



DOWNTOWN ACTION ORGANIZATION (DAO)  
Executive Committee Meeting  
June 10, 2020  
12:00pm – 1:30pm  
Zoom Meeting ID: 821 7233 5953, Password: 061020  
Phone: 669-900-9128

### AGENDA

- |             |   |                         |
|-------------|---|-------------------------|
| <b>1.0</b>  | <b>CALL TO ORDER</b>  | Natalie Balfour         |
| <b>2.0</b>  | <b>PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS (limited to two minutes each)</b><br>Comments from the public will be allowed on all agenda items at the time each item is called. |                         |
| <b>3.0</b>  | <b>CONFLICTS OF INTEREST OR ABSTENTIONS</b>   | Natalie Balfour         |
| <b>4.0</b>  | <b>CONSENT ITEMS</b><br>4.1 May 13, 2020 Meeting Minutes<br>4.2 May 26, 2020 Meeting Minutes<br>4.3 June 4, 2020 Meeting Minutes  | Natalie Balfour         |
| <b>5.0</b>  | <b>FINANCIAL REPORT</b><br>Committee will review DAO financial statements ending May 31 and financial projections   | All                     |
| <b>6.0</b>  | <b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT</b><br>Update on StreetPlus staffing and current efforts Downtown  | Cadance Hinkle Allinson |
| <b>7.0</b>  | <b>OPEN &amp; OUT PROGRAM UPDATE</b><br>Update on Open & Out Program and next steps for DAO   | Sonu Chandi             |
| <b>8.0</b>  | <b>BEAUTIFICATION UPDATES</b><br>Review of current projects for Downtown beautification including lighting and planters   | Cadance Hinkle Allinson |
| <b>9.0</b>  | <b>JOINT ACTION MEMO</b><br>Discussion around joint meeting with HRSA and next steps  | Hugh Futrell            |
| <b>10.0</b> | <b>JUNE 17 BOARD MEETING AGENDA REVIEW</b>  | All                     |
| <b>11.0</b> | <b>ADJOURNMENT</b>  | Natalie Balfour         |

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## DOWNTOWN ACTION ORGANIZATION (DAO)

### Executive Committee Meeting

May 13, 2020

12:00pm – 1:30pm

Zoom Meeting ID: 826 5168 1343, Password: 051320

Phone: 669-900-9128

Executive Committee Present: Natalie Balfour, Hugh Futrell, Tom Robertson, Sonu Chandi  
Staff: Cadance Hinkle Allinson, Peter Rumble

### MINUTES

#### **1.0 CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Natalie Balfour called the meeting to order at 12 pm.

#### **2.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS (limited to two minutes each)**

There were no public comments at this time.

#### **3.0 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST OR ABSTENTIONS**

There were no conflicts of interest or abstentions at this time.

#### **4.0 CONSENT ITEMS**

**4.1** The motion to approve minutes from the April 8, 2020 meeting was unanimously approved.

#### **5.0 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Cadance shared that the District continues its grass roots marketing and communication efforts to support businesses during the Shelter In Place order, including website updates, social media and a Live video series. Regular emails are being sent to business owners with resources and other relevant information.

She shared that the DAO helped to facilitate a conversation between the City and business owners around the City's ideas for turning Downtown into a temporary Social Distancing Destination once retail and restaurants can reopen. To create a substantially improved Downtown experience, the City is considering the following:

- Free Parking opportunities in Downtown garages and through parking app
- Designated areas for curbside pickup and takeout
- Partial closures of 4th Street to allow businesses to utilize sidewalks and streets to increase capacity for sales while maintaining social distancing guidelines. This would be limited to businesses on 4th Street and not available to any businesses without a presence on Fourth (the City is addressing options for these businesses separately).
- Parklets
- Additional furniture on Courthouse Square for diners

- Additional hand washing stations and trash and recycling receptacles
- Art elements and installations

Cadance shared that many people were in favor of doing a survey to determine which elements of plan had the greatest support. A discussion ensued about the best way for the DAO to engage in this project and it was determined that the topic should be added to next week's Board agenda and an Ad Hoc committee should be formed. Peter suggested that the committee be made up solely of business owners located within the proposed footprint, as those most likely to be affected. Sonu expressed interest in joining the committee.

#### **6.0 FINANCIAL REPORT**

Tom shared that as long as assessments come in as predicted, cash flow should be positive at year end. Cadance said she hoped to have details about the assessment in the next few weeks.

#### **7.0 DESIGN & IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Hugh said that although a few aspects of the Asawa Fountain have been put on hold due to the Shelter In Place order, he hopes it can still be installed this summer. He has bids on hand for the concrete work and is waiting on the equipment design to finalize numbers.

After reviewing a few different designs, the Design & Improvement Committee met to discuss the lighting project and came to a conclusion about lighting the branches of trees Downtown with festive twinkle lighting, similar to what had been installed ten to fifteen years ago. They are now looking for an electrical engineer to provide a scope in order to begin getting bids. Hugh reached out to Summit Engineering, who offered to provide a few free hours to create the scope. Cadance had an initial conversation and Hugh will now join the discussion to provide clarity and move the project along.

#### **8.0 HOMELESSNESS DURING PANDEMIC**

Hugh shared that he has had multiple discussions with the City around homelessness in Downtown. StreetPlus has helped alleviate some of the issues on the east side of the freeway, but it continues to worsen on the west side, where several large encampments have developed. Hugh talked through the City's timeline and plans for ameliorating the situation. He shared concerns that due to the injunction and CDC guidelines, the timeline might compromise work being done by the DAO and jeopardize business success as reopening occurs. It was acknowledged that this is widespread throughout the entire City and that there is much that needs to be done.

The committee determined to add this item to the agenda for further discussion at next week's board meeting.

#### **9.0 UPCOMING BOARD MEETING AGENDA REVIEW**

Both the City's plan for creating a Social Distancing Destination, as well as the ongoing homeless concerns will be added to the next board meeting agenda.

#### **10.0 ADJOURNMENT**

Natalie Balfour adjourned the meeting at 1:05.

## **Joint Meeting of the Executive Committees of the Railroad Square Association and Downtown Action Organization**

May 26, 2020

12:30pm – 1:30pm

Zoom Meeting ID: 854 6201 9221

Password: 094436

Dial In: 669-900-9128

DAO Executive Committee Present: Natalie Balfour, Hugh Futrell, Tom Robertson, Sonu Chandi

Historic Railroad Square Association Executive Committee: Mike Montague, Dee Richardson, Hugh Futrell

Staff: Cadance Hinkle Allinson

### **MINUTES**

#### **1.0 CALL TO ORDER**

DAO Chair Natalie Balfour called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm.

#### **2.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS (limited to two minutes each)**

There were no public comments at this time.

#### **3.0 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST OR ABSTENTIONS**

There were no conflicts of interest or abstentions at this time.

#### **4.0 IMPACTS OF HOMELESSNESS TO BUSINESSES WITHIN ASSESSMENT DISTRICTS**

Members of the Executive Committees of both organizations reviewed an action memo prepared by Hugh Futrell. Discussion ensued around the various issues facing the communities on both the east and west sides of Highway 101 due to the increasing size of the homeless population and the unmanaged encampments.

It was agreed that these issues need to be managed prior to businesses fully reopening. If not managed quickly and effectively, the homeless encampments throughout Santa Rosa will have a very negative impact on the City and the overall economic health of the communities. It was acknowledged that the City will have difficulty addressing some of the concerns due to the current injunction, but suggested that there cannot be delay in dealing with the overwhelming public health concerns present. Discussion continued around a variety of possible solutions and it was determined that the committees would jointly request an immediate meeting with the City leadership and provide them with an edited copy of the memo to request a strong and swift response. It was agreed that all parties are interested in being a part of the solution.

## 5.0 ADJOURNMENT

Natalie Balfour adjourned the meeting at 1:15.

### Action Memo Draft

To: [City]

It is urgent and absolutely demanded that the City take immediate steps to control existing encampments and limit their adverse impact on the public and businesses. Such steps are not barred by CDC or federal injunctive considerations.

It is equally urgent that the City work with affected groups to develop and then implement acceptable plans to remove the encampments in the course of the summer so that property owners, businesses and the public can have safe and reasonable access to public spaces.

As part of these needed actions, it is also urgent that public health needs of homeless and indigent persons be responded to.

For that reason we urge:

#### **A. Immediate Intervention to Control and Prevent Encampments, Mitigate Harm to Public, and Provide Medical and Other Services Intervention**

1. Consolidate the size of all encampments and impose delineated and enforced social distancing separations.
  - The encampments at Railroad Square, adjacent to the Mall, and Doyle Park and, to a lesser extent, at Corporate Center, can be consolidated in place, reducing the land area absorbed by the encampments, and in the case of Railroad Square providing access to (presumably) the southern public lot for parking.*
  - The under freeway encampments cannot be readily consolidated but social distancing requirements can be imposed.*
  - CDC recommendations include intervention to provide public health protection to the unsheltered including social distancing measures.*
  - Consolidation is not prevented by social distancing needs.*
2. Install temporary security fencing (with green screening) around the Railroad Square, Corporate Center and Doyle Park encampments.
  - The purpose is to identify egress and ingress locations to minimize unmonitored influx of persons who may violate public health rules; to prevent the expansion of encampments; to create a sense of public safety; and to reduce petty crime and illegal transactions.*
3. Provide twenty-four hour uniformed private security for all encampments, both fenced and unfenced, 1 FTE per encampment, twenty-four hours each, as well as security lighting.

*---to monitor egress and ingress into the encampments; discourage violence and crime directed towards the homelessness and surrounding neighborhoods; provide greater safety for public health and homeless services personnel; liaise with Police as needed; establish enforceable rules with security personnel monitoring; illuminate areas that are dark and susceptible to surreptitious behavior.*

4. Increase and regularize police patrols circulating near the encampments for additional disincentivizing illegal conduct. Provide in-person on-site police response to calls.
  - to date, there has been little visible police presence*
  - At Corporate Center, callers have been directed to file reports on-line only and told police are not available to come to the property*
5. Intervene to identify, test and relocate at-risk homeless persons, quarantining as necessary
  - to date there has been virtually no public health or homeless service intervention at any of the encampments*
6. Collect refuse from and ensure encampments are clean and orderly.
  - Currently, the City is taking no steps to ensure encampments are clean and orderly and not potentially subject to the spread of pathogens within and near the encampments.*
7. Ensure that existing encampments do not continue to grow.
  - Fencing, social distancing, security patrols are tools for this purpose*
  - Caseworkers need to direct additional campers to other designated locations, and such designations must be identified*
  - Potential miniencampments on the east side of the freeway in downtown need to be identified and campers removed from the public space before they grow*

## **B. Further Intervention to Remove Encampments**

1. Establish a City-Public Health-Business-Ad Hoc Group (immediately) to develop plans for elimination of the encampments in the course of the Summer.
2. Establish this plan in ten working days.
3. Clearly the plan requires an accurate census of available resources (including shelter capacity under current and nonsocial distancing rules), an accurate longer term evaluation of interim resources such as motel availability, and a consideration of additional capacity needed, what form such capacity may take, the minimum legal service needs for additional capacity locations, and the potential role of the private sector.
4. It also will require complete preparation and readiness so that when the encampments can be removed under health and legal rules, they in fact will be, and without delay.

# **Joint Meeting of the Executive Committees of the Railroad Square Association and Downtown Action Organization**

June 4, 2020

12-1pm

Zoom Meeting ID: 899 8429 5183

Password: 052920

Dial In: 669-900-9128

DAO Executive Committee Present: Natalie Balfour, Hugh Futrell, Tom Robertson, Sonu Chandi

Historic Railroad Square Association Executive Committee: Mike Montague, Dee Richardson, Hugh Futrell

Staff: Cadance Hinkle Allinson

## **MINUTES**

### **1.0 CALL TO ORDER**

DAO Chair Natalie Balfour called the meeting to order at 12 pm.

### **2.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS (limited to two minutes each)**

There were no public comments at this time.

### **3.0 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST OR ABSTENTIONS**

There were no conflicts of interest or abstentions at this time.

### **4.0 REVIEW OF ACTION MEMO FROM DAO AND HRSA**

Mayor Schwedhelm acknowledged that all City staff understand the urgency of this issue, but due to the current situation and protests, not all were able to join.

Dave Gouin provided an update about the encampments. He shared that Fire, Police and HOST assessed the current encampments and decided there were additional health and safety risks, so began by clearing out Doyle Park where nine people accepted services. They cleaned the area and are currently monitoring to prohibit repopulation. They were moving to clear the encampments under the freeways by Monday, June 1, but due to the civic unrest and demonstrations, it has been pushed to June 11, with clean up on June 12. Once cleared, these areas will also be monitored by police to prohibit repopulation.

He shared that he appreciated all thoughts provided in the memo and the collaboration and consideration from the Committees and was glad that the City had been able to address all issues in Item A.

Hugh Futrell acknowledged this was a huge positive to be at the second phase already. He questioned whether there were plans to keep the population being removed from the underpasses from populating other areas Downtown. David shared that the intent was not to allow another encampment Downtown.

Mayor Schwedhelm shared some of the long term strategies in place and partnerships being developed to help relieve the issue while maintaining social distancing. As soon as COVID 19 restrictions are lifted, they are expecting to see more positive change.

Mike Montague expressed an interest in having Railroad Squares new security company partner with the police on enforcement issues and Dave suggested the Downtown Enforcement Team would be a good partner.

Sonu asked what the size of current Downtown homeless population was. David shared that since the Point in Time count was postponed due to COVID, they only had numbers from January 2019, which indicated about half of Sonoma County's homeless population of 3,000 lived in Santa Rosa.

Discussion ensued about a variety of impacted areas throughout the City and what the City's plans were to handle them. The economic impact to business and property owners was reiterated.

Discussion ensued about the injunction and whether the City could fight it. Mayor Schwedhelm shared that legal action was unlikely because it could potentially result in the injunction becoming permanent. He shared that Council is meeting on July 7 to discuss further changes necessary to accommodate the current homeless community.

It was reiterated that law enforcement can always act on illegal behavior, which is outside the bounds of the injunction. Trespass letters can help enforce this if the activity is happening on private property.

It was recommended that when clean up occurs, the work begins at Price and moves to College since that is where the majority of the businesses need to reopen. David said he would pass that recommendation along to Chief Navarro.

Dee Richardson expressed her thanks to the City staff for their work.

Hugh Futrell urged City staff to communicate and keep in touch as work happened. He shared that he believed the City could act immediately on any RV encampments since they did not need to provide shelter. David shared they are stepping up enforcement and plan to tow vehicles. Members of the public shared their support for the work done by the DAO and HRSA to bring this issue to discussion.



Mayor Schwedhelm shared all the different task forces the City was currently hosting and that they would all accept comments and questions.

David reiterated that getting to functional zero was the City's goal, which they hope to be able to do with County partnerships.

## **5.0 ADJOURNMENT**

Natalie Balfour adjourned the meeting at 12:50.