



**Board Meeting Minutes  
September 27, 2023  
Microsoft Teams Meeting**

**Attendance**

**Present:** Brandi Gaines, Phil Megenhardt, Paul Robinson, Eva Otto, Billy Beckett, Suzie Burke, Sean Erhardt, Jamie Hoffman, Ken Saunderson, Jessica Vets

**Absent:** Amina Kapusuzoglu

**Staff:** Pete Hanning, Caroline Sherman

**Guests:** Nicole Hill, Brooks Running; Adam Gardner, Google; Mark Baldwin, Floor Coverings International

**Call to Order – Brandi**

The meeting was called to order by Brandi at 8:38am

- 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: Around the meeting, everyone introduced themselves.
- C. President's remarks: Hope everyone is staying safe and warm out there. Typhoon out there. Get your COVID shot.

**Approval July Minutes:** Brandi provided one minor amendment. Brandi asked for approval and the July minutes were APPROVED.

**Committee Reports and New Business**

- A. (10 mins) Major Events: Oktoberfest, Phil
  - a. Had to make topography arrangements. There is only one drain and it's on the other side of the event. The rain has an entire block to run. It has been a day like this on Oktoberfest weekend. Only 400 numbers down from last year. We will have a marketing number: re-entries, staffing, all the folks that come through the gate. But in this world talking about paid guests: 13705 guests, slightly under last year. We'll weather the weather no matter what. Hoping to beat the record from 2018, we fell 3k people short. If we'd had clear skies, we would have made it.
  - b. 13k over a rainy weekend is great. 26<sup>th</sup> year. Appreciate the legacy brand and the value proposition and spend \$50 bucks. Reality is, people come out and have a great time at Fremont Fair & Oktoberfest. Stein competition. Lady comes up asking for tape, she's in her dirndl stuff, shoe had broken. She'd gotten at Jamie's store at Fremont Vintage Mall! "I'm from Tacoma, I've read about it on the news. My husband wanted to go to Leavenworth, but we went 10 years ago, and it was not fun", so she came with 10 of her friends from Tacoma!

- c. The way the bars were set up and the restaurants did great. Oktoberfest bars were FILLED. If they come to Oktoberfest, the Chamber's happy, if they come to the restaurants and bars, the businesses are happy.
  - d. 18k people = marketing number.
  - e. Tips: Collect tips and it goes directly to the Chamber. Pay staff enough to be there. Before COVID = cash & credit card. Now only cc. Ask for tip or donation is a function button, rather than spinning the card reader around.
  - f. Charging for mustard = donation to chamber, raised \$500. Biggest tipping option.
  - g. News coverage for Fremont Oktoberfest. Marketing machine working again. Q13 studio interview, KOMO news live B-Roll. Fremont Outlander brewery, Fremont Brewery participated and poured beer. Sean, Anytime Fitness, has done a lot for volunteering. Going in had 100% volunteers. Saturday, 90% volunteers. 270 tickets sold through Sean's gym. We offer 20+ teams & get special t-shirt. Volunteers Sat & Sun night.
  - h. As you walked in, Hydro Miss Budweiser parked outside the entrance, which Suzie arranged to have happen. Lots of folks taking pictures in front of them.
  - i. Asked businesses to feed the 50 staff & 500 volunteers. Last year El Camino donated gift cards. Lighthouse, Red Star, Triangle, Fremont brewing, Starbucks, Uncommon Cottage, Juniper Flowers, and more I couldn't catch. Food: Big Mario, the Bagel shop, Kaosamai, Mod Pizza, Ian's Pizza, Art of the Table. Thank you to all.
  - j. Sunday night pouring rain. Watching 14 truck vendors. Thinking about the complete energy it takes to make this thing happen. Great feeling to see everyone dancing in the streets. It's actually a light load, because there's so much help.
  - k. Suzie: really important to sell tickets ahead of time.
  - l. Phil: Ken suggested lowering price on Sunday, "empty the keg". Dogtoberfest, 1300 + 900 dogs on Sunday.
  - m. Ken: Congrats on a terrific event & board sponsoring such a great destination event. Energy level so great. Tells the importance of Oktoberfest to Fremont Chamber.
  - n. Phil: Revenue engines: Membership, Fundraising events (Fremont Fair & Oktoberfest), Sponsorship, Meetings. Oktoberfest often beats Membership income. Significant income in the fall. \$38,000 on a rainy weekend. Great number to see.
  - o. Jessica: Feedback: pouring is way more fun than drinking. And get more cider—all out on Sunday.
  - p. Brandi: Thank you to Board Volunteers: Eva, Jessica, Brandi; Suzie put folks in.
  - q. Suzie: Budweiser thing happened earlier in the year. Miss Budweiser/Hydro called because she knew we did events.
  - r. Brandi: Asked how volunteers heard about it: the QR code on the poster.
  - s. Phil: VIP experiences: backstage on the DJ tower. Brandi & Jessica—mind blowing to see the view.
  - t. Brandi: All the hard work is worth it.
  - u. Billy: Red Star was busy all three days.
  - v. Phil: Team walked 50, 60, 70 miles!
  - w. Jamie: Retailer: saw higher sales than usual on Oktoberfest weekend.
  - x. Phil: goal is 10-headed dragon. Data coming next meeting.
- B. (5 mins) Finance, Phil
- a. Budget is moving ahead. First full year of new expenses of ED. Trying to find our way through that. Exec Board figuring out where we need to be financially while having an ED and staff. Revenue engines are on track. Membership, Oktoberfest performed well.

- b. Considering some easy fundraisers: Georgetown Bites event. No expenses! Super easy. U-District Food Walk. If you need to see how a chamber does it. Ballard Wine Walk. Classic Chamber fundraising mechanisms. It's September. October & November is spreadsheet number crunching and doing projections so that by end of the year we can vote on a budget. Do a really fun simple fund raising event and drive business into Fremont. Creative people in this community. Jamie, Ryan. All of these guys, the events are not hard to produce.
- C. (10 mins) Marketing & Communications: Ken
  - a. Marketing committee working every month. Would love to see additional participation. Just finished printing up the rack cards. 25,000 printed, 12,500 distributed already. Limited to 25k this time, this allows us to update and add additional folks moving forward. 4 great businesses sponsored: Adobe, Brooks, BECU, HomeStreet.
  - b. HM Lenin, Dinosaurs, Rocket. Finish in the next 3-4 months. Three sponsorship panels on each marker, \$500/year/per marker for 3 years (total marker sponsorship = \$1,500). Thank you for your support, Adobe, Red Star, Fremont Vintage Mall.
  - c. Walking Tours: Jamie & Ali Weber adding more Walking Tours, Caroline putting these together.
  - d. ToT: Pete & Caroling getting that going. Pumpkin head for Lenin.
  - e. Holidays: Update lighting on Rocket and maybe another Fremont landmark and add other activities. 3 of 4 corners on major intersection are dark, so work with property owners/landlords to activate. Phil, need budget info to see what money we have to work with.
  - f. Phil: Seeing the HMs come to life again is great. The lighting team of Susannah & Sara?? We didn't know how long that would be up. It's been a year now, did a quick job on the bottom of it. As a result, it's not tight and clean. The lighting team fixed the bottom of the rocket, light up evenly and permanently and it looks so much better. If we are going to light and invest in anything, it needs to be at our 4 corners. Will come to Marketing Committee and help.
  - g. Ken: The 4 corners is our welcome mat/living room, so that area is critical.
  - h. Suzie: Shall we look into lighting for the Interurban?
  - i. Pete: Electricity at Interurban is out of order. Caroline, Leo & Pete working on getting power restored.
  - j. Brandi: Could do battery operation.
  - k. Jessica: Consider solar.
  - l. Pete: Come to next marketing meeting!
- D. (5 mins) Membership, Jessica
  - a. Had a great quick meeting. Anyone can just join the call. Eva is going to own upper Fremont. If you walk into a Fremont store, ask if they are a member, if they are, thank them. If not, tell them you are on the board and tell them the value. If you aren't sure of the value proposition, talk to any of us for tips.
  - b. If you want to walk the neighborhood for your own business, get the 30-60-90 report from Caroline to see which businesses are late with their dues, or they haven't been a member for years, then go through that list and go and talk to them.
  - c. Brandi: Went to an event at Wet Clay Café. Talked to Randi the owner and mentioned the Chamber. Invited him to shameless Self Promotion.
- E. (5 mins) Programs, Eva

- a. Eva has just taken over as the Chair of Programs Committee and invites anyone who has ideas about programs to join our committee meeting. Our program list is full this year, but I would love to hear your ideas.
- b. Brandi: A program is whatever you want it to be. Like Tech Talk at Google that Adam hosted years ago. Fantastic event last week.
- c. Eva: Shameless Self Promotion, had a huge crowd. Filled the Aslan event room. Had a lot of members and non-members. Great to see so many people talking about Fremont and business. Aslan was a great event place to host. It was great to get to know them. They make organic beer.
- d. Suzie: I think the Shameless Promotion is always a good event. Ken and I were participants in a government issue yesterday.

## **Office Reports—Pete & Caroline**

### **A. Executive Director – Pete**

- a. Shameless: Met with folks who were impressed with how vibrant our chamber was. Thanks to Board members who were there: Brandi, Paul, Eva. Jeff Kalvelage was there, sponsored the meeting, happy with the spotlight for his business. Sponsorship is of value to the sponsor. Kaosamai provided the appetizers for \$100, and Aslan was really happy with the food they provided and hopeful they will work together in the future.
- b. It was also the day the Rack Card came out. The Rack Card is going to be huge for tourism. Walked out to 20 businesses (10 non & 10 members) to share it: "This is what we're doing." Got great responses. Non-members said great and want to join, and members were very happy knowing we were doing it for Fremont.
- c. Public Safety: Pete
  - i. Didn't have a meeting. Coming next week, Oct 3, 9:30am. Not a lot of issues, except our Cannabis businesses. Oz, Hashtag, Dockside have all been hit.
  - ii. In addition to Shameless, Public Safety breakfast is also well attended. Coming up on November 15<sup>th</sup>, Ann Davison, City Attorney is our speaker. Hoping to get sponsorship from cannabis business. If you want to participate, contact Pete and/or join our Public Safety Google Group (email Caroline/administrator@fremont.com.) Security folks from Google and Adobe participate, and a lot of our retail businesses. Paul, VP of the board & HomeStreet branch manager has been the biggest partner in public safety. It's our only local bank, and he's a good person to share info with. Making sure we are talking about Public Safety consciously: to the outside world we say Fremont is open, safe and fun. Internally, we work together with Police, and businesses to make things better.
- d. Transportation/SDOT Route 40
  - i. City of Seattle is attempting to bifurcate us, and we're not allowing that to happen. Ballard, Fremont, Westlake Corridor, General Contractors, NSIA and smaller businesses fighting the aspects of the project that force a bus only lane, take away parking and put bus stops in front of vulnerable women-owned businesses.
- e. Membership was talked about. I think the rack cards, programs, and us bring value. Who we are, member driven organization and we're really coming out of COVID with members getting engaged and wanting to be involved.

- f. Suzie: We should put in a strongly worded letter to put Route 40 on hold until the Transportation Plan is passed in 2024. If Route 40 is in place by the time they do the freight section of the Transportation Plan there will be no road to work with. That plan has to have an economic quotient to it. NSIA put that in, and we should back it up in spades. None of what they are putting in is about freight, maritime, or industry. We have to put our feet into this one.
  - g. Ken: It's frustrating that an economic section isn't involved. Every kind of use belongs on every street. To try to jam all of that into one street is ridiculous. Need policy to deal with freight mobility in Ballard, Interbay, etc. Eugene Wasserman will write a letter to get every neighborhood involved and sign on. This needs to be done on a comprehensive basis. The City's goal is to wear everyone out. The comprehensive plan needs to include freight mobility as part of the transportation plan.
- B. Government Affairs Committee—Suzie
- a. The great big freight/truck and the small UPS truck that brings your stuff every day. The UPS store gets 100 deliveries today. It's called Connectivity. We have major truck streets in Seattle. We don't have a truck grid. We have some arterials that are truck streets and get some attention. Though not successful and we are getting bus only lanes. Pinch points and connectivity. Fremont's a great big pinch point. Everything about it makes it hard to get through. If we narrow the streets, we don't get any trucks any more. Not been planned for our commercial area to stay commercial/maritime. You can't get it back. Need to postpone Route 40 until Comprehensive Transportation Plan is considered.
  - b. Phil: During the events: the Google bus services were running. Oktoberfest had a street closed sign, but I had to move it once the bus came, because it affected their turning radius. It's a big deal, our buses and our businesses need to get their employees in and do business, or they'll move elsewhere. The buses are in force hourly.
  - c. Suzie: A bus is a truck. They have to be able to make turns and have site distance. Things that are pedestrian friendly don't always help, like street trees. We have to get the streets back to being transportation.
- C. Office Management – Caroline, see attached report.
- a. Arts Fund
  - b. NERF Grant
  - c. Membership by the numbers
  - d. Ribbon Cuttings: Jessica, Charlie's Queer Books

## Announcements

- A. Announcements:
  - a. Shout out to Fremont Dock for providing housing to someone from out of town for Oktoberfest. Mischief, Theo's Katrina Eileen, everyone on Canal Drive.
  - b. Suzie: We all have to recognize that. OktF does lots of good for the whole community and some folks are tied up by it.
  - c. Phil: It affects someone's bottom line for 5 days.
- B. Calendar of Awesomeness—Chamber highlights – what have we accomplished that we want to highlight on our website?

- a. Trolloween is happening and we're trying to tie it in with Trick or Treat. Working with Theo Chocolate as sponsor of TOT.
  - b. Tourism Meeting at Dusty Strings this year.
  - c. Phil: Can we invite the Creative District group? Kate Becker @ King County. Mayor is putting money into that. Visit Seattle needs to know how important Fremont is.
  - d. Pete: Eva, let's add a Concierge event next year.
- C. Chamber of Commerce Award Ideas – who do we want to nominate for a CoC Award and why?
- a. Pete: Laura at Geocaching for next year's award. For Walking Tours, etc.
  - b. Pete: Belle Fleur, the high end ladies garments shop--Lindsay, has been a great advocate for the businesses of that area. She'd be a great retail rep on the board. She cares about her team.
  - c. Suzie: Budweiser Museum for Oktoberfest. Help make them realize it did them some good, too.
  - d. Phil: Burnt Sugar and Momo. They pop the breaker when the rocket lights blow it.
    - a. Pete: Going after them to join the Chamber.
  - e. Suzie: Harbor Patrol for an award. It was a tough summer. Working on the city. Study will be done to figure out how much of a Harbor Patrol we need. The study will come back saying we have 200 miles of shoreline and we're doing a bad job covering it, and it's important. The Harbor Patrol needs to get noticed.
  - f. Ken: Next NSIA 9pm Oct 24. You all are invited to that meeting with the Fire Department. Develop a partnership and thank them for their service.
- D. Other

### **Adjourn—Brandi**

Suzie moved to adjourn. All in favor say Fremont! The meeting adjourned at 10:00am.

Minutes submitted by Caroline Sherman

### **Meeting Chat:**

[9:45 AM] Mark Baldwin

thank you!

[9:46 AM] Brandi Gaines (she/her)

### [The Works Seattle](#)

The Works Seattle

We're in the business of making people happy! Our team of makers is passionate about providing you with the tools and know-how to try something new.

[9:48 AM] Brandi Gaines (she/her)

### [Flooring Store | Seattle, WA \(floorcoveringsinternational.com\)](#)

Flooring Store | Seattle, WA

Floor Coverings International is the Top Flooring Store in Seattle, WA: Our flooring store provides the best flooring options and installation in Seattle, WA

[9:49 AM] Brandi Gaines (she/her)

Mark, is that the correct link for your business?

[9:49 AM] Mark Baldwin

Yes it is , thanks!

like 1

[9:51 AM] Ken Saunderson (Guest)

Let's put 2024 new events on the marketing committee meeting agenda for October.

like 1

[9:57 AM] Brandi Gaines (she/her)

[!\[\]\(d0262bbe9d2356661a2e89321dfcc781\_img.jpg\) Trick or Treat in Fremont! !\[\]\(8572950e410320d7dd023da827ff014d\_img.jpg\) - Fremont, Seattle - Center of the Universe](#)

 Trick or Treat in Fremont!  - Fremont, Seattle - Center of the Universe

Once again, the Fremont business community provides neighborhood children with a chance to Trick-or-Treat in the daylight, at familiar shops and restaurants all around the Center of the Universe. O...

[9:58 AM] Brandi Gaines (she/her)

Caroline, can you please update the website to reflect 3-6?

[9:58 AM] Adam Gardner (Guest)

I have to drop - thanks everyone!

like 1

[9:58 AM]

Adam Gardner (Guest) left the chat.

[9:58 AM] Ken Saunderson (Guest)

I need to dash to another meeting. Thanks all for a terrific meeting!

[9:58 AM]

Eva Otto (she/her) (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

[9:58 AM]

Ken Saunderson (Guest) left the chat.

[9:58 AM] Brandi Gaines (she/her)

[Creative Districts - ArtsWA](#)

Creative Districts - ArtsWA

Creative Districts helps Washington communities turn arts and cultural activities into economic growth.

- Creative economy, arts and culture

[9:59 AM]

Phil Bold Hat (Guest) left the chat.

[10:00 AM]

Eva Otto (sher/her) (Guest) left the chat.

[10:00 AM]

Paul Robinson (Guest) left the chat.

[10:00 AM]

Mark Baldwin (External) left the chat.

[10:00 AM]

Sean (Guest) left the chat.

[10:00 AM]

Vets,Jessica S left the chat.

[10:00 AM]

Nicole Hill left the chat.

[10:00 AM]

Suzie (Guest) left the chat.

[10:00 AM]

Billy Beckett (Guest) left the chat.

[10:00 AM]

Pete Hanning left the chat.