



SMALL BUSINESS ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

TUESDAY, March 24, 2026

8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Location: Civic Center Plaza, 14th Floor Conference Room –
1200 3rd Ave, San Diego, CA 92101

Chair: Sunny Lee | **Vice Chair:** Natasha Salgado

Board Members: Austin Evans, Brandon S. Johnson, Christian Gomez, Jenna Hanson, Juliet Terramin, Michael Sovacool, Natasha Salgado, Sarah Mattinson, and Sunny Lee.

Staff Liaisons: Alex Southard and Sean Karafin.

Item 1: Call to Order (Chair Lee)

- Meeting was called to order at 8:37 AM.

Item 2: Roll Call (Chair Lee)

- In Attendance: Austin Evans, Brandon S. Johnson, Christian Gomez, Juliet Terramin, Sarah Mattinson, and Sunny Lee.
- City Staff: Sean Karafin, Alex Southard, Nick Stephens, and Viridiana Quintana.
- Guests: Alex Perez Demma and Kevin Tung.
- Members of the Public: Irma Soria.

Item 3: Presentations from Capacity Building Grant Recipients

- Two FY2026 Capacity Building Grant recipients shared about their projects funded through this grant and the impact it has had on the small business community.
- Alex Perez Demma with the Barrio Logan Association highlighted three events/programs supported by this grant- Sabor del Barrio taste event, a business directory, and the Barrio Art Crawl.
- Kevin Tung with Outside The Lens demonstrates art work created by aspiring business owners. Through the Media Makers program, students with intellectual and developmental disabilities create pieces to market and sell.
- The board asked questions and conversation followed.
 - Ideas were shared about opportunities for collaboration.
 - Increasing exposure of the small businesses in their programming is a primary goal.

- Item 4: Strategic Planning Conversation
- Time has been set aside for the board to have a conversation on strategic planning of the SBAB and assessing current priorities.
 - The group discussed the primary roles in which they can support. Ideas shared included advising letters, resource sharing through word of mouth, and collaboration opportunities.
 - The group identified key areas where many small businesses are facing hardships such as lack of parking, impacts of inflation on costs and for consumers, and marketing needs to stay competitive.
 - Other ideas shared include social media spotlights, networking opportunities, and partnerships with key resource centers.
- Item 5: Action: Approval of February Meeting Minutes (Chair Lee)
- With a motion by Sarah Mattinson and a second by Austin Evans, the Board voted to approve the January 27, 2026 minutes.
 - Yes: Austin Evans, Brandon S. Johnson, Christian Gomez, Jenna Hanson, Juliet Terramin, Michael Sovacool, Natasha Salgado, Sarah Mattinson, and Sunny Lee.
 - Abstain: None.
 - Absent: Jenna Hanson, Michael Sovacool, and Natasha Salgado.
- Item 6: San Ysidro Business Improvement District Advisory Committee (Liaison Southard)
- Alex Southard shared an update on the San Ysidro BID activities.
 - In the February Committee Meeting, Mission Edge presented an overview of their services. The group continues to work through the logo and website creation. They also conducted a demonstration on Get it Done reporting and filing a Letter of Agency.
 - A board retreat was initially scheduled for March but has been postponed.
 - In the March Board Meeting, an update was shared that members of the group met with Councilmember Moreno to discuss the goals of the BID including community projects, parking, and more.
 - EDD is recommending the San Ysidro Community & Economic Corporation be the designated advisory board for the San Ysidro BID in FY27.
- Item 7: Action: Draft Advising Letter (Chair Lee)
- None.
- Item 8: Staff Report
- a. Economic Development Department (Liaison Southard)
 - Alex Southard provided an update from the Economic Development Department.
 - EDD is planning upcoming Business Walks and invites the board if interested in participating. The tentative schedule includes Mission Beach in April, University Heights in May, and Old Town in June.

- Applications are now open for the Individual Artists Fellowship, offering \$5,000 to \$50,000 in unrestricted funding for artists in San Diego and Imperial Counties. This statewide program supports artists at all stages emerging, established, and legacy. Fellows also receive professional development, networking opportunities, and public recognition. The deadline to apply is April 30, 2026. The City will also host information sessions soon. Learn more at sandiego.gov/cultural-affairs.
- The State's Office of Business has several incentives programs for businesses looking to expand such as financing & bonding, energy savings programs, research & development tax credits, workforce hiring & trainings programs, and more. Visit their website for more information- <https://business.ca.gov/>.
- EDD can help with permitting and technical support such as assistance with conducting zoning research, navigating permitting with Development Services, and connect businesses to appropriate incentives programs.
- Interest has been expressed from small business owners in filling the two vacancies on SBAB. First, applications need to be reviewed by the Office of Boards and Commissions.

Item 9: Board Member Discussion

- a. Suggested items for future meetings
 - Sarah Mattinson suggested hearing from the City's social media team.

Item 10: Non-Agenda Public Comment

- Irma Soria with Logan Heights CDC shared that the Logan Heights Emergent Entrepreneurship Program (LEEP) will begin in April. This business development program concludes with a pitch competition for a chance to win a \$5,000 grant.

Item 11: Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 9:59 AM.

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