



## Minutes

**Present:** Cynthia Azari, Chuck Beaty, Patrick Brien, Marcia Campbell, Lynn Clonniger, Miguel Cruz, Ian Davidson, Gerald Douglass, Tina English, John Field, Bill Gardner, Mike Gardner, Barry Hildebrandt, Jeff Kraus, Kirk Lewis, Chris Manning, John Matheson, Peter Meyers, Oscar Moreno, Teresa Rosales for ABP, David St. Pierre, Charity Schiller, Sharon Sola-Ahluwalia, Ellie Uli., Steve Wollman John Worden, Shelby Worthington,

**Excused:** Bob Nagle, Brian Percy, Cherie Russell, Justin Tracy, Kris Whitehead,

**Absent:** Greg Lackey, Marty Lueking, Andy Melendrez

**Guests:** Collette Lee, Lari Nelson

**Staff:** Natasha Ferguson, Janice Penner

### 1) Call to Order

Chair Peter Meyers called the meeting to order.

### 2) Self Introductions and Public Comment

Bill Gardner expressed regret about the demolition of the Bindery building as part of the construction of the Fox Entertainment Plaza.

Peter Meyers said that Patrick Brien would be speaking at the Kiwanis Club luncheon next week.

### 3) Minutes of April 13, 2011

**Motion:** To accept the Minutes of the Meeting of April 13, 2011.

**Motion made by:** Bill Gardner      **Motion Seconded by:** Chris Manning

**Motion carried.**

### 4) Chair's Report

Peter Meyers said that he would fold his remarks into the discussion about improvements.

### 5) Items for Discussion

#### 5a) Presentation on new Bryant School Core Knowledge program

Lari Nelson introduced herself as the current principal of Victoria Elementary and the new principal of Bryant Elementary in the new school year. Bryant School was located downtown at the corner of Third and Cedar. She said that Riverside Unified School District (RUSD) was focused on giving educational choices to families in Riverside. The new one opening at Bryant Elementary was the Core Knowledge program. She said she was at the Board meeting to talk about the potential to reach out to the downtown community and make the program more successful.

Lari Nelson said the program was based J. D. Hirsch's idea that knowledge builds upon knowledge. She gave several examples of how the idea was implemented in the curriculum. She said that visual art and music was embedded in the curriculum which was positive as education cuts had

eliminated much of the arts education components in schools. She said that children studied art and music theory, history, and practice. She said that they had spoken to a number of arts organizations about sharing their knowledge with the children through the program.

Lari Nelson said that she wanted to include an after school program that would include 'clubs' of six-week duration and she encouraged RDP Board members to consider partnerships and volunteering with the programs. She said that the program was now full, noting that one of the reasons Bryant was selected was that its previous enrollment was under 300 students.

Janice Penner said that RDP could provide some stipends towards supplies. She asked Lari Nelson to pass on other ways that the community could help, adding that an article could go into the BID Bulletin to advise the business community. Patrick Brien said that he had also met with Lari Nelson to discuss partnerships with the Riverside Arts Council.

Lari Nelson said that there were about 43 transfers from outside of RUSD plus transfers from other schools within RUSD. She handed out cards to provide contact information for herself and for Bryant Elementary. She said that the school would also accept technology donations.

Chuck Beaty said that it was important to note that Bryant was the last elementary school in downtown and the new Core Knowledge program had saved it from closure.

#### **5b) California Riverside Ballet's 2011 Nutcracker**

Collette Lee introduced herself as a Board member of the California Riverside Ballet. She said that the California Riverside Ballet had struggled over the past year but that the organization was making a number of changes to secure its future. She said that the ballet now had a new artistic director from the Danish Ballet and had started several new fundraising ventures. She said that the ballet was also reaching out to other arts groups and the community to continue to promote the organization and the arts in general.

Collette Lee said that the ballet's events such as Ghostwalk and The Nutcracker contributed to the economic vitality of downtown, citing amounts spent by patrons while attending the shows. She said that the ballet also did significant outreach to the broader community. She outlined several new events that the ballet had launched to raise funds for financial sustainability, including Spirit Walk and Businesses in Tutus. She said that the ballet planned a new event to correspond with their moving into the new joint location with other arts organization. She said that they were also working with the Arts Institute to increase their social media.

Collette Lee said they appreciated the support of RDP and others but that more support was needed for the ballet to continue and grow. She asked RDP to consider giving a higher level of contribution in recognition of the contribution of California Riverside Ballet to the community.

Peter Meyers said that Security Bank definitely saw a bang for its buck with its contribution to the ballet and encouraged other businesses to consider contributing.

Patrick Brien noted that the economic impact study done several years ago indicated that attendees to an arts and cultural performance spent about \$25 each if they were local and over \$50 if they were from outside the community. He said that the updated economic impact study would update those numbers.

Councilman Mike Gardner said that he felt it was significant for the ballet to not only have a new artistic director but also to be including other ballet schools. He felt that the changes were essential to the organization becoming a regional arts organization.

## **6) Items for Information**

### **6a) Update on RDP Events**

#### **i) Easter Egg-stravaganza**

Janice Penner said that the event was successful with between 1,500 to 2,000 people attending. She said the WaterWars balloon toss went through over 2,400 balloons and that they had underestimated the number of eggs needed for the event. She said that the debrief meeting had come up with a number of changes for the event including moving the Easter egg component outside of the businesses.

Janice Penner said that RDP agreed to host three themed events on Main Street each year; Valentine's Day, Easter, and Halloween / Day of the Dead. She said that Halloween would include a Zombie Prom and a children's costume event on the afternoon of Ghostwalk.

Janice Penner said RDP was holding a promo event for Burn the Floor on Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### **ii) The Ward One Candidates forum**

Peter Meyers said the event went well and that people did receive information. He noted that ballots were being mailed out to voters.

Councilman Mike Gardner said that as a participant, he enjoyed the forum and thought that the format worked well.

### **6b) Update on California Downtown Association conference**

Janice Penner said that both she and Teresa Rosales were on the Conference Planning Committee and the Curriculum Committee. She said that Riverside submitted ten proposals for sessions and eight were accepted. She said that the accepted sessions included social media and 'Town and Gown' as well as several walking tours.

Janice Penner said she had budgeted money for those Board members who wanted to attend the conference.

Bill Gardner suggested that several beautification projects such as trash enclosures and alley paving be considered before the conference.

## **7) Financial Reports**

### **7a) Financial Report as of April 30, 2011**

David St. Pierre said that April showed a loss of \$3,200 compared to an expected loss of \$4,300. He said that for the year to date there was a surplus of about \$17,000 compared to an expected loss of about \$21,000. He said that it was expected that the yearend results would be about even compared to the budgeted loss of about \$13,000.

David St. Pierre noted that there would be an adjustment to the Balance Sheet next month due to the sale of the sweeper and scrubber. Janice Penner said that the equipment sold for \$19,000 in total which was about the book value. She added that the sale meant that \$9,000 of depreciation

and about \$2,000 of insurance no longer needed to be included in the operating budget. She added that RDP was also trying to sell the surplus brushes for the equipment.

**Motion:** To accept the financial report as at April 30, 2011.

**Motion made by:** Marcia Campbell **Motion Seconded by:** Patrick Brien

**Motion carried unanimously.**

David St. Pierre noted that the Finance Committee was meeting tomorrow, Thursday the 12<sup>th</sup>, and that the budget would come to the Board in June.

## **8) City Council Updates**

### **8a) Ward One**

Councilman Mike Gardner said that there was a program to upgrade the alleys from 10<sup>th</sup> to University in the summer. He said the alley in the Cal Tower block was being delayed as the City was hoping to include it with development of the Imperial Hardware Building. He said the upgrade would include paving and lighting to make them more pedestrian friendly.

Councilman Mike Gardner said the demolition of the Press Bindery Building was a mistake and that there were discussions ongoing at City Hall regarding how it happened. He said that the façade of the building would be rebuilt, and apologized for the loss of a historic building.

Councilman Mike Gardner said that the construction of the new Fire Station had taken away parking for Art's Bar and Grill. He said that although Lot 27 had been changed from permit to metered parking, there was a need for closer parking. He said that the City was trying to work with the owner of the property at Mission Inn and Lime as well as the owner of the mortuary for temporary parking.

Councilman Mike Gardner said that a residential permit parking had been established in the Mount Rubidoux Ninth Street entrance because of the popularity of walking the mountain. He said that it was the only way for residents to have places to park. He said that Tequesquite Park would be before the Council shortly and encouraged interested parties to attend or send a letter.

Councilman Mike Gardner said that City Manager Brad Hudson had given a presentation to Council on the Renaissance program and gave some statistics. He said the results were impressive and recommended that people check the City's website for the presentation. He added that since July 1<sup>st</sup> of last year, over 450 jobs had been created in Riverside, most of them in the Hunter Park area. Since July 1<sup>st</sup> of 2008, over 4,700 jobs had been retained or created. He said that Riverside was now an attractive city for small and medium sized businesses to locate. He said that it was important for Riverside to continue its economic development efforts.

Councilman Mike Gardner reminded the Board of the Council election and that ballots were mail-in, and encouraged everyone to vote.

Chuck Beaty asked about the potential reuse of the old Fire Station, noting that there was talk of retaining it as a historic structure. Councilman Mike Gardner said that there was discussion about repurposing the building and using it as an expansion for the Arts Council or a restaurant/nightclub. He said the Shopoff Group proposal to demolish the building and build an office complex was dead.

Bill Gardner encouraged the City to assist Art's Bar and Grill with its parking problem. David St. Pierre asked if Pizza Hut had been asked about sharing their lot. Councilman Mike Gardner said

that they were not interested even though the lot was never full.

Shelby Worthington said that she was working the owners and the City to improve the front of the three buildings on University on the east side of Orange with awnings, hardscape improvements, new trees and outdoor patios. She said that the west side needed to be improved as well, particularly the vacant pawn shop. She added that the homeless kept congregating in front of Back to the Grind and then moving over to the building with the bail bonds company. She said that it should be suggested to the owner of that building to perhaps put some wrought iron fencing to discourage the homeless from loitering. Janice Penner noted that RDP had updated the lighting at that building to discourage the homeless at night.

### **8b) Ward Two**

There was no update on Ward Two.

### **9) Security Update**

Chris Manning said that there was still an issue with vehicle burglaries in the area around Mount Rubidoux. He said that the problem seemed to be non-residents rather than local people who had got the message not to leave valuables in their cars. He said that the police were doing surveillance and bait programs but reiterated the need for people to be careful. He said vehicle burglaries and homeless folks loitering in certain areas were the major problems downtown.

Chris Manning reported on the abduction of a nine-year old on Sunday. He said it was a violent crime but not the work of a serial or stranger. He said that the police would solve the case and that although the child's injuries were serious, she would make a full physical recovery.

Chris Manning reported on the shootings that occurred in the Riverwalk area as a result of a relationship triangle. He said that one concern had been the potential for stray bullets due to the closeness of homes and streets.

Chris Manning noted that the Great American Clean-up was taking place on Saturday and he would be participated.

### **10) Redevelopment Update**

Tina English advised that the Development Department was going through some structural changes and that Deanna Lorson had been promoted to Assistant City Manager and that she was acting as Interim Development Director. She said that there had been some staff reductions in Redevelopment but that the City was maintaining its Economic Development staffing. She said that there was still discussion about the elimination of redevelopment agencies and that a number of proposals had been submitted to the Governor. She said that the latest proposal was the Wright proposal but it had not gone past the first committee stage. She said the Governor's latest budget update was to come out next Monday and it was expected that would contain indication of the Governor's intent. She said that the City was moving forward on a number of projects to keep the redevelopment momentum going.

Tina English said that the Riverside Arts Council, Philharmonic, California Riverside Ballet, and the Community Foundation would be moving into shared space on the second floor of the old Biokorium building shortly. She said that there was be a façade improvement on that building as well as the adjacent buildings going up to Delights and Invites. Councilman Mike Gardner said that the proposal

would be going to the Land Use Committee on May 19<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm in the Mayor's Ceremonial Room.

Tina English said that the relocation of three Victorian homes from the Olivewood site to the site of the former Su Casa apartments was moving forward. She said that the renovation of the Metropolitan Museum was progressing and should be completed by the fall. She said that proposals for the renovation and expansion of the Convention Center had come in and would be reviewed by a panel with representatives from various sectors. She said that actual construction would not start until a firm had been chosen and the funding was in place. She said that the design build for the Municipal Auditorium was in the design stage now and hopefully would be completed by August.

Tina English said that some questions had arisen about the Commercial Improvement Program (CIP). She said that the program provide funding for façade improvement for private buildings. The City had earmarked \$300,000 for each redevelopment area and the full amount had been allocated for the downtown area. She said that there was about \$150,000 of projects still in the queue and the City was looking at options on how to fund those projects.

Tina English said that the City was holding its annual Neighborhood Conference on June 4<sup>th</sup> at Cal Baptist. She said the theme was 'Give Riverside' and a number of volunteer and charitable organizations would have displays and give presentations.

#### **11) Arlington Business Partnership Update**

Teresa Rosales advised that ABP had assisted with the opening of the new Recreation Center at Hunter Park. She said ten businesses also had booths at the event.

Teresa Rosales said that the Chili Cook-off would take place on Saturday, May 28<sup>th</sup> and that ABP expected about 40,000 people. She said that the number of community cooks had double to 16. She handed out flyers on the event.

Chris Manning said that a band formed of RPD officers would be playing at the event.

#### **12) New Business**

Janice Penner advised that the RDP website now includes 'Shop Downtown'. PIP Printing is currently featured as the downtown business in the 'Spotlight' section. Mission Florist will be the next business featured. She said that businesses would be cycled monthly and then bi-weekly.

The current Board agenda is now being posted on the website when it is sent out to the Board of Directors. The previous month's Board minutes will also be posted once they have been approved.

#### **13) Adjournment and next meeting date**

On behalf of Peter Meyers, Charity Schiller adjourned the meeting until the next meeting scheduled for June 8, 2011 at 7:30 am.