

Economic Opportunity Committee Meeting

January 27, 2021, 5:00 pm

(Meeting is being held online due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic)

Meeting Minutes

FINAL/APPROVED 3/16

Present:

Aashish Karkhanis  
Lowell Caulder  
Rene Colorado, Jr.  
Iris Lee  
Ross Stackhouse  
Wendie Yeung

Helen Bean, TLCBD Staff  
Lorraine Lewis, TLCBD Staff  
Alicia Seleska, TLCBD Staff

Guests:

Karen-Symone Lee, Tenderloin Merchants Association  
Naomi Maisel, La Cocina  
Pratibha Tekkey

## 1. Call to Order. Welcome and Introductions

A. Karkhanis called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm.

## 2. Guest Presentation

N. Maisel, Community Manager at La Cocina Marketplace, shared the history of La Cocina and introduced the new Marketplace. It will be home to 7 different businesses (including Estrellita's Snacks, Boug Cali, KAYMA, Mi Morena, Teranga, and Los Cilantros). The Marketplace lowers barriers to entry and enables businesses to share cost of business, which creates more assets for business owners and is in turn passed on to consumers. During the pandemic La Cocina has also maintained their kitchen in the Mission, waived fees, created learning circles, expanded gift box offerings, created an emergency relief fund, submitted over 500 grant applications and helped secure 15 PPP loans. All entrepreneurs will move into the new space in February. Pickup and delivery will begin in March. They are exploring individual and family style meals, an outside dining area, and expanded retail products. They estimate 20-30 local jobs will eventually come from the new space.

They have had success recently with food box partnering which allowed entrepreneurs to split delivery costs. A. Karkhanis asked if they experienced any issues with the food delivery boxes. N. Maisel responded that food boxes have not allowed for some menu items, and there have been some problems determining prices that balance cost to the vendor, versus consumer purchase price.

L. Caulder asked about their strategy in dealing with the block they're on and how TLCBD can help. N. Maisel explained La Cocina has contracted a safety group they have a history with and are engaging community partners to get everyone on the same page.

H. Bean asked if there has been thought to extending to businesses in the Tenderloin. They have encouraged joining incubators, learning events, and are also working on a community room that may be able to act as a pop-up space for outside vendors.

## 3. Guest Presentation

R. Colorado, Jr. gave a brief overview of the Tenderloin Merchants Association. They are not a traditional merchants association. Their diverse Board of Directors is comprised mostly of women. The service area covers the Tenderloin and Lower Polk area. Membership is at about 150 members and community partners include OEWD, TLCBD, and the District 6 office. They were founded in November 2019.

The past year they've distributed large amounts of PPE thanks to a donation from the owner of Lapat's; joined UC Hastings in legal action to house 600 people from the streets and clear the sidewalks of tents; implemented outdoor dining; and are looking forward to a Thai New Year celebration next year. Future projects include more outdoor dining, Thai New Year food festival, Larkin Parks (a series of pop up parks along Larkin Street), the Tenderloin Flea Market, TMA Ambassadors (Tenderloin resident staffed community ambassadors), and Everybody Eats (a frontline workers food distribution program strictly employing Tenderloin residents and supporting Tenderloin restaurants).

N. Maisel asked about if TMA has anything in place to support political advocacy. R. Colorado replied that yes, drug dealing and tents have specifically been addressed.

R. Stackhouse wondered what the experience has been with Prop H. N. Maisel responded that La Cocina hasn't felt it yet. R. Colorado affirmed that it hasn't affected small businesses.

#### 4. Status Update and Information Sharing: TLCBD-TEDP Merger

A. Karkhanis suggested adding another merger checklist item for Donorbox as it has resurfaced in recent weeks.

***[Action: Add contacting Donorbox legacy donation to checklist.]***

***[Action: A. Seleska will follow up with S. Bertrang to schedule time with him and A. Karkhanis to transfer Google domain.]***

***[Action: A. Seleska will follow up with S. Bertrang about mail picked up from Regus.]***

#### 5. Status Update and Information Sharing: Economic Opportunity Work

L. Lewis relayed that Outdoor Dining's reopening tomorrow is the headline. TLCBD is creating a proposal for food distribution utilizing grant funds. H. Bean submitted an Anti-Vandalism Campaign RFP - a partnership between TLCBD and Paint the Void to install murals for small businesses with windows that have been broken, and ultimately replace the windows.

H. Bean shared information about 3 grants: 1) Mini-grants: awarded to 82 business - 15 participated in Outdoor Dining along Golden Gate and Larkin; 2) SF Shines: disbursed by the City - awarded to 25 businesses in the Tenderloin, for up to \$5,000 for furniture, fixtures, equipment; and 3) California Recovery. Another opportunity opens February 2nd. There is also a new City grant of \$25 million with more details to follow.

PPP loans are reopened, and the California Building Loan is also available. TLCBD has contacted businesses through MailChimp.

I. Lee reported of the 202 businesses she has been in contact with, 2 signed new leases in the Tenderloin and she re-negotiated another lease before renewing. She is currently working with 10 new businesses on renewals and/or new leases.

L. Lewis provided an update on workforce development work. She recently attended a Tenderloin specific job fair.

L. Caulder asked about next steps for the survey project. A. Karkhanis responded that a framework is being created. The survey will be designed to be completed in less than an hour - it will be reworked over the next couple meetings.

***[Action: The Committee will connect with N. Maisel about survey questions in-common and responses.]***

#### 6. Action: Approve December Minutes

MOTION: Review and approve the draft minutes of the December Meeting.

Moved by: A. Karkhanis

Seconded by: R. Stackhouse

Passed: yes

#### 7. Information Sharing: Announcements & Future Agenda Items

The meeting was adjourned at 6:31 pm.

**Next Economic Opportunity Committee Meeting**  
**Wednesday, February 10, 5:00 pm** | Online - Zoom