



## Minutes

**Present:** Chuck Beaty, Bruce Blomdahl, Patrick Brien, Gerald Douglass, Bill Gardner, Mike Gardner, Debbi Guthrie, Laurie Hitt, Wolde-Ab Isaac, Jeff Kraus, Nanci Larsen, Andrew Lazarz, Kirk Lewis, Shalini Lockard, Andy Melendrez, Stan Morrison, Bob Nagle, RJ Rodriguez, David St. Pierre, Justin Tracy, Kris Whitehead, Shelby Worthington, Al Zelinka, Christie Collins (ABP)

**Excused:** John Field, Michelle Freeman, Brian Percy, Charity Schiller, Steve Wollman, Ellie Uli

**Absent:** Marco McGuire, Cherie Russell,

**Staff:** Janice Penner

### 1) Call to Order

Justin Tracy called the meeting to order.

### 2) Self Introductions and Public Comments

Self introductions were conducted.

Dr. Wolde-Ab Isaac was congratulated on being appointed the new President of Riverside City College.

Gerry Douglass noted that the Downtown Neighborhood Conference would be held on May 16<sup>th</sup> on Main Street.

Bill Gardner advised that the Vintage Home Tour would be held that same Saturday. He added that Prima Vera would be held on Sunday at the UCR Botanical Gardens.

Chuck Beaty said that the Mission Inn Foundation would be honoring Jack B. Clarke with the Frank Miller Award. He welcomed Jeff Kraus back.

Kirk Lewis reported that graduations would start on Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup> and would occur during that week.

David St. Pierre reported that Riverside Repertory's new show would open in June.

### 3) Minutes of April 8, 2015

**Motion:** To accept the Minutes of the Meeting of April 8, 2015

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

**Motion carried.**

### 4) Chair's Report

Justin Tracy commented on Wolde-Ab Isaac's career and expressed admiration for his overcoming challenges in his life.

Justin Tracy commented that Riverside had been named as one of the best places to start a new business.

Justin Tracy commented on the dual trash receptacles that had been put downtown and the problems encountered with them.

Bill Gardner added that the lack of enclosures for trash bins in parking lots created an eyesore. Janice Penner advised that RDP with the assistance of Councilman Gardner had explored putting an enclosure in Lot 16 but the cost was \$80,000 due to the ADA requirements that would enable a wheelchair to go completely around the bins. Councilman Mike Gardner commented that the enclosure would have also removed six parking spaces from use. He added that the trash companies were also required to keep the trash bins clean.

## **5) Items for Discussion**

### **5a) Imperial Hardware Lofts – recommendation from Land Use and Executive**

Janice Penner referred the Board to the background information in the Notes to the Agenda. She pointed out that RDP normally supported the land use involved in the development and not the specific developer. She said that the Land Use committee did recommend that RDP adopt a motion to support the re-adaptive use of the Imperial Hardware building to bring additional residential and retail space to downtown but expressed concerns about the amount of parking provided for residents and possible. She said that the developer did provide a response to those concerns and based on that response, the Executive Committee recommended that RDP support the project.

**Motion:** That RDP support the Imperial Hardware Loft project as an appropriate adaptive use of the existing space and as a means to bring additional residents and retail space to the downtown core.

**Motion made by:** Debbi Guthrie     **Motion Seconded by:** David St. Pierre

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

Janice Penner said that RDP would prepare a letter confirming its support and present it through the approval process.

Bill Gardner asked if there would be any comments on the design, and if the support included support for the parking supply. Janice Penner said that RDP's support was for the land use and adaptive reuse of the façade. She said that the support did not specifically mention parking supply but would be implicit.

## **6) Items for Information**

### **6a) Update to RDP website**

Janice Penner said that funds from advertising and staff cost savings will be used to update the website to make the site more mobile friendly and to allow expansion of online marketing. She said that the update would add a mapping function and optimize search rankings, and allow for more frequent sends.

Janice Penner said that the total cost of the update would not exceed \$5,000 and would be done in two stages. She said that the cost savings of allowing RDP staff to maintain plus income through ad sales should more than cover the cost of the update.

## **6b) RDP activities**

### **i) Riverside Arts Walk – cross marketing**

Janice Penner said that RDP had convened a meeting between the Library, Museums, Culver Center, Arts Council, and representative of the Cultural Consortium to discuss ways to cross-market Arts Walk venues and downtown restaurants. She said that over the past few years, traffic between the institutions has lessened as has patronage at nearby restaurants and hospitality establishments. She said that as a result of that meeting it was agreed to launch a cross-marketing initiative to encourage people to move from venue to venue and to patronize downtown establishments.

Patrick Brien outlined some of the components of the initiative including signage, flyers, and social media advertising. He said that the main focus initiall7 would be on the major venues.

Shelby Worthington commented that she felt that some venues were indiscriminate in offering wine during the event and that deterred some patrons from visiting those venues.

### **ii) Events and programs**

Bill Gardner said that he had noted in the Board minutes that RDP was looking for possible beautification projects and suggested looking at an archway over Main Street at 5<sup>th</sup> to welcome people to downtown. Janice Penner said that the cost of the archway would be in excess of \$100,000 or more and beyond RDP's means.

Justin Tracy commented on the success of the Spring Fashion Show considering the poor weather and other challenges. Janice Penner said that the models were real troopers considering their summer outfits and the winter weather. She said that photos and the video would be posted on the Facebook page shortly. She thanked David St. Pierre for emceeding the show, and both RJ Rodriguez and Shalini Lockard for participating. She said that the comments to date had been uniformly positive.

Janice Penner outlined the upcoming luncheons. She said that the luncheon in October would be held at the Courtyard by Marriott to encourage awareness of the University corridor.

Janice Penner said that she had flyers for the Concerts at City Hall for people to take.

Janice Penner said that the City was taking the lead on planning for Riverside Restaurant Week running from June 19<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>. She expressed concern about promotional materials not being ready, noting that the print ads for the magazines needed to be ready by May 17<sup>th</sup>. Al Zelinka said that he would follow up.

Janice Penner advised that there was approximately \$7,250 in commitments from the hospitality establishments for the August 1<sup>st</sup> Street Jam Concert. She said that RDP was working on the entertainment lineup and that it would have more of a festival feel.

## **7) Financial Reports**

### **7a) Financial Report as of April 30, 2015**

Janice Penner said that Steve Wollman was still out on medical leave. She noted that David St. Pierre had been treasurer for RDP and would fill in to chair the Finance Committee when they met on May 19<sup>th</sup> to review the proposed budget.

Janice Penner said that the financial report for the month of April showed a deficit of \$5,048 compared to an expected surplus of \$195.

She said that for the year to date, the report showed a surplus of \$23,261 compared to an expected surplus of \$16,619, which was a positive variance of \$6,642. She said that BID levy income for the year to date was higher than budget but that it was offset by timing of other expenses. She said that it was expected to have the variances even out by the end of the year for either a small surplus or deficit.

**MOTION:** To accept the financial report at April 30, 2015

**Motion made by:** David St. Pierre

**Motion Seconded by:** Bill Gardner

**Motion carried.**

## **8) City Council Updates**

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

Councilman Mike Gardner said that Tom Hunt had commented at City Council about Chuck Beaty's heroism during the shooting at City Hall. The Board agreed with those comments and applauded Chuck Beaty.

Councilman Mike Gardner commented on the Community Livability Task Force. He said it included police, Code Enforcement, and Homeless Services and that the City was hoping to fund a mental health specialist that would work with them. He said that the City wanted to have the Task Force continue.

Councilman Mike Gardner said that the agreement between UCR and the City for the use of the parking lot adjacent to the Culver Center was extended for another six months during which time UCR and city staff would work on potential uses for the property. He said that the original intent had been for the property to be actively used in a complementary manner and not just used for parking.

Councilman Mike Gardner said that Encore High School was opening a charter high school in downtown Riverside. He said that they were renting the old Utilities Plaza space for classrooms and portions of the Walling Building for offices and art studios. He said that he believed they had also purchased the old roller rink and were also purchasing the old Fire Station for use as a secondary school offering instruction in performances and restaurant manager.

Councilman Mike Gardner talked about parking challenges in the area and the potential for a partnership between the Encore High School people and a private parking lot developer for the lot adjacent to the Fire Station. He said that he felt that a 400 space structure was needed to adequately serve the needs of that specific area.

Councilman Mike Gardner commented on the reductions in water use required by the State in response to the drought. He noted that the City was questioning the reduction as being too extreme due to previous reductions and to the City's water reserves.

Councilman Mike Gardner reminded people about the June 2<sup>nd</sup> election and applicable deadlines. He noted that the ballot included an initiative about marijuana dispensaries.

Bill Gardner commented that a number of detour signs on the 91 Freeway were outdated.

## **8b) Ward Two**

Councilman Andy Melendez provided information about the Riverside Transit Agency's 10 year plan and the change from a hub to a grid system. He said that the Metrolink station would become a multi-modal station with the combined efforts of RTA, Metrolink, the Riverside County Transportation Commission, and the City to improve public transportation. He said that there was funding to study the potential for a pedestrian bridge that would link downtown to the Metrolink station. He said that the Greyhound station would need to relocate but its inclusion in the multi-modal station was not definite. He said that bus service to downtown would improve including the addition of an express bus route.

Councilman Andy Melendez said that the name of the City's School for the Arts had change to the Riverside Arts Academy to avoid confusion with RCC's School for the Arts. He said that they were partnering with a Los Angeles music school as well as with RCC and La Sierra on the music curriculum. He said that they were looking at expanding to a location at Arlington Park.

Councilman Andy Melendez said that there were plans for a residential loft project on the east side of the railway tracks next to the Marketplace area. He said that there were other opportunities for development in the area.

Councilman Andy Melendez said that there were a number of projects along University including a dim sum restaurant. He said that discussions about the Coco's property becoming an In-N-Out seemed to have stalled.

Janice Penner said that the Riverside Reconnects group had a telephone conference scheduled to get input from downtown businesses. She said that RDP was working with Public Works on a pilot project for taxi stands at two downtown locations. Councilman Andy Melendez noted that usage of University Avenue by buses was expected to increase as a result of the change to a grid system.

Bill Gardner suggested that the Arts Academy consider reaching out to the Voc-Ademy for joint programming and curriculum. Justin Tracy said that students should be encouraged to enter engineering courses.

Bill Gardner asked about the landscaping around the railway bridges along University Avenue. Councilman Andy Melendez said he would follow up.

## **9) Security Update**

Bruce Blomdahl encouraged people to use the 311 app to report graffiti.

Bruce Blomdahl said that he hoped to be able to deploy four volunteers trained to patrol on bikes in downtown in the next month or so. He said they would likely patrol during the day.

Janice Penner said that the Homeless Outreach Team was patrolling more frequently. She said that they did not notice an increase in homeless from the sweep of the river bottom.

Bruce Blomdahl said that they were unable to prove a connection between the person they suspected of shooting at windows at Citrus Towers with a high powered pellet gun. He encouraged people to call police if they noticed odd or unusual behavior.

Bruce Blomdahl said that the police were noticing an increase in copper wire thefts and attempts to steal these materials. He said they had posted cameras near the solar project as a deterrent. He said that thieves were using various methods such as wearing reflective vests to obscure the camera images. He advised businesses to be aware of unusual circumstances.

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

Al Zelinka said that there were several community meetings scheduled to discuss potential uses for downtown properties. He commented on several homeless initiatives.

Al Zelinka said that the City needed to deal with the funding component of the Safety Ambassador program before releasing the RFP. Janice Penner noted that a joint meeting with the Chamber had been held to provide input for staff.

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

Christie Collins reported on the Chili Cook-off. She said that Sonic Drive-in was likely to take over the property that Walgreens had decided not to build on.

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

Debbi Guthrie reported on several large sports events coming to Riverside. She noted that the RDP monthly Convention Center calendar would be changed to include the large sports events each month. She also commented on the Special Olympics event.

Wolde-Ab Isaac said that Riverside City College was participating in a process to streamline students transferring to universities.

Shelby Worthington commented on her experience as a victim of the scam about utilities cut-off. She also thanked those who contributed to the prom event she organized for disadvantaged youth.

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

Justin Tracy adjourned the meeting until the next one scheduled for June 10, 2015