



## **Minutes**

**Present:** Chuck Beaty, Bruce Blomdahl, Patrick Brien, Gerald Douglass, John Field, Michelle Freeman, Bill Gardner, Mike Gardner, Debbi Guthrie, Jeff Kraus, Kirk Lewis, Shalini Lockard, Jeremy Leyva for Marco McGuire, Andy Melendrez, Stan Morrison, Charity Schiller, Cara Swearingen, Justin Tracy, Kris Whitehead, Steve Wollman

**Excused:** Cherie Crutcher, Laurie Hitt, Wolde-Ab Isaac, Nanci Larsen, Bob Nagle, Brian Pearcy, RJ Rodriguez, Shelby Worthington, Ellie Uli

**Absent:** Rafael Guzman, David St. Pierre

**Guests:** Lea Hernandez

**Staff:** Janice Penner, Whitney Waters

### **1) Call to Order**

Justin Tracy called the meeting to order.

### **2) Self Introductions and Public Comments**

Self introductions were made.

Bill Gardner distributed mock-ups of his concept for Raincross monument signs to designate entry ways into Riverside.

Bill Gardner said that he was refurbishing bikes for Longfellow School students and asked people to consider donating any of their old bikes for that.

### **3) Minutes of December 9, 2015**

**Motion:** To accept the Minutes of the Meeting of December 9, 2015

**Motion made by:** Bill Gardner **Motion Seconded by:** Chuck Beaty

**Motion carried.**

### **4) Chair's Report**

Justin Tracy wished everyone a Happy New Year and reported that he had his first grandson.

Justin Tracy commented on the impact of taxation on businesses at yearend and on employees being paid bonuses.

Justin Tracy said that he looked forward to the new construction and developments downtown.

### **5) Items for Discussion**

#### **5a) Referral of City proposal to establish Community Benefit District to Land Use**

Janice Penner said that she and Justin Tracy were invited by the City to meet with Marco Li Mandri of New City America and senior City staff. She said that Mr. Mandri was a consultant engaged by the City to explore the feasibility of a Community Benefits District (CBD) to provide

additional funding for downtown improvements and activities including the Safety Ambassador program. She said that a CBD was similar to a Property Based Business Improvement District and noted that RDP had considered the feasibility of a PBID several times in the past. She noted that RDP had concluded that a PBID was not feasible without the support of the public sector due to the relatively low number of private properties. She said that City Manager John Russo had advised that the City would support establishment of a CBD and that the City would determine if the other property owners including the public sector would support a CBD.

Janice Penner said that she attached the agenda from that meeting to provide the proposed time line for exploration of the feasibility of the CBD as well as reference material including the legislation AB2412. She said the item was being provided for information and referral to the Land Use Committee for review and comments.

Councilman Mike Gardner said that Council and others had taken a tour of Arizona cities and found that they were able to fund activities like the Safety Ambassador program with expanded funding through CBDs and PBIDs. He noted that any assessment program would need to be approved by City Council.

Bill Gardner asked what would happen to RDP and the existing BID. Justin Tracy said that the CBD would have its own Board and at the present time there was no direction regarding RDP's involvement. He said that RDP needed to be involved in the discussions to monitor the process and represent RDP's and downtown businesses' interests.

Michelle Freeman asked if the public sector had considered future expansion outside of the downtown to allow more private sector investment. Councilman Mike Gardner said that government buildings that were patronized by the public tended to be concentrated downtown. Justin Tracy added that the government employees did serve as customers for downtown businesses. Michelle Freeman said that there needed to be more private sector investment downtown to add to the tax base.

#### **5b) Support of RAM's request for analysis of need for new parking structure**

Justin Tracy said that Drew Oberjuege had requested on behalf of the Riverside Art Museum that RDP support their request for the City to analysis the need for a new parking structure. He said that the RDP Land Use Committee and the Executive Committee agreed that RDP should do so.

**Motion:** RDP is well aware of the need for additional parking in areas of the downtown and the benefit of providing that parking in the form of multilevel parking structures. RDP concurs with the Riverside Art Museum position that such parking is needed in the area surrounding their facility and supports their position on that issue.

**Motion made by:** Bill Gardner **Motion Seconded by:** Steve Wollman

**Motion carried.**

#### **6) Items for Information**

##### **6a) Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony**

Janice Penner said nominations for the Roy Hord Award closed the previous Friday and once the Hord family had made their decision, the invitations could be finalized and mailed. She said

the Mission Inn Hotel and Spa had accepted the offer of sponsorship of the Arts and Cultural Award and would be providing the meal for the negotiated price of \$50 per person all inclusive. She said that the ticket price had been raised by \$5 but there a \$5 discount per ticket if purchased prior to January 31<sup>st</sup>.

Janice Penner said that three of the awards had been sponsored, and that cash sponsorship and items for the opportunity drawing would be accepted up to the Friday prior for inclusion in the program.

### **6b) Nominating and Board update**

Janice Penner said that the ballots for the officers and the five candidates running for the four elected at large director positions had gone out and were due back by January 15, 2016. She said that the final Board Slate would go to the Board for approval at the February meeting.

### **6c) RDP activities**

Janice Penner said that the January luncheon would feature Rafael Guzman, Community and Economic Development Director, at the Marriott at the Riverside Convention Center.

Janice Penner said that they were working with the Chamber to schedule a meeting to reach out to businesses about Chow Alley @ Courthouse Piazza and parking. She said that RDP was also working with the Chamber on joint meeting on the Mission Lofts.

Janice Penner said that the destination marketing ads were being refreshed to simplify the message and to reflect the look of RDP's redesigned website. She said 2016 placements would include destination ads in Palm Springs Life and Inland Empire hard cover issues for hotels, event and destination ads in selected magazines, and may include Westways during the summer months depending on pricing.

Janice Penner said that RDP was coordinating the fashion show component of Riverside Community Hospital's Red Dress Fashion Show and Health Expo to be held at the Riverside Convention Center on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup>. She said that RDP was outfitting just over ½ of the RCH models from the community plus its own models.

## **7) Financial Reports**

### **7a) Financial report at December 31, 2015**

Steve Wollman said the financial report for the month of December showed a deficit of \$13,712 compared to an expected surplus of \$18,522. He said that the negative variance was due to BID levy income for the month being \$34,204 less than expected due to fluctuations as to when businesses pay their business licenses.

Steve Wollman noted that the negative variance carried over to the year to date with the report showing a deficit of \$52,836 compared to an expected deficit of \$20,104. He said that the negative variance of \$32,732 was largely due to BID levy income for the year to date being lower than budget by \$31,927.

Steve Wollman noted that RDP reserves were held in four CDs and currently totaled \$315,464. He stated that all four CIDs were within the FDIC guarantee limit of \$250,000 per institution.

**Motion:** To accept the financial report at December 31, 2015

**Motion made by:** Bill Gardner      **Motion Seconded by:** Patrick Brien

**Motion carried.**

## **8) City Council Updates**

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

Councilman Mike Gardner said that trees east of Market were being trimmed annually and those west of market every seven or eight years. He said that the trimming cycle would be changed to every two years for both east and west of Market as more appropriate for the type of trees. He said that it would alleviate complaints about debris and droppings from the trees by the businesses.

Stan Morrison commented on the state of trees in downtown due to the drought.

Councilman Mike Gardner said that Riverside Public Utilities decided to reinvest proceeds from sale of water into infrastructure rather than rebating to customers. He said it was felt the best use of the funds and that it was difficult to determine an equitable method to rebate.

Chuck Beaty asked about the surplus funds the utility had. Councilman Mike Gardner said that RPU had \$80 million in reserves of which \$50 million were unrestricted. He said that the Utility Board would be presented with a plan to utilize the unrestricted funds such as replacing old infrastructure.

Councilman Mike Gardner said that the City adapted a County ordinance to allow for home growing of marijuana for medical use. He noted that there was a maximum of 8 plants and that it was subject to certain guidelines.

Councilman Mike Gardner said that there was a discussion on the City Attorney prosecuting certain cases dealing with livability issues. He said that the discussion first started with the City Attorney talking to the County District Attorney about talking on that responsibility but that discussion stalled due to concerns about responsibility and staffing. He said that the City was pursuing the discussion on its own as they felt there would be an advantage to prosecuting those cases. He said that the City was considering putting the matter on the June ballot.

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

Councilman Andy Melendez said that the Arts Academy would be holding its Cesar Chavez Film Festival at the Culver Center.

Councilman Andy Melendez said that the scrap yard east of the railway tracks was now gone. He commented on the ongoing discussion of the multimodal transit station with Metrolink.

Councilman Andy Melendez noted that the renovation of the old Kawasaki building was well underway with the seafood restaurant scheduled to open in a few weeks. He noted that El Patron was now open.

## **9) Security Update**

Bruce Blomdahl said the upcoming shift change should result in five officers and a sergeant

being available for North Area patrols which was very positive for downtown.

Bruce Blomdahl said that there was an increase in homeless activity including the Riverside Plaza area. He said that the Community Livability Task Force was helpful but there was a huge area to cover.

Bruce Blomdahl said that there was a new Vice Sergeant and that there was a meeting with the downtown hospitality owners planned for early March to go over various issues. He commented on several instances that occurred downtown with individuals brandishing guns.

Bruce Blomdahl commented he felt personally that having the City Attorney being able to prosecute livability cases would be beneficial. He said that people needed to have repercussions for their behavior. Stan Morrison asked if there was concern about the impact of certain behavior on people wanting to come downtown. Bruce Blomdahl said there was but noted that there was also an increased movement to 'non-criminalize' the homeless which limited the available options for the police.

Michelle Freeman commented that there seemed to be an increase in aggressive behavior and wondered if there was an increase in meth use.

Justin Tracy commended the Homeless Outreach Team on their swift response to a particular incident with an individual.

There was a discussion about public restrooms. It was noted that there were public restrooms at City Hall and certain City buildings.

#### **10) City Community Development Department Update**

As Rafael Guzman was not in attendance, there was no report.

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

Lea Hernandez said that the Physical Improvements Committee was looking for possible projects. She said that ABP would be updating their website.

Lea Hernandez said that the ABP Executive was looking at their strategic plan.

It was noted that the pocket park and clock at Magnolia and Van Buren would be relocated due to the sale of the property.

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

Janice Penner said that Whitney Waters would be leaving to go to nursing school. Whitney Waters said that she was fortunate to receive a scholarship to cover the costs. Janice Penner said that RDP was fortunate in that Emily Minnick who had been an intern with RDP would be taking the position.

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

The meeting was adjourned until Wednesday, February 10, 2016 at 7:30 am.