



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

**SMALL BUSINESS ADVISORY BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES**

March 22, 2006

Comerica Bank Building  
600 B Street, Eighth Floor Large Conference Room  
San Diego, CA 92101

<b>BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	<b>BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT</b>
Scott Cummins Judy Preston Richard Sims Spencer Skeen Chi Tran	Auday Arabo Faith Bautista Kurt Chilcott Ruben Garcia Warren Simon

<b>CITY STAFF</b>
Steve Bal, Office of Small Business Sue Blackman, Office of Small Business Kelly Broughton, Development Services Department Meredith Dibden Brown, Office of Small Business Ron Halbritter, Development Services Department Jeff Kavar, Economic Development Division Marcia Samuels, Neighborhood Code Compliance Department

<b>OTHERS PRESENT</b>
L.R. Soriano Cabais, Low-Roller.com Jackie Carmona, San Diego County Water Authority Andrew Hapke, Accion San Diego Scott Kessler, Business Improvement District Council Elizabeth Makee, Accion San Diego Penny McGuire, San Diego Gas and Electric

## **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

- Chair Mr. Richard Sims called the meeting to order at 8:27 a.m. There was no quorum, so no action items were heard.

## **Approval of Minutes**

- Postponed until the next SBAB meeting on April 26, 2006.

## **Public Comment**

- Mr. L.R. Soriano Cabais, owner of Low-Roller.com commented that the community outreach meeting went very well. He hoped that it will help the public attendance at the SBAB meetings.
- Ms. Elizabeth Makee and Mr. Andrew Hapke introduced themselves as representatives from Accion San Diego. They also participate in the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce' Small Business Advocacy Committee.
- Mr. Sims noted that he has been invited to attend the Small Business Advocacy Committee meeting on Friday morning to answer questions pertaining to the SBAB.

## **Business Improvement District (BID) Council Report: Scott Kessler, BID Council**

Mr. Kessler provided the following report, since Mr. Warren Simon was unable to attend the meeting.

- The BID Council in collaboration with several small business organizations are sponsoring a Small Business Night at the San Diego Padres baseball game on Friday, April 7, 2006.
- They have their monthly board meeting this Thursday, March 23.
- Their Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Task Force meeting was held this past week. He noted that SBAB member Mr. Spencer Skeen provided information to them at the meeting.

## **Selection of Vice-Chair: SBAB**

- Postponed until the next SBAB meeting on April 26, 2006.
- Mr. Sims noted that both Mr. Auday Arabo and Mr. Ruben Garcia have expressed interest in the position.

## **Chair's Meeting with Mayor Sanders: Richard Sims, SBAB**

- Mr. Sims commented that Mayor Sanders is very supportive of small business and with the network of entities, especially the BIDs. The Mayor is interested in growing and nurturing the relationship between the City and small business. They discussed increasing the support to small businesses to assist them in becoming successful. The Mayor would like the SBAB have a clear voice and provide advice to him when issues arise that would impact small business. Mr. Sims explained to the Mayor that the SBAB wants to become more proactively involved on decision making issues, instead of becoming involved in issues after the fact. The Mayor indicated that as time progressed, he couldn't see why that couldn't occur. The Mayor's comments during his

presentation at the community outreach meeting significantly reflected the comments the Mayor expressed during his meeting with him on February 14.

### **Discussion on Ordinance pertaining to SBAB: SBAB**

- Mr. Sims stated that when he reviewed the Ordinance pertaining to the SBAB, he determined that there were specific guidelines for membership terms which haven't really been adhered to.
- Mr. Skeen noted that the Ordinance language states that "The members shall serve two (2) year terms and each member shall serve until a successor is duly appointed and confirmed." Since the language infers no less than or no more than two (2) year terms, an argument can be made that it is no less than two (2) year terms and until the member is replaced. The idea would be to keep the board members so they have a chance to make an impact vs. replacing members when they are starting to make an impact. He noted that City might take the perspective that they do not want cronyism and so they would want boards that continually replenish themselves with new faces and new ideas. Members stated that they will need clarification from the City on the issue.
- Ms. Marcia Samuels, Director of the Neighborhood Code Compliance Department stated that she agrees with Mr. Skeen's interpretation of the term language in the Ordinance as a minimum. She stated that the Housing Advisory and Appeals Board which they staff, has a maximum number of years that a member may serve, which is enforced. Their board is established by ordinance and they also have board rules pertaining to conflict of interest, terms and absences from meetings.
- Mr. Scott Kessler of the Business Improvement District Council observed that many boards and commissions in the City have similar term language.
- Mr. Sims reported that in his meeting, the Mayor asked for recommendations of new members to the Board that he has knowledge of. Mr. Sims noted that he has already identified a couple of individuals that would meet the requirements for membership. The Board should also be involved in providing input on recommendations for new members. Mr. Sims stated that the Ordinance does provide some criteria for selection of Board members which include: A) Small business owner; B) Accounting, financial-lending, legal or economic backgrounds; and C) Advocates of small business interests with governmental agencies.
- Mr. Sims also observed that in the Ordinance, there are duties and functions that SBAB is charged with upholding, including providing an annual report to the Mayor and City Council on the "State of Small Business" within the City of San Diego. He stated that it is something that the Board may want to consider, noting that they would need a budget to produce an annual report. Other functions of the Board cited in the Ordinance include performing research and data gathering on the status of small business and performing ombuds services to small businesses. He also highlighted that the Ordinance states that the Board shall be involved in the review of private sector performance ability and recommend potential transfer of functions performed by City forces to private enterprise.
- One of the topics Mr. Sims discussed with Mayor Sanders was the process of privatization of City services. He informed the Mayor that if the privatization efforts move forward, it would be essential that there is a study and an assurance that small businesses would have an equal opportunity to participate in the privatization of any services. Mr. Sims added that he was unaware that there was an actual mandate until he reviewed the Ordinance, so it would be an area in which they would have to expand their dialogue with the Mayor and Council.

- Mr. Skeen responded that it is unlikely that the SBAB will receive a budget to conduct any studies, but they can review and analyze the studies that have already been conducted pertaining to privatization of municipal services. He added that he doesn't feel that the SBAB could address all ten focus areas in any given year.
- Mr. Sims remarked that the SBAB should be prepared, so if privatization efforts move forward, they would be able to have a meaningful voice in the process. Whether or not the SBAB is asked to participate in the process, they still need to be advocates for the importance of inclusion of small business in the privatization of services.
- Mr. Sims informed the Mayor that some Board reappointments were up and that there was a vacant slot on the SBAB. The Mayor requested that Mr. Sims forward to his office the recommendations of names of potential candidates to fill open slots on the SBAB. Mr. Sims informed the Board that he has identified two potential candidates, but he prefers not to make recommendations unilaterally. He added that the Ordinance calls for the full Board to make recommendations.
- Mr. Sims stated requested that OSB staff get information on the appointment process relative to the review of boards and commissions and the name of the appropriate staff person for him to discuss the matter with. Also, it was requested that staff obtain clarification from the Mayor's Office on the term issue. OSB staff will also email all Board members to determine if they are interested in serving another term and also request that they research and identify their most recent reappointment letters.
- Mr. Jeff Kavar, Deputy Director of the Economic Development Division commented that boards and commissions throughout the City are being reviewed for potential consolidation, due to the large number of them. He added that staff is being asked to review any policies and procedures relative to their mission.
- Mr. Sims stated that the Mayor is interested in sustaining the SBAB, provided that it is effective in doing what it is mandated to do.

#### **Discussion on Board Plenary Session: SBAB**

- Mr. Sims stated that the planning should focus on the City's fiscal year calendar, therefore the plenary session should be held in late April or May.
- There was discussion on when the session should be held. Options included having it immediately after an SBAB meeting (which could be abridged - completed by 9:15 or 9:30 a.m.) or it could be held on a different date in either the morning or afternoon. The plenary session will take approximately two to three hours. Members will decide on a date and time at the next meeting.
- Mr. Kavar will check to see if the plenary meeting can be a closed session.

#### **Development Services Department (DSD) Report: Kelly Broughton and Ron Halbritter, DSD**

Mr. Broughton and Mr. Halbritter provided the following report:

- They have continued with much of their work program elements. Recently, they started the mystery permittee in which they partner with other local jurisdictions by having a staff member

knowledgeable of the permit process within those jurisdictions act like a customer. The permittee goes through a few of the service areas and then provides independent feedback afterward. They received much constructive feedback and hope to build upon it.

- They are expecting to receive their customer survey report very soon. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) received a report from the consultant firm at the last meeting. A number of questions were raised and the consultant firm's full report should address a number of those questions. They will share the report with the SBAB as soon as they receive it.
- Mr. Halbritter stated that they are working on providing ADA training, but no dates have been set. The dates will be posted on the website when the dates are set up.
- Mr. Broughton stated that the Mayor is very interested in efficiency and in the streamlining of the permit process. This means that the concerns of small business are back at the top of the list.
- In their next update, they hope to bring forward some very significant improvements that could benefit small business. They are soliciting staff about the types of uses that require use permits such as sidewalk cafes and pushcarts. They welcome input from the SBAB. Scott Cummins and Judy Preston volunteered to assist Mr. Broughton with the small business perspective.
- Mr. Sims noted that at the community outreach meeting, a representative from the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce spoke specifically about some issues pertaining to DSD. He noted that many issues have been addressed and that it may be a communications issue. Not everything has been resolved, but progress has been made. He asked Mr. Broughton if they could provide an update on the scorecard report at the next SBAB meeting. They could make it a public discussion as to what progress has been made and what areas still need improvement.
- Ms. Preston will serve as Mr. Sims alternative at TAC meetings if he is unable to attend.

#### **Office of Small Business Report: Sue Blackman, Office of Small Business (OSB)**

- Ms. Blackman stated that her last day of employment with the City of San Diego is on March 24.

#### **New Business**

- Members requested that the appropriate staff from the Economic Development Department be invited to attend the April 26 meeting to discuss the application process and performance measures pertaining to the Economic Development and Tourism Support Program and the Small Business Enhancement Program. Members would like to see the list of awardees from both programs for the past several years.

#### **Meeting Adjournment**

- The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.