JAPANTOWN TASK FORCE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2018
6:00 PM – UNION BANK COMMUNITY ROOM
1675 POST ST, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94115

ATTENDEES: Sandy Mori, Judy Hamaguchi, Glynis Nakahara, Seiko Fujimoto, Mark Moriguchi, Rosalyn Tonai, Jacquelyn Chew, Coco Tando, Scott Hamaguchi, Richard Hashimoto, Jon Osaki, Benh Nakajo, Clint Taura, Alice Kawahatsu, Kenta Takamori

ABSENT: Beau Simon, Neal Taniguchi, David Takashima

STAFF: Steve Nakajo, Lauren Nosaka, Nikki Yoshikawa, Max Toshiro Loubet

GUESTS: Grace Horikiri, Karen Kai, Tomo Hirai, Michiko Yamada

I. CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by President Sandy Mori. A quorum was acknowledged.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Minutes of the JTF Board meeting of November 14, 2018
The minutes was amended for the correct spelling of Gough St. It was moved by Alice Kawahatsu and seconded by Jacquelyn Chew to accept the minutes from the November 14th meeting (Attachment A.)
The motion passed unanimously.
No public comments.

III. UPDATE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, STEVE NAKAJO
Executive Director Steve Nakajo emphasized on items not included on the Executive report (Attachment B). Steve introduced the JCBD Board of Directors, and spoke of a JTF newsletter concept similar to JCBD’s to extend information beyond the board meetings (Attachments C-E). The homelessness issues continue to be a challenge and expressed that it is important to interact and identify with homeless individuals who frequent the area to maintain cleanliness and sanitation of Japantown. Grace Horikiri, Executive Director of JCBD, commented that she is in discussion with Commander Lazar and Chief Scott of the SF Police Department about this issue.

Nikki Yoshikawa presented the Accessible Business Entrance (ABE) Open House on November 26th. The ABE Open House was a workshop to help property owners comply with existing state and federal accessibility laws and help people with disabilities gain greater access to goods and services offered by SF businesses. This workshop was a success with a total of 26 attendees.
A reference to creating a Japan House was made, similar to the one in Los Angeles. Steve asserted that space is an issue and the president confirmed the Consul General advised it was impractical and infeasible. Steve informed the Board that JTF has requested additional funding of $10,000 to the API Council. This was made to fulfill the community aide position for a total of $162,000 to the Official of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) for FY19-20. The proposal for a Visitors Learning Center at Suite 525 has not officially been submitted and is in the process for in mid-January. The funding for the OEWD Resiliency Fund was approved for $25,000 but JTF is waiting for an official letter. JTF volunteer Steve Nakajima wrote the proposal for the OEWD Resiliency Fund pro-bono.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Land Use/Transportation Committee (Glynis Nakahara)

1. Ford GoBikes

Glynis Nakahara reported that a survey was sent to the mailing list which included suggestions for alternative areas and emphasized the importance of participation from the community and Board Members to ensure the MTA is aware of the issues of the proposed plan. Glynis spoke to MTA staff to receive input in the proposal for each site. GoBike representatives will return to the Land Use Committee in January.

Public Comments:
- When will the survey end?

2. Neighborhood Design Guidelines

Glynis reported that the Small Working Group began developing guidelines 2 years ago with the idea that the neighborhood guidelines would complement the design guidelines. She stated that there is still need of assistance with the planning of architecture.

3. Neighborhood CPMC Meeting

The meeting is scheduled for January 8th at 6:30 p.m. The Cathedral group invited representatives from Van Ness hospital. There will be a big impact with parking.

4. Buchanan/Sutter Bush Bench

Glynis reported the SFMTA is installing a glass bench and will meet with them on December 21st.

5. Geary BRT Kick Off Event

SFMTA will hold a meeting on January 23rd at the Peace Plaza. The success of the median railing designs and unveiling of renderings were discussed at the event. There was collective representation of St. Francis and the Fillmore.

6. Committee Leadership

Glynis reported they will make the final recommendation in the end of January.

7. Geary Community Advisory Committee

Glynis reported they are currently looking for community members to be seated.

B. Peace Plaza Committee (Jon Osaki/Richard Hashimoto)

1. Committee Updates

Jon Osaki reported the plaza design is nearing completion after the two public
community meetings were held. SF Rec & Park is currently going through community feedback to narrow a design and plans to have a single design completed by the third meeting in March.

Richard Hashimoto reported the design must be completed in April before the Rec & Park commission so it's eligible for the 2019 park bond. He discussed the Peace Plaza committee will meet in the end of January for bond planning.

Jon discussed that other projects in the city are also being considered for the Parks Bond. If the design moves forward, the community's input will commence and JTF members must be in consistent attendance during the design process. He emphasized the importance of staying in contact with the Mayor, department heads, and Rec & Park Commissioners.

C. Cultural Heritage Committee  (Seiko Fujimoto/David Takashima)

1. Approval of members of the Committee and Co-chairs (Attachment F)

Seiko Fujimoto reported the importance of young Japanese Americans working together with the older kibei and issei to focus on Japanese culture and heritage. David Takashima visited the Japan House in Los Angeles and would like to create one, however the president expressed that JTF will not pursue a Japan House in SF due to the Consul General’s advice. The president highlighted the importance of outreach to the Japanese community in the East Bay.

It was moved by Richard Hashimoto and seconded by Jon Osaki to accept members of the Committee and Co-chairs.

The vote passed unanimously.

2. Update on Legacy Business Program

Nikki Yoshikawa reported an overview of the program and its implications. She stated that it is the city’s recognition of culturally significant businesses of 30+ years. Benefits include protective class funds and other benefits to ensure the cultural assets will stay alive. Kabuki Hot Springs, Nihonmachi Little Friends, and Papertree have already been approved. Kimochi and Benkyodo are currently in the process of being approved. Steve Nakajo emphasized the tremendous job Nikki has done in meeting with these businesses. A board member suggested creating a plaque to display in the storefronts of the Legacy businesses. Nikki confirmed that a plaque is being created.

Public Comments:

- What is the date for Kimochi’s hearing at the Small Business Commission? It is Jan. 14th.

V. UPDATE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (Attachment G)

1. JTF Tables for Osechi Ryori

The president discussed the SF Japantown Foundation fundraiser on Jan. 10th. She stated 3 tables are filled and she is working on a 4th table. Mayor Breed and Supervisor Brown will be in attendance.

2. Approval of Co-chairs of Committees to be Board members

The president explained that at the November Board meeting, everyone talked about this issue. There were no comments by the Board. It was moved by Jon Osaki and seconded by Mark Moriguchi to accept Co-chairs of Committees to be Board Members. The vote passed unanimously.
There were no public comments.

3. Approval of Nominations for Committee Chair and Committee Members

The president reported that the Nominations Committee with Judy Hamaguchi as Committee Chair and Sandy Mori and Benh Nakajo as Committee Members is being recommended for 2019.

It was moved by Alice Kawahatsu and seconded by Mark Moriguchi to accept the Nominations for Committee Chair and Committee Members. The vote passed unanimously.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VII. NEW BUSINESS

VIII. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements were shared:

Richard Hashimoto reported that Kinmon Gakuen will have a hearing at Historic Preservation Commission on February 6th, 2019 to be designated for landmark status. If designated, Kinmon Gakuen will be eligible to be funded. The cultural heritage committee will make a recommendation of support. Kinmon Gakuen is looking into the Legacy Business Program depending if the board decides to pursue it.

Kimochi Inc. is in the process of applying to be designated for the Legacy Business.

Grace Horikiri reported that an anonymous donor gave $750,000 for security cameras in Japantown. She is working with the SafeCity Program and Hotel Kabuki has begun installing cameras, 1700 Buchanan has begun the process, and AMC theaters will be installed next. She is aiming to have all security cameras installed before the Cherry Blossom Festival.

Richard also reported that the holiday lights will be removed January 21st and starting next year, JCBD will be in charge of the holiday lights.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Sandy Mori at 7:15pm.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: Wednesday, January 16, 2019 6-8pm at the Union Bank Community Room.