



## Minutes

**Present:** Chuck Beaty, Bruce Blomdahl, Patrick Brien, Gerald Douglass, John Field, Michelle Freeman, Mike Gardner, Debbi Guthrie, Jeff Kraus, Kirk Lewis, Andy Melendrez, Bob Nagle, Stan Morrison, RJ Rodriguez, David St. Pierre, Charity Schiller, Cara Swearingen, Justin Tracy, Kris Whitehead, Steve Wollman, Emilio Ramirez for Al Zelinka

**Excused:** Cherie Crutcher, Bill Gardner, Laurie Hitt, Nanci Larsen, Shalini Lockard, Brian Pearcy, Shelby Worthington, Ellie Uli

**Absent:** Wolde-Ab Isaac, Marco McGuire

**Staff:** Whitney Waters

### 1) Call to Order

Justin Tracy called the meeting to order.

### 2) Self Introductions and Public Comments

Self introductions were made.

### 3) Minutes of September 9, 2015

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

**Motion made by:** Chuck Beaty      **Motion Seconded by:** Kirk Lewis

**Motion carried.**

### 4) Chair's Report

Justin Tracy said that he went to the International Downtown Association Conference in San Francisco and that he had attended interesting sessions. He commented that the conference didn't offer as many amenities as he expected for the price. Janice Penner said that she relayed that message in the conference survey she completed.

Justin Tracy said that the Fall Fashion show was great and very well organized. He said that even though it was not held on a busy night downtown, there was still a good crowd in attendance.

Justin Tracy said that the Long Night of Arts and Innovation brought a lot of people downtown. He said it was well done and very successful.

Justin Tracy advised that an endowment had been established in memory of Marion Mitchell-Wilson and he congratulated the Inlandia group on meeting their goal of \$100,000.

Justin Tracy noted that the Festival of the Arts at White Park had decreased attendance and commented that might have been due to the warm weather. He added that the event had changed over the years and might need some further changes.

Justin Tracy commented on the proposed merger of Security Bank and said that he hoped Stan Morrison would continue with the bank as he was a very important part of downtown. Stan Morrison said that it was an interesting transition and should be finalized at the end of March in

2016. He said that he hoped he would continue to be involved in the community.

Janice Penner welcomed Cara Swearingen as the newest board member representing Tilden-Coil Constructors.

Justin Tracy concluded his report by mentioning the Chow Alley proposal and expressed his concern about the funding for the project. He said he believed Riverside was of a sufficient size to access \$1 million without taking on debt.

## **5) Items for Information**

### **Fall Fashion Show:**

Janice Penner said although there were fewer retailers and outfits, the show was one of the best to date and feedback was very positive. She said that several of the retailers went above and beyond including Iliana, Vanity Haus, and Formal Images. She said the audience was estimated at 600 to 800, and that Cinemachines did both photography and a video which would be posted on the Fashion District Facebook page.

Janice Penner said that in 2016, the fashion shows would be repositioned as being in support of women's health issues. She said that RDP would partner with Riverside Community Hospital on their annual Red Dress Fashion Show and Health Expo in lieu of the spring fashion show. She said that RDP would provide financial sponsorship and arrange the fashion show component of the event. She said the partnership with Riverside Community Hospital allowed exposure to a more affluent demographic, noting that Terri Elliot of The Parrot said she had several new customers after the show. She said that each retailer may have fewer outfits, but everyone would get a chance to be in the show.

Janice Penner said that the fall show would continue to be held in October on Main Street but that RDP would partner with Riverside Community Health Foundation and the Pink Ribbon Place in support of Breast Cancer Awareness. She said that discussions had started with the City to hold the show under the City Hall breezeway and to light City Hall in pink LED lights.

Debbie Guthrie asked if RDP had been tracking the numbers of increased sales to determine the benefits of the shows. Janice Penner said increases had been reported anecdotally. R.J Rodriguez of The Vanity Haus said that it was a long term benefit rather than a rapid return on increased customer rate. He said that the success of the shows resulted in them being featured in the Inland Empire Magazine. Janice Penner said the goal of the fashion shows was to raise awareness of the unique fashion options that downtown Riverside has to offer.

### **Riverside Zombie Crawl:**

Janice Penner said a capacity crowd was expected for the event due to increased publicity and social media reach. She said that Riverside Magazine was doing a feature story on the event and RDP placed an ad in the magazine in addition to its regular advertising. She said that RDP also partnered with Live Nation on a postcard featuring the Zombie Crawl event on one side and their Fright Fest movies on the other, increasing the distribution area. She said that RDP had arranged for 40 volunteers to assist with activities and the expected increased attendance. She said that Cinemachines would be taking photos and shooting a video.

**i) Other programs and activities**

Janice Penner said RDP would be working with the City on liaising with the businesses during the Festival of Lights activities, with particular attention on parking issues during the event.

Janice Penner said that RDP was working with the McGuire Brothers Group and the Riverside Community Health Foundation on the third annual Miracle on Main Toy Drive and Health Fair scheduled for Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup>. Janice Penner said if anyone was interested in having a drop off box for toys in their location to please let her know.

**6) Financial Reports**

**6a) Draft Financial report at September 30, 2015**

Steve Wollman reported that the draft financial report for the month of September showed a deficit of \$7,656 compared to an expected surplus of \$3,577. He said that the he negative variance was due to lower than expected BID levy revenue and timing of certain expenses.

Steve Wollman reported that for the year to date, the report showed a deficit of \$25,874 compared to an expected deficit of \$10,436. He said that the negative variance was due largely to lower than expected BID levy income of \$9,663. There are several variances in expenses due to timing but these should even out during the fiscal year.

Janice Penner said the IDA Conference registrations were paid early for example to get a discount. She noted that in many cases, event items had to be paid in advance or deposits made.

**6b) Financial review of fiscal year ended June 30, 2015**

Janice Penner advised that staff had made corrections to the review and expected the final version back from the accountant in the next few weeks.

**7) Adjournment for Review and Approval of Annual Report for 2016 Renewal.**

Justin Tracy temporarily adjourned the RDP Board meeting so that the Advisory Board for the Riverside Downtown Parking and Business Improvement Area could review and approve the Annual Report for the 2016 renewal.

**Motion:** To approve the minutes of the October 8, 2014 meeting of the Advisory Board for the Riverside Downtown Parking and Business Improvement Area

**Motion to approve:** David St. Pierre                      **Motion seconded by:** Charity Schiller

**Motion carried.**

Janice Penner said that next year, RDP would move the approval for the 2017 Renewal to September due to changes in requirements for City reports and agendas. Justin Tracy asked if there were any questions or comments on the Report.

**Motion:** To approve the Annual Report for the 2016 Renewal

**Motion to approve:** Bill Gardner                      **Motion seconded by:** Charity Schiller

**Motion carried with Councilmen Mike Gardner and Andy Melendrez abstaining.**

## **8) Reconvening of Board Meeting**

Justin Tracy reconvened the RDP Board meeting.

## **9) City Council Updates**

### **9a) Ward One**

Councilman Mike Gardner discussed the proposal of relocating the downtown library. He said that the decision was on hold until the library director returned from medical leave. He said the next meeting would take place with the library board of trustees where they would discuss the details and at some point they would make recommendations to the City Council. He said the estimated budget and funding was still up for discussion. He said that there was still discussion as to whether the existing building would be remodeled or if the library would be relocated as a whole. He said that there were two sites that had been looked at: the old Victoria Market site and the old RTA site. He encouraged others to continue to follow the discussions and be involved in the decision making process.

Councilman Mike Gardner said that he thought that the Chow Alley proposal with small restaurant buildings from Main to Market was interesting. He said that the old PIP building would probably be turned into a restaurant or market but that the bank would stay as is. He said the block of Main Street between 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> would close to traffic or be able to be closed. He said other cities have done something similar, and the County would rent the property to the City for a dollar a year.

Janice Penner said the concept was going to the RDP Land Use committee the next day. She said that the concept sounded like a good idea and should not pose a problem to the other downtown businesses. She said she would send everyone a copy of the presentation that Emilio Ramirez had presented.

Justin Tracy said that he liked the idea and looked forward to being able to cross the street and eat. Councilman Mike Gardner said it would be a great place for students to practice their craft and start new businesses and would allow existing restaurants to have alternate locations.

Michelle Freeman asked if there had been a study on which the target demographic was as well as how parking would be accommodated. She said that a lot of people work in downtown but leave after 5 pm. Janice Penner said that there was not a lot of choice in the Justice Center and that hopefully having more options would result in people staying downtown. Justin Tracy said that Chow Alley would be targeted for millennials. He said that once there was more housing downtown, there would be a need for more eating options.

Emilio Ramirez said that he agreed that the target audience was millennials. He said that the parking concern was being looked into. Janice Penner said that there would be a lot of students downtown between the RCC Culinary School and Encore high school.

Councilman Mike Gardner said the ice skating rink would stay outside Imperial Hardware this holiday season but it would have to be moved next year due to construction. He said that the concept of Chow Alley had brought up the idea of moving the skating rink to in front of the courthouse. He noted there were issues with the splash pad fountain on Main and they were exploring the possibilities where they could move it. He said a new assistant City Manager had been hired replacing Deanna Lorson.

Chuck Beaty said he thought that Encore high school students needed to be mindful that they were in a downtown environment. He stated that he felt the downtown library should not be reduced in size because it was the City's Main Library.

### **9b) Ward Two**

Councilman Andy Melendrez said El Patron was still being worked on. He said that the City had been approached by a developer who wants to bring a Social Security Administration office into the old packing house. He said that it would be a good location as it was close to public transportation. He said they had received funding to study the creation of a pedestrian bicycle bridge that would link the Metro link station and the downtown area.

Councilman Andy Melendrez said that RTA had two routes that were very busy; the UCR to Corona, and the Moreno Valley into downtown area. He said public transportation had increased, and he hoped to begin express routes next year. He said the Perris Valley line should be up and running next year.

Councilman Andy Melendrez said there was a Highlander Hoops Fan Fest that night at UCR. He also said there was a lot of discussion about the Sycamore Canyon industrial area because the warehouses are very close to the residential area. He said that there were analyzing the environmental impact and working closely with the neighbors to devise a solution.

Councilman Andy Melendrez said he wanted the parks in Ward Two to be used more frequently and had asked staff to come up with ideas on how to utilize the parks for more activities. Chuck Beaty asked if the ownership of the scrap yard had been changed, Emilio Ramirez advised Chuck Beaty that the ownership has not changed.

### **10) Security Update**

Bruce Blomdahl said that there has been an increase in car break-ins. He said that there was a pattern of victims not wanting to prosecute. He said that was a problem, and he wanted to do what he could to help.

Bruce Blomdahl said that many of the homeless were service resistant and outside the box ideas were needed to solve the problem. He said there were certain laws that gave them legal authority to ask people to move or issue them a citation but that did not assure that the person would not return. He encouraged board members to contact him and allow him to assist them in combating their homeless issues. Justin Tracy said that after visiting other city downtowns, downtown Riverside was clean and had minimal homeless in comparison.

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

Emilio Ramirez gave an update on behalf of Al Zelinka. He said that El Patron did not pass their inspection so they needed to make corrections. He said that the Chow Alley proposal encouraged a buyer to make an offer for the old auto repair shop on the corner of 14<sup>th</sup> and Main. He said the Stalder building went to council on Tuesday.

He said that the RFP for the Safety Ambassador program was in fairly final form. He said that funding was the hold up for sending the RFP out. He said that he did not know where the \$300,000 would come from and encouraged board members to offer potential funding sources.

Janice Penner said that \$100,000 of the \$300,000 had been identified. She said there had been discussions to increase BID revenue by expanding the assessment to include public property owned by the City and the County.

Debbie Guthrie said the Safety Ambassador program was important for downtown Riverside to be considered clean and safe and get new businesses such as the Chow Alley proposal.

#### **12) Arlington Business Partnership Update**

There was no report.

#### **13) New Business**

RJ Rodriguez said that The Vanity Haus had two exciting opportunities; to style Madeline Stuart for a TMZ show, and pop artist Iggy Azalea. He said these would bring attention to Riverside and its fashion district.

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

It was noted that the next Board meeting fell on November 11<sup>th</sup>, Veterans Day. It was agreed to hold the meeting on the regularly scheduled date.