for Chinatown businesses, using a similar scoring system. If another funding source is secured, we may do a second round to extend to other areas downtown outside of the PBID. In addition, the Lowell CDC may be doing a small pro-neighborhoods grant.

Jimmy addressed the riots nationwide and local activity. The DFP had extended security to 8 hours per night with the COVID-19 shut downs, so that has continued. They are operating from 10 pm to 6 am. They and our team have been in constant communication with police to get updates on potential activity. They have been obtaining information from social media including any planned protests, riots, etc. The June 1st, Sunday protest went off fantastic. There was no damage. The event coordinators worked with police, and dispersed after there were threats of counter protest. The same happened with the car cruise. Everyone on social media conversations we observed was amenable to ending both events early. The police have activated more officers, and these officers are going to respond where-ever they are needed.

DFP issued an email blast for merchants and property owners with tips for protecting businesses if there is rioting activity. Erin working on Spanish version, and ambassadors. Jerry Dyer thinks that most of them are being used to throw off police, but there is no official BLM chapter in Fresno, and none of the social media posts are associated with NAACP.

IV. **Marketing and Communications**

- a. **Branding Campaign** – DFP has a new logo, new branding color scheme and everything in place. We are working on getting it switched over on the website using new materials. We are also working on using new banners for Fulton, Van Ness and Kern Street. We were going to reveal at the State of Downtown, but with that postponed for now, we wanted to get this going. Our ambassadors will be getting new shirts. The banners had a scheduled photo shoot before the COVID-19 pandemic, so we are looking at new design options as well.

V. **Events Updates**

The only event we have currently is the Market on Kern each Wednesday from 10 am to 2 pm. The events team is working with the Blood Center to host a blood drive next week. If it is successful, they will be back throughout the summer.

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VI. Economic & Business Development Update

Jimmy explained we are working on an outdoor dining letter for our businesses to sign and forward to the city. We'd like a big push for that. Modernist is doing a soft opening over the coming weekend, and we are working with Nora Monaco the property owner for the parklet for them, Dab Tacos and the Rec Room. We are hoping that the city will move it forward.

Courtney updated that she saw both Dab Tacos and Quail State had been able to move forward with plans. We received two inquiries for space Downtown – Fig and Honey Lavish Grazing would like 2,000 to 4,000 sf of space for retail and storage, and one of the food truck owners is exploring options for restaurant and event space.

The TCC has its first planning meetings on the calendar. There will be one big community meeting that we will host probably in August. There will be pop ups in late June and September. We are reaching out to adjacent property owners like Teresa Negrete & Sevak Khatchadourian to be involved in discussions on the potential impact of construction.

VII. Next Meeting – 8/6/20

VIII. Adjourn – 9:12 am