

August 20, 2019
Constituency General Assembly draft minutes
6:00 p.m.

Attendance: Jerry Baroh, Nick Setten, Mark Brady, David Ghoddousi, Joan Paulson, Samir Master, Laurie Johnson, Gordie McIntyre, Russell Monroe, Colleen Bowman, David Ott

Jerry called the meeting to order and said that Nick would be chairing the meeting today.

Bylaws review

Postponed to the Executive Committee meeting.

New members

David welcomed the new members to the Constituency. He recommended that each new member have a binder of information. Nick said his binder included the PDA Charter. He suggested that having a copy of the Hildt-Licata agreement would be helpful. David suggested additional documents, such as city ordinances. He suggested adding them.

Guest introductions

Samir Master, selling at the Market since 1993. Will be joining the Constituency.

Samir had questions about the PDA's process for tenants getting into space at the Market. David and Mark talked about their own experiences as business owners. David explained the process in general terms and suggested that Samir get answers from the Executive Director.

There was a discussion about Constituency/democratic process in who gets into the Market.

PDA Council Committee reports

Programs Committee: David explained that there was a mid-year report, reports on concierge program, tidying up trademarks, Flower Festival. Parking is some of the cheapest in Seattle: \$4/hour, early bird parking. Trying to attract all ages through the use of Instagram, YouTube and other social media. He passed out the presentation. He said farmers were down 50%. Discussion ensued. David said he wants the PDA to have a chance to give the report at the next Programs Committee so he can ask questions. Mark added that he was disappointed because there wasn't time for discussion at the last meeting.

Joan said the PR report shared today took up most of the two-hour meeting. Farmers, craftspeople and minutes were not covered. She said the PR report is based on what the DSA is targeting - age brackets, etc. She said the PDA is closing the door to advertising to people that are age 55 and over. She said the education program should be 12 months. She passed out a 1907 document that speaks to the importance of the Market to the next generation.

David explained that the PR report contained data the PDA Council had asked for. He suggested that Constituency members review the information.

Nick asked Joan if the PDA is leaving out people over 55 or reaching out to younger people. Joan answered that by emphasizing outreach to younger people it is deemphasizing outreach to older people.

Market Connections Committee: Updates postponed to the next meeting.

Finance Committee: Mark said that financial statements were good. The LaSalle is being improved with fire/life system updates. 30-year reserve okay but said there is a 2% deficit that may have to be paid from it. David added that the expenses are predicted to increase. There was a discussion about modeling the forecast. Residential report: there has been a 3% turnover. He summarized leases that were renewed. He reported on work to be done to the Livingston Baker and Corner Market buildings. Discussion ensued. Medical/dental approved.

Old Business:

Elections Committee: Nick said he, Joan and Ali debriefed over the elections and he will be writing up his notes. Joan said they discussed improving the process for next year.

Media: Postponed.

Budget: Jerry will be meeting with Haley Land to explore having someone staff the office on a temporary basis three days a week.

Bring back family photos and potlucks: No discussion

City Council campaign debate: Nick summarized City Council actions and potential plans concerning the Showbox and Victor Steinbrueck Park that could affect the historic district boundaries. He said these leave the boundaries permeable, which is problematic, so this could be a good opportunity to teach the candidates about how special the Market is and the need for its protection. Joan said it would help to provide history of the Market to the City Council and where it is now. She spoke to engaging with five or six Councilmembers that will help protect the Market. She suggested educating them now so that they are not undermined, hoodwinked or sabotaged.

Nick talked about the efforts by the Friends of the Showbox. He met with their media unit recently. They are working on a message. He will update the Constituency.

Orca Card Lift program: Postponed.

New Business:

First Avenue Streetcar: Joan said the City Council needs to hear about this as well. She said the plan is to attach the two existing streetcar lines with one down First Avenue, and it means First Ave would be down to one lane either way. She referenced an article from Real Change.

Mark talked about the streetcar project and that he thought it was important to take a stand on it. Jerry said that other cities are discontinuing their streetcars.

Flags: Mark expressed concern about the American flag being replaced with a Pride flag. He thought the Pride flag should either be underneath the American flag or shorter than, just not in the same place. He said Joan had researched how flags should be displayed. He would like to have that information sent to the PDA Council.

David G. said that hopefully next year it will be rectified. He said he was proud at how the Market celebrated diversity this year. Gordie said that as long as you fly the American flag, you can fly the second flag below it. Mark said the American flag was removed instead. Joan said a smaller, second pole needs to be installed.

State of the Market - survey: Mark said things are not as good as they appear to be. He said there are businesses that are struggling. He said he would like to do an anonymous survey with six questions concerning how the businesses are doing and what age demographic is spending money at their business. Also, questions on what are the biggest assets and deficits at the Market, and how things are going at the Market and what are your suggestions. Mark would like to use the election box.

Nick suggested writing it up and presenting the questions to the Executive Committee. Jerry asked where the ballot box would be. Mark suggested some ideas. Discussion ensued about the survey and whether or not Market business employees be included in addition to owners. Nick asked how the survey would be distributed. Mark said it would first be given to business owners. There was a discussion about impacts from snow earlier in the season. Russell said that it seemed like the PDA is pushing businesses that can pay percentage rent. Colleen clarified how the percentage rent system works. Nick asked how the survey can be based on fact and not on feeling. Mark went over the kind of information that would be collected. He is hoping that advertising dollars can be spent on people over 50. He thinks two or three questions would be factual and the rest would be asking how people are feeling. Further discussion ensued, on how to determine the questions, how to administer the survey, and how to engage business owners.

There was a question about the Merchants Association. Nick suggested leveraging the Market News. Mark said they are trying to keep the doors open and keep the newspaper going.

Street closures: Nick said he's noticed that on Saturdays, the streets are closed down for a few hours when it's busiest. He ran into Mary the other day and she was under the impression that it was just for an hour. However, it's been for longer than that. David G said it only closes when the safety of the public is at risk because there are so many people. He said it's at the prerogative of Market security.

Meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.