

Meeting Date: Wednesday, April 2, 2025
Time: DNBA Membership Meeting (DNBA/BID Members Only)
Board of Directors Meeting (immediately following – Closed Meeting)
NEW Location: CWS Construction, 1301 Grant Ave, Novato (upstairs from HenHouse)

DNBA/BID Membership Meeting
(Open to DNBA/BID Members Only)

7:11pm Call to Order & Introduce Guests: Barbara Slack, President
Michael Crespo Atkinson, CrossFit Novato; John Christman, TOPO Chiropractic; Meghan Evans, Buttercup Home; Barbara Slack, CWS Construction; Rob Sundberg, Avenue Salon; Tief Gibbs, Vintage Vehicles; Stephanie Koehler, DNBA; Steve Jordan, Creekside Bakery; Denise & George Athas, Athas & Associates Realty; Ginger Sheets, Accents; Kevin Jacobs, City Council; Tim O'Connor, City Council; Sean Murphy, The Game Fortress

Visitor + Member Comments

- John Christman gave an update on the painting of the electrical boxes on Downtown. The Leadership Novato team is starting the primer and the art will be done very soon.
- We took a moment to acknowledge Meghan Evans of Buttercup Home. With her store closing, this will be her last meeting as both a Board Member and BID Business. This is a sad event for all of us.
- Denise and George Athas announced they have moved their office to the upstairs of 1500 Grant Ave. They are excited for the new space!
- May 6th from 5-7pm the DNBA has partnered with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC); The City of Novato, and the Novato Chamber for a Small Business Week networking event at City Hall. Stephanie Koehler will be moderating a panel discussion about marketing small business. Panelists are John Christman, TOPO Chiropractic, and Shannon & Armando Gallegos of B12 Love. Food offerings will be from Golden Gate Bistro. The event is free but RSVPs are requested at MarinSBDC.org because space is limited.
- The Chamber is holding a Mixer at B12 Love on Grant Ave on April 17th. All are encouraged to attend.
- The Alchemia Art Walk in Downtown will happen Friday, April 11th.

The Future of Economic Development In Novato: Open Discussion with Mayor Tim O'Connor

Mayor O'Connor announced the hiring of Carla Hansen as the new Assistant City Manager who will oversee Economic Development and will be our liaison at the City. An Economic Development Manager position will be added soon to support the efforts. He announced the official launch of the SAFE program to support the Novato PD is offering support and services to the homeless population. He gave a brief update on the AMD low income housing developments – basically we are waiting for AMG to submit final revised plans.

Questions:

- Is the City still working on the parking study/plan for when the AMG buildings are built? Yes, however no formal steps have been taken yet.
- Is the City connecting with property owners to address the long standing vacant spaces in downtown – specifically the corner of Reichert & Grant (Former Ken's Kitchens); Sherman & Grant (Former Albor Medical); etc. Expressing concern with so many industrial businesses going in to Grant Ave in Old Town - what are they doing to make sure the right kind of businesses go in at Mantra and Buttercup Home? Bend, Oregon was cited as a good model where there is a City commission made up of stakeholders, contractors, architects, building owners, etc. so highest and best use businesses can come in as soon as a property is vacated. Tim said he hopes the City will build relationships with Landlords and thinks the Commission is an interesting idea.
- Is the Tenant Improvement Grant coming back now that Measure M passed? This was a critical and successful program for businesses. Tim indicated it is being proposed in the new budget cycle at \$100,000.

Upcoming City Happenings

- Farmer's Market Opens May 6th. Expanded parking available at 7250 Redwood Blvd Office Park.
- Novato Small Business Networking Event
 - May 6 | 5:30-7pm
 - Partners: Novato Chamber, City of Novato, and Marin SBDC
- First Fridays 2025
 - June 6
 - July 18
 - August 1
- 2025 Event Dates
 - Rock The Block: June 19 & September 11
 - Nostalgia Days: October 10 & 11
 - Small Business Saturday: November 29
 - Tree Lighting: December 6

Upcoming City Happenings (cont.)

- v. Not So Silent Night: December 13
- vi. Bouncy Ball New Year: December 31

2025 Meeting Locations

1. May: CWS Construction: 1301 Grant Ave. (upstairs from HenHouse)
2. Any volunteers for other dates?
 - a. Marin Glow House. DNBA Meeting on May 7
 - b. Residence Inn. BID Advisory Board Meeting on May 20
 - c. B12 Love. DNBA Meeting June 4

2025 DNBA Membership Meeting Schedule:

Membership Meetings are open to DNBA members only and are held the first Wednesday of each month at 7pm. An email reminder will be sent to the week prior to the meeting. In 2025: **May 7 (Marin Glow House 920 Sherman Ave)**, June 4 (**B12 Love 1122 Grant Ave**), July 2, Aug. 6, Sept. 3, Oct. 1, Nov. 5, Dec. 3

BID Advisory Board Meetings are open to the public and are held the 3rd Tuesday of February, May, August and October at 7pm. In 2025 the remaining **meetings will be held at the Marriott Residence Inn at 7546 N Redwood Dr: May 20, Aug. 19, Oct. 21.**

Treasurer's Report

8:36pm Close DNBA General Membership Meeting

Regular Board of Directors Meeting
(closed meeting)

8:43pm Call to Order: Barbara Slack, President

Roll Call: Michael Crespo Atkinson, John Christman, Meghan Evans, Tief Gibbs, Barbara Slack, Rob Sundberg, (Stephanie Koehler, Executive Director)

General Update – Stephanie Koehler

- a. Economic Development Updates
 - i. Met with Alexis Gevorgian of AMG. He is working on a development agreement with the City which will start outlining the timeline of building. He is still indicating he wants 1st & Grant to have little to no street level business but rather have the entire street level be a parking garage. Both the City and DNBA are pushing back on this.
 - ii. Storefront Cannabis is on the front burner of the Council agenda. It will be back for public discussion in the early fall so the topic should be agendized for a BID Advisory Board Meeting soon.
- b. Sponsorship Updates
 - i. Sponsorship is moving exceptionally slow. Board was encouraged to offer suggestions of businesses (also outside the BID) who might be interested in sponsoring our events.
 - ii. Costs have gone up significantly so we actually need more sponsorship than before to keep our events free.
- c. Associate Membership Materials
 - i. As requested at the last meeting - Stephanie created and emailed a PDF version & handed out a paper version of the Associate Membership program so Board members could reach out to potential businesses.
 - ii. Indian Valley Brewery is for sale and therefore will no longer be an associate member.

Approve Meeting Minutes from March 5, 2025

John made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted. Rob seconded the motion. *Vote: All in favor. Non opposed. No abstentions.*

Other Business + Open Discussion

None.

9:02pm Close DNBA Board Meeting