

August 29, 2024

Constituency Executive Committee draft minutes

6:15 p.m.

Attendance: Bob Braun, Heather Pihl, Emily Pike, Babak Ziraknejad, Bob Messina, Jonathan Berner, Joan Paulson, Nick Setten, Chris Scott, Christine Vaughan, Golnaz Mohammadi, Ben Adlin, Gina Karaba, Janice\_\_\_, Graham Marmion, Alex Rasmussen

Bob Braun called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m.

### Agenda

Approved by acclamation.

### Minutes

The draft minutes of April 2019 and July 2024 were approved by acclamation.

### Public comment

Joan asked if a current list of Constituency officers and their email addresses, phone numbers, and term details could be provided to the membership. Past Chair Chris Scott answered that the individual emails can't be provided to the membership but that officers can be reached via the email address on the Constituency website. He said officers should have a list for themselves, but not to be shared with the general public.

Bob Messina suggested the Constituency meet with a Market resident who is creating videos about Market businesses. Bob Braun suggested bringing it up at the next General Assembly meeting.

### Old Business

Nick reported back from Constituency Officer Russell Monroe that he is too busy with work and PDA Council leadership duties to attend Constituency meetings right now but will return at the September meetings.

### New business

Budget: Nick said he's not had a chance to follow up.

Top ten ideas for funding:

Jonathan thought there should be money for Emily to do outreach. Nick clarified that money is needed to print brochures, make buttons, to sponsor events. He suggested renaming the Outreach Committee to be the Outreach and Advocacy and Education Committee.

Bob Braun suggested updating the website, such as adding videos of Market merchants.

Babak asked about the purpose of outreach. Emily described her outreach efforts, educating residents and businesses about the Constituency as a place to be involved and escalate concerns.

Nick would like to know if Friends of the Market has a digital membership renewal system to recommend that would improve the Constituency website. Gina said she's had videos and Paypal on her website and it's not complex. She felt it would encourage people to join.

Discussion ensued about outreach methods. Gina suggested a sign in the bathroom to remind people about the Constituency. Emily said she and Nick are working on a brochure. She suggested that Market businesses could educate their employees about the Constituency. Chris suggested adding a QR code to signs that takes them to the Constituency website. He encouraged organizing the budget around categories of expenses. Babak said he was not aware of the Constituency when he first opened in the Market and agreed that raising awareness is important. Gina suggested putting signs by the elevators. Bob Braun said he has offered to pay for businesses' employees to sign up but there were no takers. He said that the interest level has waned.

Christine said she thinks the PDA has some fiscal responsibility for dues that are collected because they become part of the budget, therefore dealing with the financial department of the PDA is essential. She suggested that the more specific the Constituency can be, the more successful it will be at PDA Council.

Chris suggested that Christine tell about her background, as she has just started on the PDA Council. Christine said she's been a craftsperson for 34 years, served on the PDA Council, Friends of the Market Board, the Market Historical Commission, and the Constituency Bylaws Committee.

Bob suggested discussing ideas at the General Assembly meetings per category. He asked that specific ideas on categories or subcategories be sent to the Constituency's email address: [marketconstituency@gmail.com](mailto:marketconstituency@gmail.com)

Nick brought up the conversation from the previous General Assembly meeting - costs associated with Election Runner, Survey Monkey, website and newsletter cost increases, events budget.

Chris reminded Nick about a workshop related to restarting the Merchants Association. Nick explained that they had chatted about potentially working with the PDA to hold a workshop for people interested in restarting a merchants association, creating an environment to foster that. He brought it up under Committee concerns at full Council. Jonathan asked about the PDA Council response to it. Nick said that no one responded. He thinks this (restarting the organization) is in line with where the PDA is headed. Chris suggested reaching out to the Office of Economic Development and the Chamber to host it.

Jonathan said he thought this was a next step for the Listening Committee; it could reach out to businesses to facilitate/lead the charge for setting up an event so businesses can get together to discuss it. He noted that there will not be an Exec Director at the PDA for months, so the Constituency could get people together. Discussion ensued.

Babak asked when the budget was due. Christine said it will be in November.

There was a discussion about the videographer, a Market resident who has been recording podcasts about Market businesses. Chris suggested that she join the Constituency. Bob Messina suggested that she be invited to a Constituency meeting.

Gina suggested that the Constituency use Instagram.

CB120824 3-year Design Review "holiday": Heather explained that the bill, coming before the City Council's Land Use Committee on September 4, would mean that the public would not be notified about new developments across the street and the city staff decisions would not be appealable. She was not sure if the Council will be voting on it yet, because the Council will be entering into budget discussions shortly. She explained that it will affect land adjacent to and across the street from the Market. Gina asked if it would be a good idea to have people show up at Council. Heather said yes. Joan explained that it is critical to send in comments in September is critical to send in comments because the City Council shuts down for budget discussions.

Figgy Pudding presentation: Heather explained that Pamela Hinckley, Executive Director at the Market Senior Center, had asked to do a presentation about the Figgy Pudding event to the Constituency. Could it be scheduled for September, or after that? Discussion ensued. Tentative for September, perhaps for October agenda. Nick said he thought there should be a Market Constituency team.

Pike Place: Heather suggested including discussions of Pike Place. Constituency and Friends of the Market members have been attending Downtown Greenways meetings and providing history and education to the volunteers. There is consensus that removing unnecessary traffic from Pike is a good idea and there was a suggestion that installing a "Local Access Only" sign would cause mapping applications to circumvent Pike Place as a thoroughfare. It is not clear if that works or not, because it doesn't for Bell Street. Downtown Greenways is supportive of bringing back bus lines to First Avenue.

Emily said she was glad to see the Constituency members engaging with Downtown Greenways. She thinks the volunteers were receptive to information shared by Constituency and Friends' members. She said that Downtown Greenways is interested in helping by collecting data on Pike Place. She would encourage people in Greenways to join the Constituency and who often shop at the Market. There was a discussion about the PDA managing the street.

Babak asked for more information about the collection of data. Emily said no data is currently being collected, but the idea would be to have volunteers count the cars that keep driving through the street without stopping. Babak said he used to work for a company that collected

data, and said that kind of data is already available. Emily explained further that it would be to determine how many people just drive through.

Christine said there isn't any short term parking on Pike Place, because it's not enforced. She pointed out that people driving through would find parking if it were enforced. Gina said she has been ticketed, so they are enforcing it. She spoke to the need for pick up/drop off on Pine or Stewart.

Emily emphasized that the conversation about Pike Place is happening outside the Market, and it would behoove the PDA to take control of the conversation. She is concerned that the PDA is not taking action.

Nick said that the PDA is working through a large backlog of leases and is down staff members, including no director yet. He agreed that it should be made more of a priority.

Discussion ensued about coordinating dialog between the PDA and Greenways. There was a tentative plan to discuss it in October. Bob Braun suggested that the PDA probably should take a more active role. Emily suggested discussing it at the Constituency and then elevating it to the PDA Council.

Alex supported the idea of adding a Local Access Only sign to deter people from driving down the street. Alex asked Nick what would be involved to put in such a sign. Discussion ensued on the type of sign it would be and what steps would be required. Gina said she would not want to have it there all year. Nick asked that any next steps be approved at a General Assembly meeting. Bob Messina referenced the amendment by Bob Kettle to the Transportation Plan that Pike Place be evaluated with the PDA and stakeholders. He said the PDA will be the convener, once the Executive Director is hired.

### PDA Committee reports

Programs, FAM and Executive Committee meetings were canceled. Nick summarized the full Council meeting this evening: leases passed, presentation by the Senior Center, conversation about Executive Director hiring committee - three candidates passed to final interviews. Nominations Committee update - Gabriel Grant is up for confirmation. New Officers, Committee Chairs. Medical and dental coverage for PDA employees. Business owners made angry comments related to leases during public comments. Christine added that Councilmembers were sufficiently concerned with the public comment that there may be an additional closed session to discuss leases.

### Public comment

Gina said that the lady who attended the last meeting still wants to know what is happening about the garden and the senior housing. She explained that it was started as a mental health help for seniors, but they are not allowed to garden there now and an intern from the Market Commons has taken over. She explained that some people have been 86-ed and that has

resulted in no one being able to garden there. Nick clarified that the garden was started as a way to provide food to the Food Bank, not a mental health help. Chris said the gardeners are from the Senior Center. Nick encouraged residents to reach out directly to the Market Commons and to Crystal Dixon. He explained that they have to go through the Commons.

Finalize agenda items for September 17 GA meeting

Bob Braun said a draft will be sent out to officers for their comments.

8:10 p.m. Meeting adjourned.