

## **BANKERS HILL COMMUNITY GROUP MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, June 20, 2022  
Bankers Hill Clubhouse, 3030 Front Street

BHCG Steering Committee member Aaron Reyes called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Reyes introduced the following Steering Committee members who were present: Co-Chairs Pete Politzer and John Percy, Treasurer Jeanne Rawlings, Secretary John Lamb, Ben Baltic and Michael Reyes. Approximately 41 people attended the meeting.

Reyes welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Jordan and Zack from Orange Theory Fitness for serving as the Featured Business for the meeting. Reyes asked that when someone wants to speak or ask a question during the meeting to please identify themselves by name and neighborhood they live in for the record.

It was announced that the Self-Realization Fellowship Temple next door to the Bankers Hill Clubhouse will keep its newly installed gates open until 8:30 p.m. during meeting nights to allow attendees to exit through the property onto First Avenue, if they choose. Normally, the gates are open from 7 a.m. until sunset.

Reyes mentioned that SDPD Community Relations Officer Larry Turner recently conducted a "security walkthrough" of his residence building and recommended others do the same.

### **Treasury Report**

Rawlings reported \$4,036 in the bank.

### **Project Review Committee**

Percy provided an update on committee activities with a continued focus on understanding the city's Complete Communities program as it relates to the Uptown Community Plan. Percy said he is hopeful the developer of 301 Spruce, Lawrence Howard, will attend a future meeting, adding that city staff review of the project is behind schedule.

### **Neighborhood Safety Committee**

Ann Kilrain provided an update on pilot Neighborhood Watch efforts in Bankers Hill, including the addition of a new block captain north of Maple Canyon on Second Avenue. She stressed that it only takes a few neighbors to start a watch program. She said if anyone is interested in becoming a block captain, email [info@bankershillcommunity.org](mailto:info@bankershillcommunity.org).

### **Safe Play Zone Update**

Reyes said Port-A-Potties and a hand-washing station are now set up next to the Nutmeg restrooms on Balboa Park's West Mesa. Those facilities will be available when the city begins closing the permanent bathrooms at Nutmeg and near Upas at night. He said money is being raised for a pizza party to thank park maintenance workers.

### **Featured Business — Orange Theory Fitness**

Zack Fenderson of Orange Theory Fitness thanked the BHCG for the opportunity to be the featured business and gave a brief overview of the gym, located at Fifth and Nutmeg.

### **Non-Agenda Public Comment**

Michael Meacham said Officer Turner had recently reviewed his building's security systems at no cost. He said he would highly recommend the service.

Pat from St. Paul's Cathedral announced that the church is putting together welcoming gift baskets for the new neighbors at the recently completed 525 Olive apartment tower.

Peter Raymond of the Bankers Hill Neighborhood Parking Committee said 48 trash receptacles have been placed throughout the neighborhood and will be cleaned out three times a week. Also, additional stainless-steel bike-locking hoops have been installed in various locations. More trees and shrubs will be added to the landscaped pop-outs, he said.

Baltic said he appreciated St. Paul's church bathing itself in blue and gold light in honor of Ukraine.

### **Government Representatives**

Emily Bonner, Councilmember Stephen Whitburn's representative, discussed the city budget, short-term vacation rentals and a street-vendor ordinance. Ryan Darsey, Whitburn's director of community engagement, provided a status update on the West Mesa restrooms. He said Whitburn has suggested closing the restrooms from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. Darsey said regarding the restroom controversy, "there's a lot of misinformation out there." The most challenging thing, he said, is keeping the restrooms functional. He described items being put down the drains, including rocks. The reality of restrooms out of service creates its own public health issue, he added. He said newly added security will patrol the restrooms, hopefully beginning before the July 4 holiday. Michael Welch reported streetlights in need of repair along Balboa Drive. Darsey acknowledged the security aspect of that but noted that there's a backlog of streetlight-repair requests. Other attendees noted the importance of available public restrooms, improved sidewalk lighting and a reduction in street drag-racing.

Christopher Gris, representing state Assemblymember Chris Ward, introduced himself and updated attendees on state budget and legislative issues regarding community colleges and solar-power storage.

### **San Diego Pride Weekend Cleanup Update**

Rawlings and Baltic, spearheading this year's cleanup organizing, brought attendees up to speed on planning for this year's return to in-person Pride celebrations July 15-17. Rawlings noted that the BHCG earns its annual revenues from its volunteer-cleanup efforts in the neighborhood during Pride weekend. Baltic said he hopes the cleanup will be easier this year, given the addition of nearly 50 new permanent trash receptacles this year in Bankers Hill.

### **San Diego City Attorney Mara Elliott**

Elliott said she was glad to be in Bankers Hill and complimentary of the BHCG, adding, "I've never seen anything like this." She introduced two deputy city attorneys and her chief of staff in attendance. Regarding street racing, she said her office is "on it." She suggested that witnesses take photos or videos. Elliott described her office as "independent." That said, she "can't tell the chief of police what to do." Regarding homelessness, Elliott said state statutes have changed tremendously with more focus on rehabilitation over punishment. "Being homeless is not a crime," she said, but added, "A crime is a crime." She also touched on efforts to pursue conservatorships.

The city attorney was asked about Mayor Todd Gloria's proposed settlement of the 101 Ash real-estate debacle. She said the City Council would be considering it in a week and that people should be "prepared for a long meeting." Elliott added the District Attorney is still reviewing the case. "Stay tuned," she said.

An attendee asked if it's appropriate to photograph individuals who are exposing themselves to children in local parks. Elliott said juries want to see all the evidence. Witnesses should also call 911 immediately, she added.

Elliott was asked how she reconciles images of people's belongings being thrown away with her claims of compassion towards the homeless. She said "it's hard to get the whole story with one photo. But we're not perfect."

Meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by John Lamb, Secretary.