

Board Retreat Meeting Minutes January 25, 2023 Adobe

FREMONT - Blasting Off Into 2023!

Attending: Brandi Gaines, Paul Robinson, Phil Megenhardt, Sean Erhardt, Jamie Hoffman Billy Beckett, Jayson Cottam, Steve Mitchell, Eva Otto, Jessica Vets

Not Attending: Suzie Burke, Amina Kapusuzoglu, Ken Saunderson, Michael Wanaka

Staff: Pete Hanning, Caroline Sherman

The meeting was called to order at 12:13 PM by Brandi.

12:00-12:30 - Welcome

The Chamber Mission: The Fremont Chamber of Commerce Strengthens the business climate and improves the quality of life in the Fremont community.

- 1) Housekeeping Paul
 - a) Note taker will be Caroline. In Caroline's absence Paul will take notes.
 - b) Paul is timekeeper.
 - c) Ground rules & agreements. We'll listen to everyone. All opinions listened to. Poster on wall is the Parking Lot for great ideas outside of the agenda to be reviewed at a later time. The Executive Board will take it up later. Offline conversations must be taken out into the hall.
 - d) Pee freely meeting. No potty breaks.
 - e) Who is leaving early?
- 2) President's Remarks Brandi
 - a) Review of Retreat Agenda Brandi
 - b) Phil: I've been through a lot of these. It's a retreat. Lots of different ideas and opinions, and we all respect that. And that's what makes Fremont Awesome! A lot of the work from this meeting will happen in the next 6 months.
- 3) Board Introductions Pete
 - a) Suzie brings lots of history. It wouldn't be here if it weren't for Suzie. She brings lots of determination.
 - b) Amina Kapusuzoglu, Suzie's granddaughter, couldn't find child care.

- c) Michael Wanaka, has a sick daughter.
- d) Ken Saunderson, out with illness, but doing well.
- e) Then around the table. Most are residents of Fremont, and all have a business in Fremont.
- 4) 2022 Wins Brandi
 - a) COVID s#*t show
 - b) Rocket painted and decorated with lights
 - c) Fremont Fair happened
 - d) Our events are what fund us. Need to look for new revenue streams
 - e) Inherited Trick or Treat
 - f) Ended Lenin Lighting & Festivus
 - g) Hired Pete

12:30-12:45 -2022 Review

1) Review History of Action Plan and 5 pillars

12:45-1:30 - Board Membership

- 1) Review of roles and responsibilities of the board Paul
 - a) Encouraged everyone to familiarize themselves with these documents. He read the Board Participation form intro that reviews board member responsibilities.
 - b) Phil explained we are a solid organization with the Bylaws, a legal document. We have board insurance, we pay our taxes, we have a license. We have a code of ethics and diversity statement to keep ourselves in line.
 - c) Brandi, we strive to be compliant and within the lines, as much as we like to color outside the lines.
 - d) ACTION ITEM: Need to update the <u>Diversity Statement</u> to Say APPROVED
- 2) Board Participation -- Paul
 - a) 2023 Board Member Participation Form Links directly to online form
 - b) 2022 Board Meeting Attendance
 - i) We need participation. We understand everyone has businesses to run. Participation means show up, give ideas, commit to action items. Report back to the board. Volunteering at the Fair/Oktoberfest is virtually non-negotiable.
 - ii) Pete—the committees will find their own rhythm.
 - iii) Brandi—the Major Events committee will be working hard first six months & then less busy.
 - iv) Phil—this board moves slowly. Things get chipped away at.
 - (1) Represent Fremont
 - (2) ...
 - (3) Gov't Advocacy.
 - (4) Listed this way because we only have so much capacity. Depends on what heavy lifting is needed. When Brandi, Pete or Caroline sends an email, it's worth your time to read it.

- v) Brandi: Read the newsletter, the Blast.
- vi) Pete: Send me your news! We want to promote you. We shine lights on members who participate more.
- vii) Brandi: Soupocalypse! Lots of restaurants involved.
- viii)Pete: I didn't see anything about it! Please send this to Pete and Caroline
- ix) Brandi: Anytime Fitness just remodeled and is having a sale.
- x) Jayson: What are the Chamber's boundaries?
- xi) Pete: We are not a BIA, which is bound geographically. We extend to Frelard/Leary where it bends, South side of ship canal, East to Ivar's, North to the Zoo.
- xii) Jessica—it's a state of mind. If you want to join us, it doesn't matter where you live/work.
- xiii)Phil: Great to be meeting for Fremont.
- xiv) Eva: People are coming out of their shell. Great time.
- xv) Jessica: And pre-covid plenty of businesses that were and are still here and haven't heard of the Chamber.
- xvi)Brandi: That's on us. We need to advocate for the Chamber. I am a board member. Join the Chamber! Being proud to be a member. What does it mean to be a member.
- 3) **BOARD ACTION ITEM:** Elect Secretary of the Board Brandi
 - a) See Job Description in the **Bylaws**:
 - i) Article 2, Section 2
 - ii) Article 3, Sections 1 and 5
- 4) Committees/Roundtables (Committee List to date)
 - a) Membership—figuring out how to increase membership, manage membership levels, etc., all year.
 - i) Pete: We need more members, and we need to upsell members to new levels.
 - b) Grants—not all year
 - c) [Major Events-removed]
 - d) Marketing and Communications--Walking Guide, Website, events, etc., all year
 - e) Finance committee—if you have a head for numbers and spreadsheets.
 - f) Annual Chamber Awards meeting—help decide who should be honored with an award.
 - g) Government Advocacy--
 - h) Public Safety-
- 5) Everyone came up to the board and added their names to committees with post it notes.
 - a) No one signed up for DEI.
 - b) Brandi: It's something we all need to do all day every day.
 - c) Pete: The ways to improve our minority/female/younger participation is to get them to join committees, join the board, etc. It can be tough when it's the same faces for every meeting. Need to have an intention to be someplace different.
 - d) Phil: learned a lot being on that committee.
 - e) Caroline: Consider drafting a committee statement that includes some component of DEI.
 - f) Brandi: Programs—how do we get more businesses from different backgrounds, DEI, etc. Partnering with Kent Chamber that has a lot of BIPOC representation. How can we do better as a team.

- g) Who from Board and/or ad hoc will participate? Who from staff will participate in which committee?
- h) Membership:
 - i) Jessica & Pete to co-lead
 - ii) Billy
 - iii) Jamie
 - iv) Eva
 - v) Sean
- i) Government and Advocacy
 - i) Brandi
 - ii) Billy
 - iii) Likely Suzie?
- 6) **ACTION ITEM:** Get absent folks to sign up-Caroline
 - a) Marketing and Communications
 - i) Ken-lead?
 - ii) Jessica
 - iii) Jamie
 - iv) Phil
 - v) Eva
 - b) Finance
 - i) Phil--lead
 - ii) Jayson
 - iii) Steve expressed interest in attending, though not being on the committee
 - c) **ACTION ITEM:** Put all meetings on the Chamber Calendar and on the Board Agenda—Pending rollout of updated website—Caroline.
 - d) Annual Chamber Awards
 - i) Paul
 - ii) Brandi
 - iii) Sean
 - iv) Suzie?
 - v) Amina?
 - vi) Caroline-co-lead
 - vii) Pete: these awards are meaningful and people like getting the physical awards and certificates. They help pull folks together as a community.
 - e) Programs
 - i) Eva-co-lead
 - ii) Steve
 - iii) Jayson
 - iv) Ken
 - v) Pete-lead
 - f) Grants
 - i) Jessica
 - ii) Leo Griffin?
 - iii) Caroline-co-lead
 - iv) Pete—powerful to learn the roles of FAC, FNC, FCC in the grant. Leo and Caroline have done well to get us \$125k in two grants.
 - g) Public Safety
 - i) Jamie-co-lead

- ii) Paul
- iii) Billy
- iv) Steve
- v) Pete-co-lead
- vi) Getting help from vendors on this, as well. Store Front Repair fund. Limitations have been on lack of numbers participating.
- 7) There is an expectation of committee member action to move the committee's work forward. There are consequences for inactivity/lack of accountability.

1:30-1:45 - Break

1:45-3:15 - Establish 2023 Action Plan

- Goal is to keep it simple! Know our limitations. Stay within these 5 topics. No bad ideas. All ideas will be listened to.
- 2) Budget, Management and Operations Phil
 - a) Review of budget using Proposed Budget up on screen. Reviewed the Revenue engines (Chart of Accounts.) It was developed way back when Phil and Jessica worked together. Budget vs Actuals with Proposed Budget included. Actuals per each month—true story of what happened in 2022 and then 2023 numbers.
 - b) Looked at the Totals columns BJ-BN. See where things are and the challenges we face. We used to give out a lot of money to non-profits and grants, etc. But then where is our money and how are we going to maintain our business? We decided to build up reserves and got up to \$100k and it saved us through COVID. Good financial stewardship back in the day saved us. As Treasurer, I don't let anyone spend any money unless we have a really good reason.
 - c) All is well.
 - i) Bylaws say we have to have a year's worth of reserves. We have half of that. So, we need a savings plan. Cash flow ebbs and flows, and we have to get into reserves sometime.
 - ii) Magenta is possibilities. The budget tells the story.
 - iii) Walking Guide started by Jon Hegeman a long time ago. Hasn't been updated recently. We have \$6k to create a digital version with a simpler card with QR code. Drives things to businesses, too. Also, we have Google Maps, but that is not our competition.
 - d) History of Hysterical Markers—Jon Hegeman started them. They need to be updated. Working on it with the NERF Grant.
 - e) Meeting Income—did nearly \$12k in 2019. This committee can work at it and get us revenue to get us back to 2019 levels. Could be a revenue engine.
 - f) Meeting Sponsorship Income—this is also something that could be a revenue engine.
 - Jessica wants to do a mixer.
 - g) Membership Income—most important: Actual was \$45k, over \$5k of budgeted. \$60k is attainable. Use the Goals numbers to see where the opportunities lie.

- Discussion of upselling, finding the ones who will join at a higher level. Renewals are a big success place, too.
- h) Jessica: The point of this chamber is to cohere community. So those who can't even afford to join, they should join the safety committee. Then more and more people coming to meeting brings in more \$160. Don't discount the low level and having those numbers high.
- i) Phil: We have lots of data. We know who is current, who has lapsed. There is a lot of low hanging fruit.
 - i) We are proposing a bold budget.
 - ii) Pete: With the bold proposal, how much would be going back into our coffers for the rainy-day fund.
 - iii) Phil: no answer today but will report back on a savings plan. We'll be aggressive, if it takes us 2 years/\$20k/year.
- j) Jessica—we tried doing an add-on to membership. Art Fund and a couple of others. The Rainy-Day fund got us through COVID, here's the value we brought, round up your membership for the rainy-day fund!
- k) Phil: Oktoberfest—back about 60%. Conservatively budgeting \$35k. Fremont Fair, we did make that budget. They are proven and test every year. It really makes sense.
- Pete: Fremont Fair—we look at that as part of our marketing budget. Not our revenue engine. It's been very successful that way. It's very expensive—sponsorship and beer garden—smaller every year. That's how it works so all ships rise.
- m) Oktoberfest is our second biggest revenue engine behind membership.
- n) INCOME: \$88k
- expenses: magenta items are higher and do we need to reduce/cancel these things.
 - i) Holiday/Lighting—usually we'd give it some money so vendors could be hired to do it. This year, the lighting of the Rocket took a big chunk of that. First year we've lit the Rocket.
 - (1) The Chamber supported Lenin Lighting because it was goofy, and it got us on the front page of the Seattle Times.
 - (2) With Ukraine, we decided not to do Lenin lighting and lit the Rocket instead. This resulted in a new member! Worth every penny!
 - ii) Walking Guide—costs about \$12k to design and print. But it is off the charts as far as tourism and marketing. Everyone used to pay, \$170 for members and \$220 for non-members. We decided to move it from a revenue generator to a marketing tool.
 - iii) What meeting costs—this will go up, because we'll have more meetings.
 - iv) Advertising & Promo expenses—where will this go in the Chart of Accounts? We have put \$5k in Holiday Marketing, but it can live anywhere.
 - (1) Holiday Lighting
 - (2) Digital Ads (bump up social media)
 - v) Human Resources
 - (1) Stephen—cheap CPA!
 - (2) Caroline—by myself for 6 months, so was up. Gave her an increase this year. Not negotiable.

- (3) Ken—for putting on events, sometimes a percentage of proceeds.
- (4) Pete-not negotiable.
- vi) Office Expenses—added a new texting program.
- vii) Operating Expenses
- p) TOTAL EXPENSES: \$140k/year!
- g) Net Revenue in Proposed Budget: -\$51k
- r) Cost cutting is tight, so we have to look at new Revenue Streams!
 - i) 2022 Statement of Financial Position
 - ii) 2022 Statement of Activity
 - iii) 2022 Budget vs Actuals
- s) Changes for 2023
 - i) Proposed 2023 Budget -- DRAFT
- t) What our exposure is: contractors
- u) What our revenue engines are.
 - i) Any new ones?
- Reviewed WG over time and cost vs income. Costs the Chamber about \$1k to produce in past years.
- 4) We don't usually go over the P&L, because it doesn't show where we are each month. Cash flow is what drives success.
 - a) Billy: does Chamber pay anything for Oktoberfest?
 - i) Phil: No! Chamber gets \$2.50/per person who entered the door. Bold Hat takes all the risk.
- 5) Billy: Swag—he's got a guy who will give us a great deal.
- 6) Pete: Before Fremont Fair it would be good to review what Bold Hat does. Safety Security plan, managing 20k drunk people, all the licenses, etc. Yet Chamber has the liquor license.
 - a) Pete: Would be good to review Bold Hat/Chamber at a board meeting.
- 7) Brandi: Existing revenue engines and where opportunities are. We don't charge for things that are a benefit to the community. Others are a nice to have. We need to think about increasing programs. Open to ideas for fundraising and other revenue ideas.
 - a) Casino night gala, & get Fremont Studios to donate the space.
 - b) Phil: our smallest event is 5k people. Wine walks, food walks, etc. Chelan sold 600 tickets. August wine walk? There other event companies that do this. Seattle Uncorked. There are all sorts of stuff that can be done.
 - c) Jessica: Events like that, you need to bring value, and that brings value to a sub-set of businesses. We're making money on the event, bringing in new member. Show the value to the members who will benefit.
 - d) Jamie: Behind the Triangle, doing smaller little markets opened to Fremont Businesses. First Wednesday tied to a wine walk or something.
 - e) Pete: Sidewalk sale, retail specific, get rid of excess inventory.
 - f) Pete: Artwalk—used to do this.

- g) Phil: Georgetown Bites
- h) Jayson: Soupocalypse
- i) Pete: Also, other event revenue generators. Trick or Treating, Trolloween—can we put a revenue model within that day of Halloween?
- j) Jamie: Passport books?
- k) Jessica: Winter Walks—game sheet. Like Bite of Fremont.
- I) Brandi: \$150 wine passport with discounts throughout Fremont.
- m) Phil: Another option is SWAG! Two major festivals to sell Fremont branded stuff. Consignment option. Sunday Market, coffee cups, beanies, etc.
- n) Jamie: We have a great weekend crowd. We could bring folks in at other times of the week. That might get other types of businesses that don't always participate.
- Jayson: Great idea—we need something to help everybody out. We need to be a
 destination spot as a community working together. What are events that are good
 for all different sectors in Fremont. Salons vs restaurants vs retail, etc.
- p) Phil: Fremont Fair during covid was the Fremont Art Scramble. That brought different people to Fremont. Turn this into the Art Walk. Do that twice a year = \$20k/year. T shirt is a long play. On the membership side of things, that's where the numbers can change long term. What materials do you have in your hand to help folks sign up. A QR code on their phone.
- 8) Caroline updated briefly on NERF Grant, Art Catalog, Digitization of WG, translation button, ADA Guidelines, etc.
 - a) Jamie: How the Chamber supports you.
 - b) Jessica: We create material that we can more easily update over time. So, each year we are revisiting the value propositions and can update the materials.
 - c) Brandi: Next Board meeting we can give folks the generic business cards,
 - d) ACTION ITEM: update the QR Code when we move to Jag system--Caroline
- 9) Brandi: sell swag. We need a fulfillment house. CODIS Design, Bravo Mktg.
 - a) Billy: my contact doesn't do fulfillment, but very cost effective.
- 10) Membership Development and Membership Services Caroline and Pete
 - a) Review and create strategies for membership campaigns Caroline
 - i) Caroline: presented Pete & Caroline's targets for upselling from her report.
 - ii) 2023 Membership Goals
 - b) Programming Pete
 - i) Want to make sure our programming is of value to our different sectors throughout the year. Most of that programming is dedicated at the \$160-\$600.
 - ii) Jessica: Would like to see some professional programming for employees at the big businesses. Opportunity to bring their younger employees to leadership.
 - iii) Jayson: What about meetings at later, after vs before work.
 - iv) Eva: Adobe/Google-how businesses could improve their skills
 - v) Jessica: If your business is a member, you can come. And you can join a committee, you can add this to your resume and advance.
 - vi) Good time to share that our March 16^{th} event is the Route 40 event.
 - vii) 2023 Programs (to date)

11)Marketing and Tourism – Phil

- a) Fremont Fair and Oktoberfest
 - i) Phil: 52nd year for Fremont Fair. Bold Hat Productions has run it for a decade. Amazon returns as title sponsor for 2nd year. Gives it a financial recovery. Booked better bands. We worked with booker for Nectar, Andy Palmer to book bands. Shifted from headliner to local diverse bands. Was a cool initiative. Brought ethnicity to the event. 2 beer gardens. Recruitment for vendors going well. Also symbiotic with FAC's Solstice Parade. Returning on Saturday of Solstice Weekend.
 - ii) Eva: How things went. The way the parade ended early was brilliant! Really great that it didn't go to Gas Works.
 - iii) Phil: The police were not available to do it. So, we paid \$12k to pay the police.
 - iv) Brandi: problem for FAC with competing beer gardens.
 - v) Phil: Fremont Fair set to be another success. It is our welcome mat for the art world. Adobe moved here because they liked funky fremont. The more we keep our bohemian world the better.
 - vi) Brandi: our lease was up but we all rallied to stay.
- b) Phil: The more we do cool stuff it pays off.
 - i) Oktoberfest, a micro distillery thing. Glad to see it come back. It will be stronger. The Bold Hat Team that puts it on is strong. We rely on 600 volunteers to make it work. This year, Saturday night, we had 17 volunteers, we need 55 just to be open pouring beers. The problem is that it's all guest experience. If you are standing in line that is long forever, it all comes to a grinding halt. We want our retention to be a positive experience. Bold Hat is very cognizant of all these things. It's fun, people return, it's done professionally.
 - ii) Brandi: Jessica worked two days.
 - iii) Phil: Suzie rallies her community to show up
- c) 2023 event forecast
- d) Walking Guide digitization
- e) Swag -- Brandi
- f) Arts Maintenance
 - i) Review of NERF Grant
 - (1) Leo Griffin steering mgt of it to FCC vs FAC
 - (2) Art Repair & New Art
 - (3) Hysterical Markers getting refurbished.
 - (a) Removed HM by Brooks, the old Chiso restaurant (SW corner 36th & Fremont) and VAM Studios
 - (b) Lenin?
 - (c) Starbucks?
 - (d) By Interurban?
 - (4) Need to review the plaque/storyboards.
 - (a) Jessica: There was a plan to redo the plaques every year & monetize it.
 - (b) Brandi: Take it up in committee!
 - ii) Creative City through UNESCO?
 - iii) Mague Da Vis grant thing to be a Creative Neighborhood (?)

iv) Arts Fund Account Activity

12) Advocacy and Government Relations - Brandi

- a) Route 40-Brandi
 - i) Proposal to increase the time the route 40 can travel for a better on-time rate. They approved it in 2020. Never told us. 100 people read it and opined on it. Part of Move Seattle. Nobody along the route was notified of the impacts. When we learned about it, Suzie brought it to our attention. Dedicates a lane to just busses. We'd go from 8 to 6 lanes. Leary through 36th to Fremont Ave over the bridge. Eliminating parking.
 - ii) Dedicate more bike lanes. We do not need more of these.
 - iii) Coming north across the bridge—moving the Route 40 bus stop in front of Show Pony, Olympic Jewelry, etc. But keeping the original stop. Add a bike path to go up the hill, but it would take away all that parking along Leary. We have the busiest draw bridge in N America, traffic will not stop. But they are asking everything go into one lane. It will back up all the way into Ballard, etc. It's just taking one mode and prioritizing it at expense of all others. Ridership on Route 40 is not even at 50% of pre-pandemic.
 - iv) Brandi: They did this in south seattle, but it didn't work. It's a disaster.
 - v) Phil: We as a business community see all the challenges. Where at this point can we be most effective as a voice for the business community. What is our action plan.
 - vi) Brandi: We are in partnership with NSIA, Ballard Chamber, Pelington Props, FNC, all the businesses along the route are on a big group chat, hired a transportation consultant and all are opposed. Metro is listening, but they are doing nothing. Still reaching out with new director of Transportation to get a meeting with them. What can you do? Advocate against it, let your neighbors know. Need to do a flyer campaign.
 - vii) We need to market the March 16th meeting. Before that we need to educate everyone. So, get those posters with a QR code.
 - viii) Jamie: Can we produce those posters?
 - ix) Brandi: We need to educate!!
 - x) **ACTION ITEM: Eva:** Can make the flyer.
 - xi) Pete: We think Metro is not communicating in good faith.
- b) Candidate Forum
 - Brandi: Coming up in June. Big event. Paid program that Ken puts on—we hire him to do it. Opportunity for all new candidates on the ballot to come & meet people.
 - ii) Ken is willing to produce it with Ballard Alliance & all maritime communities and agencies. It's a really great mix of business community.
 - iii) Pete will be attending as a candidate and not representing the Chamber.
- c) Community Grant
 - i) Brandi: Another way to forge community relations and cross pollinate and partner in support of things that are important to us.
 - ii) Pete: FNC-participates ad hoc. Represents Fremont for Public Safety.

13)Security & Crime/Public Safety - Pete

- a) Pete: Our event last week was very popular and well attended. We've been plagued with all sorts of crime. We have a limited amount of police resources right now. Focus is on building resilience in our community. What can we do for each other. Will probably have Public Safety meetings every other month. Fill out the incident report form. Didn't charge because we wanted as many folks to participate, and also because we had two employees from SPD, so couldn't charge.
- b) Pete: Staff will send a report to the Google Group bi-monthly or so.
 - i) Consider emergency preparedness—Pete's trained in it. You can feel proactive about this (vs public safety). When you put energy into safety meetings with your staff, it helps build a great culture within the business and beyond. Rudy Guiliani and his New York initiatives: crime didn't go down, but sense of public safety went up.
- c) ACTION ITEM: Add all board members to Google Group.
- d) Business2Business
- e) Fremont Public Safety Google Group
- f) Fremont Public Safety Incident Report Form links directly to online form

14) Community Relations and Partnerships - Brandi

- a) Grants Caroline
 - i) NERF Grant 4th Qtly Report

15)Priorities

- a) Board Development
 - i) Welcoming new board members
 - ii) Recruiting new board members: Management team from Fremont Brewing, Brooks, industrial core, evo, Asko, etc.
 - iii) Great way to build skill set-go for diversity!
- b) Committee Development
 - i) Meeting regularly, being an ideation center
- c) Secretary to be on Executive Board
 - i) Overseeing record keeping, filling in when other Exec Members can't
 - ii) We are required to have one.
 - iii) Participate in Exec Board
 - iv) Ensure we are following our bylaws
 - v) Help keep us on track for our 2023 Action Plan
 - (1) Revenue engines
 - (2) Paid programming
 - (3) Art, ??, swag
 - (4) Membership??
 - (5) Community partnership
 - (6) Public Safety
 - (7) Gov't Relations & Advocacy
 - vi) Eva signed up to be the Secretary!! Need to approve by vote at February board meeting.

Parking Lot of Great Ideas:

- a) Billy: Mixer on 2/15-bring the community boards together!
 - i) Jessica: Billy if you host, Jessica will work to get everyone there!
- b) ACTION ITEM: Caroline to set up on Constant Contact
- c) Paul: Biggest goal is membership. Question: What is the value proposition.
- d) Caroline: Please familiarize yourselves with the website.

3:15-4:00 - Final thoughts and Adjourn

- 1) Photos (Board, Staff, Exec Committee) taken outside in the Adobe Courtyard.
- 2) Plan on reviewing our work here at subsequent board meetings.
- 3) Re-convene for Happy Hour at George & Dragon!

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