

BID MISSION STATEMENT – “A volunteer-led committee promoting the economic growth and resilience of businesses through marketing and beautification while maintaining the unique and authentic character of the Business Improvement District.”

ATTENDEES

PDA Board: April Frederick (Estuary), Katie Lafranchi (Hanks), Eric Lafranchi (Taps)
PDA Staff: Marie McCusker (Executive Director), Elisa Seppa (Admin, Event, Coms Coord)
Merchants: Kim Wheeler (Sugo Trattoria), Luis Flores (Tortilla Real), Naomi Crawford (Lunchette), Joey Reed (Redwood NECA), June Ghiglioli (Mama’s Biscotti), Bev Haley (Oli Gallery), Damien Carney (Avinage), Samantha Robert (Ceto Home), Katherine Bergin (J Devereux Beauty), Mandy Podesta (The Hunter & the Bird), Rob Mirante (Refill Mercantile), Sydney Barnes (Hollingsworth Jewelers), Dan Bleakney Formby (Jupiter Foods), Joani (i Leoni)

CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order at 8:37am.

INTRODUCTIONS

BID OVERVIEW / IMPORTANCE OF BUSINESSES INPUT The goals of the BID are to beautify downtown and encourage visitors to eat, sleep, shop.

BID FINANCIALS / BILLING

BID funds are distributed across 4 categories – security (27%), marketing (23%), beautification (30%), administration (20%).

As of 7.31.2023

- 581 businesses billed
- 416 businesses paid
- 165 businesses unpaid
- \$53,581 collected (down 7.6% over 2022)

BID WORK SESSION – APRIL FREDERICK

A. **HALLOWEEN – TRICK OR TREAT TRAIL (TUESDAY, OCT 31)**

- Information for the Trick or Treat trail event was distributed via email and flyers to BID businesses. Free to sign up and be added to the event map. Event signage and designation will be delivered to participating businesses.
- Opportunity for free advertising now through event day and lots of foot traffic on event day. Businesses encouraged to advertise / promote incentives, deals, dining, etc.
- 6-8k families / kids participate.

B. **SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY (SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25)**

- Free annual marketing opportunity to encourage shopping local.
- Promotional opportunities on Shop Small national website, PDA website, social, etc.
- PDA will reach out with more information and promotional opportunities in early November.
- Restaurants to stay open late (8pm).

C. **ESTUARY HOLIDAY WINDOW**

- Estuary to host a holiday fundraiser for COTS. Businesses are encouraged to participate by dropping off a gift bag from their store. Bags will be raffled off weekly during the holiday season.

D. **HOLIDAY PARKING**

- Free Transit - Petaluma Transit to offer free bus rides on holiday event days (11/25, 12/2, 12/9). The Mail Depot is the downtown bus stop. Cool Petaluma, PDA, and City to promote / link online.

- Waive Parking Fees - Request for City to waive parking fees / restrictions for the holiday season (end of November through the end of December). PDA to discuss with City. This would not be publicized as people would park all day and impact parking availability.
- Additional Parking - City and PDA are looking at additional opportunities for parking areas (vacant lots, etc). The City is offering free parking at City Hall / encouraging businesses to have their staff park there to alleviate congestion of downtown parking.
- Bike Parking - Discussion about safe bike parking locations to encourage biking downtown. The bike shop by Taps has a bike rack. Discussion of racks at The Mail Depot &/or other locations.

E. HOLIDAY ACTIVATION FOR DOWNTOWN

- Extended Hours - Discussion about businesses staying open later hours (7pm or 8pm) for the holiday season (end of November through end of December).
- Cross Promotion - Discussion of ways to market the later hours, cross-promotional opportunities to coincide with people shopping / dining, etc.
- Arts Alive - Integrate with Arts Alive Third Thursday event again as it was successful in partnering with restaurants for their August event.
- Shopping Passport - Discussion of creating a downtown passport for the holidays. Businesses could create individual promotional discounts and a 'grand prize' could be offered to incentivize shopping local and at multiple locations. PDA can assist in creating, promoting, managing.
- Shop Petaluma Gift Card - Free and simple marketing opportunity. Any business may sign up. PDA will assist with onboarding and management. Businesses should check all information and deals are accurate on ShopPetaluma.com. Approx 140 Petaluma businesses currently using. PDA can provide window cling signage &/or signage at register for participating locations. The program is not meant to replace individual business gift cards. PDA is marketing this program in conjunction with holiday event marketing. PDA will send signup and training information, as well as follow up on tipping requirements for restaurants.
- Sonoma County App - Free marketing opportunity all businesses are encouraged to participate in (paid for by the Petaluma TOT Tax). All businesses should check the app for accuracy.
- Lighting - A lighting consultant is needed to determine best options for long-term decorative lighting downtown. As lampposts are too short to have lighting spanning the street, ideas include lighting the silhouette edges of tops of buildings, canopy / hanging lighting in trees, etc. City, PDA, property owners, and businesses will need to work together to implement. The City has available funds to add temporary lighting for the holiday season. PDA looking into the availability of electricity in street light poles to add lighting to the holiday decorations. PDA will provide discounted LED lighting for decorating windows to any interested businesses.
- Downtown Event Spaces - An architectural firm is moving into 199 Petaluma Blvd N (corner of Washington x Petaluma Blvd N) and plans to create a community event space. Hotel Petaluma to host holiday events (Gingerbread house contest, Festival of Trees, etc). Discussion of activating the plaza for the holiday season. BID committee to explore requirements and ideas including permitting, costs, etc. Ideas discussed included carolers, Santa visits, Menorah lighting, altars, wrapping stations, decorated windows, and exploring other inclusive seasonal options.

OTHER

- Discussion of a decompression party in January for BID business owners following the holiday season.
- PDA working on creating a centralized and up-to-date BID / Property Owner list to be utilized by the City, BID, PDA for more streamlined communication.
- The Floathouse is interested in hosting more events. Businesses are encouraged to work with / support them. Their Witches & Wizards on the Water event is October 28 for any who would like to be involved (participation, partnership, sponsorship, etc).
- The Festival of Trees event will be returning on December 1 and 2 at Hotel Petaluma / hosted by The Fabulous Women of Petaluma. Downtown businesses may participate by decorating a tree or donating other prizes to be raffled off at their fundraiser event.
- Santa's Riverboat Arrival will disembark at the Yacht Club dock and cross the bridge to take photos by Taps as the docks by the Floathouse are being replaced with more energy-efficient ones.
- Sonoma Clean Power is offering free walk-through assessments for downtown businesses to review ways of being more energy efficient.

2023 UPCOMING EVENTS

- Fall Antique Faire – Sun, Sept 24
- Trick or Treat Trail – Tues, Oct 31
- Small Business Saturday – Sat, Nov 25
- Santa's Riverboat Arrival – Sat, Nov 25
- Holiday Open House / Marketplace – Sat, Dec 2
- Theatre Square Tree Lighting – TBD
- Lighted Boat Parade – Sat, Dec 9
- Arts Alive – 3rd Thursday of every month Arts Alive events are an integration of the arts community and downtown Petaluma businesses. Interested businesses and artists may apply through the PDA website. Businesses may request to be paired with an artist.

MEETING ADJOURNED The meeting was adjourned at 9:50am.

NEXT MEETING **Tuesday, October 17, 2023** (Avinage ~ 8:30am)