



**Board Meeting Minutes
February 22, 2023
Teleconference via Microsoft Teams**

Attendance

Present: Brandi Gaines, Paul Robinson, Eva Otto, Phil Megenhardt, Billy Beckett, Jayson Cottam, Ken Saunderson, Jessica Vets

Absent: Suzie Burke, Sean Erhardt, Jamie Hoffman, Amina Leighton, Steve Mitchell, Michael Wanaka

Staff: Pete Hanning, Caroline Sherman


Guests: Mark Ukelson

Call to Order – Brandi

The meeting was called to order by Brandi at 8:33am

A. Mission Statement was read out loud.

- a. The Fremont Chamber of Commerce strengthens the business climate and improves the quality of life in the Fremont community.
- b. Introductions

B. President's Message: Send flowers to Suzie, who's having knee surgery, from **Juniper Flowers, \$75. ←ACTION ITEM** .

Approval of November Minutes: Billy moved to approve all Minutes; Jessica seconded. A vote was held, and the November minutes were APPROVED.

Approval of December Minutes: Brandi moved to approve; Billy seconded. A vote was held, and the December minutes were APPROVED.

Approval of January Minutes: Brandi moved to approve; Billy seconded. A vote was held, and the January minutes were APPROVED.

Guests: Mark Ukelson, The Fremont Tour

Thank you for letting me speak. I'm a Fremonster from way back. Produced mugs, posters, etc., about the NW. Owned it for many years. When sold it, needed a different way to make nuisance. Opted for the Fremont Tour of Art in Fremont. Had big ideas, like the Underground Tour. They bring thousands of folks to Pioneer Square who eat and drink before and after. That was the vision. We knew folks would be in costume. Rocket Man, Fairy Godmother, etc. We'd roll around a suitcase with props and invite folks to do an art attack at the interurban. Engage the traffic to participate with us. Rocket Scientist costume. Under the Rocket, tell the story, get a passerby, dress her up as Rocket Scientist & fire off the rocket. Rigged up with fire extinguisher. Business

model is simple, no office. Uses professional services for IT & bookkeeping. \$3-5k/year. He hires tour guides but doesn't pay himself. If you don't have a lot of money to do promotions, you get listed on platforms like Airbnb as an experience. Expedia, TripAdvisor, B-Line Tours is local. Show Me Seattle van, large buses for more regional tours, and walking tours, mostly in Pike Place Market. They are looking to expand their repertoire of Walking Tours and want to list the Fremont Tour. Very media friendly. In front of the Rocket, the Troll, Frommer's Guide did the tour once and it's listed. Had sponsors: HomeStreet bank, Mike Peck, Brian Regan, Brown Paper Tix, Grinders, Kostas. They recognize the value to bring folks to Fremont.

COVID shut it down. But looking to start it up again. A couple of asks:

- 1) Free Membership: My agenda is in sync with the Chamber. Would like an honorary membership because in sync.
- 2) Brochures in HM: I produce brochures. Would like to place my brochures in the HM.
- 3) Encourage Participation: Props: Meet at Solstice Plaza by JP Patches. Hand out a ticket with map & footprints. Inside includes Troll Money. This is minted at Fremont Branch at HomeStreet Bank. We encourage you to find your playfulness through art and history on the back. Hold onto Troll Money because you'll need it later on. When we go to Troll, someone becomes the Troll's cousin, group photo, pay off the cousin with Troll money. What if we could give them more than one piece of Troll money and use at business community. Troll Money Accepted here in business. Small trinket or other for the Troll Money. Use your influence to use folks to participate in the Troll Money and accept it and support the Tour.
- 4) Welcome any financial support: I produce brochure & ticket. Wouldn't turn down any support to produce something like this. Nothing specific, just asking you to support in this way.

Brandi: Thank you. With Leo and the NERF grant, we've cataloged and updated much of the art in Fremont. How will you update the tour.

Mark: 90-minute tour. Solstice Plaza, through biz Center of the Universe, Rocket, Lenin, Billy Goats Gruff, Ernst Park. Could update it with a map. Walking steps where we go on the tour. Could update it with other art pieces to see. Could talk about different things. It's not a good idea to be too specific—it's a moving target. Don't want things to become outdated.

Leo: We have the Arch at the Troll's Knoll Park by Kim David Hall. Moss Turtle that folks like to water with Japanese hokura. 4 Mushroom sculptures that will go along the path to Norma's mural. You could add them or reference them.

Mark: Very easy to add to the map with info. Going up there or not—couldn't promise. Could evolve. Depends on timeline. Talk about the Billy Goats Gruff. Important to say how it evolved from the playful nature of the community. This is what we mean by being a Fremonster. Gives out certificates: I had a good time at the Fremont Tour. Choosing where to stop—you need places for people to stand. Most places we stop at are safe. Trickiest place is Center of the Universe sign. Other places have a place where folks can stand while we do our patter.

Phil: So much info! Great work! What was your annual total attendance: 2-300 people/year. Not a lot, but I have big plans. To make it work, it will take some work. I'm confident it can happen. I'm enlisting you to support this because it's your agenda as well as mine.

Brandi: we'll talk about this as a board. How we can promote you and discuss supporting you. Troll \$\$ we'll have to see if the businesses want to participate.

Mark: If the Chamber could use our network and see how businesses could create the synergy we've discussed. It's an incentive to get folks to walk into your business.

Phil: This organization won't be able to decide today on 4 asks. Getting the tours, we have mechanism, website, newsletter, every member can get that updated. We can easily execute as far as promoting what you're doing. We can discuss membership. \$160 is lowest. \$50 is a donation. If you're looking for a financial donation. Putting our brand on it, could be a sponsored membership. Heavy lifting on our side to make that happen: Marketing Committee, Caroline would funnel it to the right media platform (website, newsletter, social media channels). Those are easy lifts. I think it's the funnest thing ever! Meet with Caroline to get marketing materials up there. We as a board can consider all the other stuff.

Mark: I'd love to see them come to fruition. I'm a realist. I'm not afraid to ask.

Pete: You and I met a number of times when I ran the Red Door. Having so much turnover in my business, adding something like Troll \$\$ is a complexity that for retail, there can be a rub. I wouldn't feel good about a new layer of complexity.

Mark: Some folks will have problems. If you imagine this being like the underground tour, I think it will be. I recognize not all businesses can do it. If it does, we hope you'll consider it.

Brandi: We're happy to promote your program, but if you promote it. We're happy to promote your program.

Mark: intro from Chamber prior to the work?

Brandi: not in our scope.

Mark: Part of a package I can do.

Brandi: You've already done the work. Say Red Star Taco Bar has already signed up. We're promoting your tour. This is part of your tour.

Mark: One of the things this business is doing. Not planning on you administering it.

Brandi: We'll take all of this info and come back to you. We are super excited about your tour. So many tech visitors from out of town/country. Team Building, or fun outing. Really great potential. Very excited to have that come back.

Pete: Send your promotional stuff to Caroline and me.

Mark: Will send over what I have. Thank you so much!

Office Reports—Pete & Caroline

A. Executive Director – Pete (see attached report)

- a. Membership: 5 new members since December. Fremont Avenue Tours—the Fremont Avenue boat, new owner. Formerly VP of Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce. We're going to do like on Ride the Ducks. Can get 41 people on his boat. We should do a Summertime Cruise. For all of Tech's outside visitors, he could tailor tours along the Silicon Canal and go over the history of it.
- b. With Jag Chamber, one thing is really exciting, we have Leads tab. So, we've been adding every lead (20-30 and growing) Nice hooks out there. Can see more movement on that.
- c. Engagement & Gov't Affairs. Had really good meeting with folks along Odd Fellows Building. Show Pony, Belle Fleur, etc. We met with Dan Strauss about Route 40 Project to provide support and context. Afterwards, everyone said hey, I really need to join the Chamber. Need to show value and feel supported. Stephanie of Show Pony—she's lapsed, it's been a tough winter, but she definitely wants to rejoin. They are starting to see the value.
- d. Programming: We have locked down the location for the March 15th event. Still figuring out the agenda. We should not invite SDOT or any elected officials and use it more of a planning meeting to galvanize our community in opposition to SDOT's proposed changes: loss of parking changing of bus stops and congestion with bus lane both ways. Ask to the Board: Come to the meeting. Bring other folks and talk it up. It will be at Dragster. Wanted Made in House, and she was willing, but it's just too small. Need to have it along Route 40. When I talked to Belinda at Dragster. More of the nightlife community will be really good.
 - i. Brandi: Update the Programs calendar.
 - ii. Awards Ceremony in April will be at Courtyard by Marriott—breakfast, not Happy Hour.
 - iii. Pete: Happy to hear from Caroline, Billy & Jessica on the event last week. Very thankful you put that together while I was out of town.
 - iv. Jessica: good coverage of people, thanking us for putting it on. Great venue! Thanks Billy!
 - v. Billy: great to meet folks I've never met all trying to pull in same direction for Fremont.
- e. Committee Meetings: Trying to calendar out the committee meetings. Won't work for everyone, right away but we ultimately want to get to a set time and day of the month. Some committees staff will be on. You should have received some invitations for these meetings. Trying to go for consistency on these. We move forward slow and steady. We have our first Public Safety mtg on March 7th at 9:30am. Keeping it small intentionally to grow it slowly.

- f. Brandi: If you signed up for a committee, please make sure you are really being active on those committees. While slow and steady is good, we really want to get stuff done. It will take all of us. Please participate.
- g. Ken: Great that we have board member participation. Open up to membership at large.
- h. Pete: General Participation: Public Safety. I agree with Mark Ukelson. He has experience in schwag....
- i. Brandi: We're going to go with a fulfillment house. Making sure a speaker is purposeful.
- j. Phil: Fulfillment house note: volunteer shirts for Fair. Will have an intern join us this summer to setup an online store.
- k. Brandi: We can work together on this.

B. Office Management – Caroline (see attached report)

- Consider using Arts Fund \$\$ for HM Story Boards.
- NERF Grant: Leo: N 46th Street mural has been washed and partially painted out. Got a quote, but they say it really needs to be refreshed (repainted). Will come up with a proposal with Urban Artworks to refresh it. That's at least \$1k over budget. Still trying to see where we could get extra money.
- Brandi: Could you draft up a campaign? You're a 501c3.
- Leo: Not really part of Troll's Knoll—not in our focus.
- Brandi: do a GoFundMe.
- Maque has meeting with City to put in steps. Excited to get the City's participation and maybe WADOT. Take out ecology blocks and put in bollards. Paul Jackson from the City wants to take that project on. Canal Place, Novo Painting, local biz wants to do something. But too expensive. Doing benches and weigh stations by Steve Badanes. Got a quote at \$1600 over the budget, but we could do three. Will talk about doing three now and then see if there's enough to do the fourth one. It's hard to figure out the budget. And it would be good to lock him in with the three. Businesses there want more improvements and interest. We'll get official change in scope to do this. They did all those benches for \$2k back then.
- Billy: do you have a breakdown for getting the benches repainted. \$1600 seems like could get them repainted really easy.
- Leo: repairs, re-sealing, fix posts, paint, etc.
- Ken: Blast updates: adding shout out to new members in the Blast.
- Caroline: Yes, with Jag system was easy to capture that info. Should see some changes in the Blast this Friday. Urban Earth reopening.
- Brandi: Try to give some of those corner businesses some love.

Committee Reports and New Business

A. Awards Committee – Brandi

B. Finance & Events – Phil

- Not prepared to vote on 2023 budget. We have a few more things we need to confirm, like Marketing \$\$\$. Will send out email next week asking for questions. Same budget we reviewed at Retreat. Will send to Stephen so he can produce a budget vs actuals. P&L—

everything is fine. You'll see this in the email. Ending this year in 2023, need to be aware of some of our challenges. How much debt risk we want to incur.

- Events are moving fine. Booking hasn't yet started. Registrations start in March. Looking good. Haven't done nay outreach to FAC/Solstice Parade. Ask Brandi/Pete to own this and figure out what we want. End at Fair Grounds. Offered some ideas. Maybe they have capacity.
- Brandi: Doing the standard outreach around the Fair grounds near Mischief, Katrina Eileen, Imperfetta, etc.
- Phil: We have sent out our official neighborhood letter & Valentines Day candy. Got a big hug from Mischief. They are happy. No acknowledgement from Katrina Eileen, but she's been informed.

C. Government Relations & Advocacy – Suzie

- Not a monthly committee—more as things bubble up.

D. Grants – to be added to Finance Committee. Jessica will help Caroline when Grants come up.

- Jessica can help look for Grants.

E. Marketing Committee – Ken

F. Membership Committee -- Jessica

G. Programs Committee -- Michael

H. Transportation/SDOT Route 40 – Pete

I. Public Safety – Jamie

Brandi: Board Retreat—please read the minutes and ask any questions. We have a new board secretary. Ken moves to elect Eva to the Exec Board, Billy seconded. All were in favor. APPROVED!

Announcements

A. Paul: Rocket in Mardi Gras colors!

- a. Phil: Talked with Sarah, the lighting designer. \$4k to pull the lights down. Base is PVC pipe. Siren tower has same lighting with a conduit base. We're going to meet next month to replace the PVC and anchor the lights up there.
- b. Caroline: Who will pay for it?
- c. Phil will get a quote. It will be cheaper than taking it down.
- d. Jessica: at Mktg committee an idea came up: do more lighting. Add new lighting projects each year. But we need to find ongoing maintenance money.
- e. Pete: Success of that project (Rocket lighting) and that we've been able to use it for V-day and Mardi Gras, etc. Let's get a 4-way stop there & crosswalk. Let's invest some of our resources to make that lighting even more permanent.
- f. Brandi: get more secure lights. I love it there. No complaints from landowners.
- g. Phil: gave V-day to Burnt Sugar, and she was very happy.
- h. Caroline: Talked to Barrel Thief and the new owner is very happy with Rocket.

B. Calendar of Awesomeness—Chamber highlights – what have we accomplished that we want to highlight on our website?

- a. Rocket Lighting!

C. Chamber of Commerce Award Ideas – who do we want to nominate for a CoC Award for 2023 and why?

- a. Brandi: Nominate Billy for hosting first networking event.

- b. Pete: Nominates Brandi for hosting Board Retreat at Adobe—was a great location.
 - c. Brandi: 2022 last year nominees: Please Vote! Who should get what award. That would be great. Would like to get this by end of week. Suzie will get all the certificates framed.
- D. Other
- a. Leo: FAC doing a big fundraiser, a new thing called ArtEnlighted Soiree on April 22nd.
 - b. Eva: Happy to buy a table.
 - c. Phil: The Chamber doesn't buy a table. The Board, or Suzie and invites folks to write a check. The Chamber doesn't have a line-item for that. This year, we could call it the Fremont Fair table.

Adjourn—Brandi

Meeting ended at 10:00am

Minutes submitted by Caroline Sherman

Meeting Chat:

8:20 AM Meeting started.

[9:06 AM]

Mark Ukelson (Guest) left the chat.

[9:07 AM] Vets,Jessica S

who is the new owner?

[9:09 AM] Ken Saunderson

Mike Luis

[9:12 AM] Vets,Jessica S

thanks Ken

[9:19 AM] Vets,Jessica S

Since FCC online calendar is not working can Caroline or Pete please send all the initial committee meeting dates and times to all board members for FYI

[9:35 AM] Ken Saunderson

Happy to participate in the meeting with Google if the schedule permits.