



DRAFT December 8th, 2021, Ratepayer Advisory Board (RAB) Meeting Minutes

Date: December 8th, 2021

Location: In Person & Zoom Hybrid Meeting

Present (in person):

Tom Malone, CKM Associates
Mike Kahrs, Resident
Mark Craig, Henbart
Christine Ackerman, Hjarta Condominium
Legh Burns, re-soul

Absent:

Chris Beaudoin, Swedish Medical Center Ballard
Stephanie Carrillo, Equity Residential
Barry Blanton, Greenfire Campus, Commons at Ballard
Scott Koppelman, AMLI Mark24
Michelle Rosenthal, Veris Law Group

Present (via Zoom)

Eric Nelson, National Nordic Museum

Observers/Presenters:

Phil Lloyd, Seattle CFO
Mike Stewart, Devin Reynolds, Kiana Ballo and Andrea Dohring

1. Welcome and Introductions (Tom Malone)

The meeting was called to order at 3:07 p.m. and all present (in person and via Zoom) gave brief introductions.

2. Public Comments

None.

3. Finance Report (Phil Lloyd, Mike Stewart)

Phil Lloyd presented the finance report update. The Alliance is anticipating close to 100% of the budget spent this year with the recently addition of nightly security patrols.

4. Ballard Alliance Update

Business Development & Retention

Devin Reynolds announced that the Alliance is working with gigs4u to provide 25 busking services in Ballard by the end of the year. This entails 1-3 musicians performing on the sidewalk for two hours. Performances happen on Market Street and at the Belltower. This is great for livening the street during the holiday shopping season.

Reynolds presented updates for business recruitment in Ballard. Until recently, the Alliance had continued efforts to recruit Jet City Improve to sign a lease with the Magnum Storage Building, but those conversations have gone quiet. Seattle Edge a local knife shop is in lease agreements in the old Le Merde space. Pat Graney Dance Company is in conversations with the old Classic Consignment building. Ballard Clay is a local potter looking for a retail space in Ballard, Onimomo Bubble Tea is looking for space, and Peixotto recently got a space in the Ballard Blossom Building. The Alliance has also worked with Sacred Circle to find a storefront this year and worked with Tommy Patrick to open another restaurant in the former Matador space on Market Street.

Mike Kahrs asked how businesses connect with the Alliance.

Reynolds responded that the Alliance seek out businesses that would be a good fit or businesses come to the Alliance when they are looking for space in Ballard.

Stewart added that the more that the Alliance can curate what businesses are coming in, the more the Alliance can create a better Ballard and meet the community's needs. The Alliance also has been in close conversation with Starbucks and remains hopeful that they will reopen their store soon.

Public Health and Public Safety

Stewart presented updates regarding public safety. It is widely known that break ins have been on the rise recently, the Alliance created a small business crime prevention webinar and is looking at doing a neighborhood crime watch program. Seattle Police Department can also do assessments for buildings for free. The Alliance did outreach to business owners that have been victims of criminal activity and created a google form to gather data. The new north precinct captain said that the videos and data that the Alliance gathered did not provide enough solid evidence and said that they do not have resources to deal with these issues that are nonviolent crimes. The Alliance asked for detective work and emphasis patrols but there are not resources available currently at SPD. The Alliance is going to keep pressing and working on these crime issues.

Regarding Ballard Commons Park, Stewart recounted that as the violence increased Ballard Commons Park, it reached a tipping point when the propane tank fires began. Stewart called a meeting of City officials to demonstrate that extensive outreach work had been completed and that the park should be prioritized for a plan to address the needs of individuals living in and around the park. At the meeting with Council Member Strauss stepped up and organized weekly team meetings to prioritize resources and keep the pressure up to make this a priority. CM Strauss did a really good job with this effort. Council Member Strauss sees what the Alliance does for the community and helped develop a partnership that made this whole thing happen.

The Mayor's office provided the needed resources, and James Sizemore worked tirelessly to place several individuals into tiny houses and other shelter every day for a month. When the encampment was cleared in early December, there were very few campers left, including several that refused any support. All told, James was able to secure support for nearly 70 people.

On the day of the removal, fencing was installed and SPD is committed to patrolling twice a day and removing any new encampments. The RVs also left, which will greatly reduce the amount of noise and drug activity. The cleanup has already started, it will be six months to a year for a full clean up. Parks indicates they will scrape six inches of soil off and resod the entire park as well as building the children's play area the Alliance developed.

Additionally, tomorrow there will be a decision made regarding Bridge Housing's new development next to the park, they may have also received city funding to help with the park. The Alliance also did a press conference today over at the library with CM Strauss, Chloe Gale from Reach and Britt Olson from St Lukes, all four tv outlets were there plus some other publishers. The message is that this is a model for addressing encampments elsewhere in the city.

Kahrs inquired about the people that got housing and how they will be treated if they leave and start camping again. Stewart replied that outreach workers will continue to assist, but reiterated that the city has pledged to keep the park and library free of encampments.

Clean and Safe

Reynolds stated that the Alliance had a really good year of getting Ballard cleaned up. These numbers are from last week and the Alliance clean team is still collecting right now. Uplift NW is finishing leaf collection this year, and this has been the best year of leaf collection that the Alliance has done so far. The Alliance also had two street sweepers come out in tandem with Uplift NW and they were able to remove 6 tons of organic material that day. The Alliance is beginning efforts to identify someone to do on demand trash clean up because when Uplift NW is not in Ballard.

Public Realm Enhancements

Reynolds announced that the Alliance just completed a large mural this week. There is a 47 ft x 25 ft mural that was designed and painted by local artist Stevie Shao. This piece of art is inspired by the Nordic myth of the oak tree of Valhalla with the deer that eats from the tree. NOVO painting and property services provided the paint for this project again which is great. The Alliance also partnered with Urban Artworks to put on a community paint day for a mural on the old Classic Consignment building.

Kiana Ballo stated that another utility box will be covered with vinyl wrap art by the end of the year, depending on the printing company's availability and the weather for installation. The utility box is located on the NW corner of 24th Ave and Market St. The final design has been acquired from the artist and features several Ballard Icons. Also, the Alliance has added over 58,000 square feet of new public art to the Ballard Improvement Area in 2021, leveraging over \$80,000 of external funding. Additionally, the Alliance is preparing to create Visit Ballard branded light-pole banners along NW Market Street that will highlight both Ballard's Scandinavian and Indigenous history.

Marketing and Promotions

Anndrea Dohring presented updates for Marketing and Promotions. The Alliance is still seeing a nice increase on the website due to recent events, there was an uptick of return users and now that in person events are returning more people are coming to Ballard to visit, shop and dine. Visit Ballard passed the 3,800 mark on Instagram. The Alliance implemented a familiarization visit with Martinique Lewis. Kudos to Kiana and Mike for showing her around, she got a hands on tour of the food bank, she wanted to see black owned businesses so she did a boxing class with Manny at Nomad boxing, she visited the brewery district, the national Nordic museum, the locks, and she stayed at the Hotel Ballard. She was great to work with, the Alliance had some photography done and now has some great photos to use. This was funded in part by the Port of Seattle tourism grant.

The Alliance has also developed promotional videos for Ballard, there are two more videos to share with you including the Ballard Alliance video and why open a business in Ballard video which will be great for business recruitment and retention.

Stewart added that these will be a great resource to have going into reauthorization. Dohring mentioned that the shorter videos will be pushed out within the next month or two.

Mark Craig brought up a previous discussion regarding the ability to use these as a part of marketing for apartment buildings and resident recruitment.

Stewart responded. Once the videos are ready, the Alliance will share them for all to promote.

Programs and Events

Ballo announced that the Alliance produced several holiday events including Trick or Treat in Ballard with more than 50 participating businesses and the Harvest Food Drive with more than 30 businesses collecting non-perishable food items for the Ballard Food Bank from October 25 – November 25 with each business collecting approximately 10 – 25 pounds of food. Also, a record number of Ballard Tomte Trail passports were turned in at Ballard HolidayFest this year. Ballard HolidayFest was a big success with more than 350 attendees and the new set up under the bell tower worked really well and will be replicated next year. Feedback from attendees/participants and participating businesses has been overwhelmingly positive. Also, the Ballard Alliance/Visit Ballard represented at the 44th Annual Julefest, over the course of the two-day festival, the Ballard Alliance sold over \$1,000 of merch and educated public on our programs, projects and events.

Stewart added that the Alliance wants to do Julefest every year, this is a great event with a great response from the community.

Tom Malone mentioned that there were supposedly over 11,000 people at the festival. Eric Nelson confirmed that number.

Stewart discussed that the Alliance was also the tote bag sponsor and talked to a lot of people which was great outreach for the organization.

5. Review 2022 Draft Work Plan & Budget

Stewart presented the 2022 Draft Work Plan & Budget. For 2022, it looks like the Alliance has less money for the budget but this year the REACH funding for \$50,000 was a part of the BIA budget but next year that funding will be managed by the King County Regional Homeless Authority, but the Alliance will still be the client for REACH. The BIA increased by about \$30,000 this year. There is always CPI that happens each year and soon the Ballard Yards building will be coming online.

The strategic planning process the Alliance started this year will help outline what can be done before and after reauthorization. This plan includes more of the near-term items that were identified in the strategic planning. Reynolds mentioned the on-demand cleaning service already, the Alliance would like to have a person to pick up little things about 4- 8 times a month which should not be a huge expense. The Alliance is hoping to turn even more attention to crime and hopefully spend less time on the park, while still overseeing the park rehabilitation and ensuring that it remains clear of encampments. The work plan also includes creating a neighborhood business district watch and getting SPD to do onsite security assessments. The Alliance will continue to identify and recruit new businesses, especially now that the Alliance has established good relationships with developers who are building in Ballard. The Alliance will also be working on a large scale welcome to Ballard mural. The Wine Walk and other mainstay events will return. The

Alliance will continue the lighting program and the Ballard Artwalk. Dohring is working on a plan for the video marketing roll out.

The Alliance is going to create a standalone Ballard Alliance website with funding from the Office of Economic Development to showcase all of the work that the Alliance is doing that is separate from the Visit Ballard site. The Alliance will be doing light pole banners on Market Street and will update the Ballard Shop and Dine Guide. A key point for the Alliance is to continue to establish dialogue and advocate for the needs of residents in Ballard. The Alliance will be researching other BIAs to see how they engage with their residents, in Seattle most BIAs focus on relationships with businesses and not so much the residents.

Kahrs inquired about the significant drop in funding for advocacy, urban design, and transportation.

Stewart replied that a lot of the Alliance's advocacy actually happens through public safety and public health enhancement, it is rolled into that section of the budget. Also, in 2021 in the beginning of the year the Alliance had anticipated hiring off duty officers for security but that did not happen this year because there were no officers to hire.

Malone added that the organized crime that has been happening will need to be emphasized now that the park has been dealt with. The revitalization of market street now needs to be prioritized now with the vacancies left from the fire. The Alliance has credibility and should have a forum with city attorney Davison, the police chief and north precinct captain (they have used the problems the city has had to shun of responsibilities that they should be doing), and the presiding judge of the Seattle municipal court. Potentially the mayor as well. It will be important to have them on the same page. Second observation, the route 40 changes is going to be a big issue. No one likes what they are doing with this and this needs to be prioritized.

Reynolds mentioned that SDOT showed overwhelming favorability for their plan in a poll they released recently.

Kahrs discussed that it would be good to request the public records for that and offered to help.

Malone stated that the Alliance has the plan and the budget, it is really a very consistent budget. Motion to approve.

Legh Burns seconds.

Chris Ackerman noted that under management; the budget is currently at 105% yet management went down in the new budget \$7,000.

Stewart responded that underneath total expenses, the Alliance's time is listed as a part of those costs. Management is mostly accounting costs, bookkeeping costs, overhead management.

Lloyd added that it was a part of the strategic planning for this year, that is why it is higher.

Kahrs mentioned that if there needs to be a mid-season correction, that can be done.

Malone stated that it is essential to keep the staff the Alliance has built and should be very serious about that. It is key to keep this going and it would be a real damage to this organization to not have this team in place.

Stewart outlined that this budget always comes first and then next week the Alliance board meeting will approve a budget, which is different because it includes SeafoodFest, which adds to revenue. Also, one thing for to consider is that the Alliance used to have two members who crossed between the ratepayer board and the alliance board, that is something that should return. It makes it easier when someone can see both sides of it outside of Alliance staff.

Motion approved by all.

6. Affirm Program Manager

Malone stated that now it is time to affirm the program manager. Any discussion of renewing the relationship with the Ballard Alliance?

Kahrs moved to continue the relationship with the Ballard Alliance.

Ackerman seconds.

Motion approved by all.

7. Discuss Strategic Planning and Upcoming Renewal Process

Stewart presented updates for strategic planning and BIA renewal. The Alliance is in the final stages of crafting the document and ultimately including a draft budget. That should be done by the end of the year. What the Alliance is envisioning for the beginning of next year is trying to use the balance of that calendar year to get signatures for reauthorization. That means next year the Alliance will start meeting with key ratepayers and property owners to discuss a draft budget for a renewed BIA and what the Alliance will cover. Once that is coalesced, by the middle of the year, the Alliance should be able to see what the BIA would look like starting 2024 and working it parcel by parcel.

Kahrs asked about what the odds are that BIA's get renewed historically and what do you know of the process.

Stewart replied that it just depends. It can be smooth, or it can have some friction, but it will get worked out.

Kahrs added that it seems like the business community and ratepayers don't have issues with the BIA so far.

Stewart discussed that overall people are satisfied with the Alliance's work. Several people who originally were not in support of the Alliance have come around since they see what the Alliance provides.

Malone mentioned that the important thing was to get a BIA in place originally but now it is time to revisit the boundaries and bring more in to continue the work. With more resources, the Alliance can do so much more for the neighborhood.

Ackerman stated that they are benefiting from all the Alliance is doing and they need to participate and help support the efforts in the community.

Malone agreed that people have noticed what the BIA has done, and that Ballard would be different without the BIA.

Ackerman mentioned that if the park is kept clean, that would be huge.

Malone discussed that when it is time to reauthorize, the Alliance needs to have a plan for the future and the boundaries are a big part of it. There is work to do.

Stewart stated that last time the Alliance had a staff of one and having a full staff for our reauthorization process will be a big advantage.

5. New Business

N/A

Meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.