



Minutes

Present: Bill Gardner, Brian Percy, Charity Schiller, Chuck Beaty, David Bristow, David St. Pierre, Debbie Rose, Donna Stephenson, Gregory Anderson, Jeff Krauss, Jesse De La Cruz, Justin Tracy, Lou Monville, Nanci Larsen, Nathan Freeman, Nick Pacific, Patrick Brien, Paul Gill, Per Nilsson, Philip Makhoul, Randy Hord, Sergio San Martin, Shalini Lockard, Shelby Worthington-Loomis, Stan Morrison,

Excused: Chris Wagner

Absent: Andrew Walcker, Andy Melendrez, Bob Nagle, Cherie Crutcher, Erin Phillips, Geoff Neely, Simone Sink, Todd Turoci

Ex-Officio ABP / City Council: Erin Edwards, Oz Puerta

Staff: Janice Penner, Shirley Schmeltz

1) Call to Order

Shelby Worthington-Loomis called the meeting to order.

2) Self Introductions and Public Comment

There were no self introductions and/or public comments provided.

3) Approval of Minutes of July 8, 2020.

Motion: To accept the Minutes of the Meeting of July 8, 2020

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

Motion carried.

4) Chair's Report

Shelby Worthington-Loomis commented on the recent heat wave and the negative effect it had on the outdoor flex dining. She stated that unless restrictions lifted, a number of downtown businesses may not survive.

5) Items for Discussion

5a) Strategic Plan – Recommendation

Janice Penner stated due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was recommended to the Executive Committee that the Strategic Plan focus on 2021 and be primarily an Action Plan for the short term. Many downtowns are putting their long term Strategic Plans on hold and instead putting forward short term plans to deal with the impact of the pandemic. Staff has found several examples and will be using one of those as a format. The proposed actions will be similar to those in the BID Renewal Report but reflect the organization's priorities. The two main priorities for RDP would be security and marketing focused on drawing people back to downtown Riverside.

The first draft should be ready for the Executive Committee's review by September 15. The final draft will be presented to the Board at the October 14 meeting.

Shelby Worthington-Loomis mentioned how other cities in the area are not charging for parking spaces used for flex outdoor dining, providing the barricades to keep the people in those spaces separate from traffic, and providing a streetscape plan and traffic plan for those spaces. Riverside is not providing similar help for its businesses. Paul Gil added San Diego was closing streets to allow restaurants to set up in them, providing them with more outdoor dining areas. He said Riverside should be doing even more because its downtown has a greater challenge. This prompted a discussion on the City could help businesses without charging them for the assistance.

5b) Prop 15

Janice Penner said the item was for information only. The California Downtown Association alerted its members about the impact of Prop 15 if passed. Prop 15 is on the November 2020 ballot and would repeal Prop 13, resulting in tax increases for property owners. It is expected that these increases would be passed down to tenant business owners with resultant rent increases. RDP does not take political positions but does alert the Board and Committee members to available information on issues of importance. That information can then be passed on so individuals can make informed decisions. ReformCalifornia.org, NoOnProp15.org, and ballotpedia.org, are three websites with information on the issue. The San Jose Spotlight also has an interesting article worth reading <https://sanjosespotlight.com/what-you-should-know-about-prop-15/>.

6) Items for Information

6a) Downtown Security – Action and Plans

Janice Penner stated the Board of Directors agreed at their July 8 meeting to use the \$50,000 that was allotted for the StreetPlus Safety Patrol that was canceled by the City for a security patrol in the Entertainment District. At the Executive Committee's special meeting on July 20 the committee approved proceeding with a 3 month contract with Multi-Housing District Patrol, Inc. (MHDP). Staff started negotiations with MHDP but it took several weeks to finalize the contract and liability insurance coverage. The contract was signed on August 24, and patrol started on August 25.

The contract provides for a security person to patrol the Entertainment District from 4 pm to Midnight seven days a week for an initial period of 90 days starting Tuesday, August 25. The specific area is Main Street from 5th Street to City Hall, University Avenue from Market Street to Lime Street, and Lime Street from University Avenue to Mission Inn Avenue. Representatives of the security company including the patrol person and Janice Penner walked the route on the start date to introduce the new patrol. The response to the new patrol was favorable. RDP is getting daily reports as well as a weekly summary that will be shared with the City and the Security Committee.

The City of Riverside has entered into an agreement between the City and RDP under which RDP would provide the security patrol for the garages previously provided by StreetPlus. The Professional Services Agreement was signed on August 25 by RDP and sent to the City to be approved by the City Council. As required, RDP will issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to obtain a minimum of three bids. The bid process will start in September. The changeover will take place sometime in November.

A meeting was held on Monday, August 24 with members of City Management and Council member Erin Edwards, Shelby Worthington-Loomis and Janice Penner representing RDP. The

meeting was initiated by Erin Edwards who had received calls from businesses about the increased number of homeless in the downtown, particularly on Main Street.

Shelby Worthington-Loomis and Janice Penner advised that there were a number of issues that had arisen, particularly with the marked increase in troubled homeless on Main between City Hall and 5th Street. Several obviously have mental issues and are partially dressed and dirty. They are frequently sitting by the fountain near the Chavez monument and on the Gandhi monument walls which are particularly concerning for the shops between 6th and 5th which often are staffed by women alone.

Chris Wagner has alerted his officers who have been patrolling day and evening shifts. Hafsa Kaka has informed outreach services to address the area frequently, along with County behavioral health units given the mental health issues. Both police and outreach workers have been on Main Street since the meeting. Kris Martinez has been asked to look into the lighting at the Gandhi monument which is somewhat obscured at night by tree growth. The RDP Ambassadors have been instructed to ask individuals to move along in those circumstances where they can, for example lengthy loitering or camping out.

Jeff Kraus wanted to know what the cost was for the 3 months of the contract. Janice Penner responded the cost is just over \$16,000. The cost of one person for seven days a week from 4 pm to midnight for the entire year would be approximately the \$50,000 allocated for this program.

A discussion took place in regards to the follow-up meeting which would determine how the new security was doing and any changes needed to make security better.

6b) Update on Downtown Activities and Items

Janice Penner said RDP continues to share pertinent posts on Facebook, and distribute informational emails. Staff is promoting free Facebook seminars focused on restaurant recovery and sponsored by the Inland Empire Women's Business Center.

RDP Ambassadors have been distributing the masks which were provided by the County. Three shipments of 10,000 masks have been received which equates to 600 boxes of 50 masks. So far, over 450 boxes of masks have been distributed with distribution ongoing. RDP will receive another supply this week.

RDP has resumed the two Security meetings and the Land Use meeting this month using Zoom.

7) Financial Reports

The reports are considered draft until the final version of the financial review is received. The motion to formally approve the June 30, 2020, July 31, 2020, and the August 31, 2020 financial reports will be presented at the October 14 Board meeting.

7a) Financial Update for July 31, 2020

The draft financial report for the month showed a surplus of \$10,604 compared to an expected deficit of \$6,578, resulting in a positive variance of \$17,183. BID levy income year for the one month to date was \$18,544 higher than budget which accounted for the positive variance, along with some lower expenses. As of July 31, RDP has \$235,745 in two Checking and one Money

Market accounts with Citizens Business Bank and Provident Bank. RDP reserves included four CDs with Pacific Premier Bank and Provident Bank for total reserves of \$328,031.

The Accounts Receivable equaled \$52,062 which consisted of \$14,726 for Republic Parking for garage parking patrol and \$37,335 for the City of Riverside for June BID levy. The Accounts Payable equaled \$981.

7b) Financial Update for August 31, 2020

The draft financial report for the two months to date showed a surplus of \$37,067 compared to an expected deficit of \$17,405 resulting in a positive variance of \$54,472. BID Levy income year for the two months to date was \$54,017 higher than budget which was the main reason for the positive variance. Non-budgeted but approved expenses to August 31 were \$1288 for the new safety patrol.

As of August 31, RDP had \$248,533 in two Checking and one Money Market accounts with Citizens Business Bank and Provident Bank. RDP reserves include four CDs with Pacific Premier Bank and Provident Bank for total reserves of \$328,031.

The Accounts Receivable equaled \$66,249 which consisted of \$9,984 for Republic Parking for garage parking patrol and \$56,265 for the City of Riverside for July BID levy. The Accounts Payable equaled \$1,323.

7c) Update on Annual Financial Review

The CPA has finished the review and provided the draft report. A final version will be available shortly and provided to the Executive Committee and to the Board of Directors. The tax return will then be completed and sent to the Board before submission.

8) Adjournment of Meeting and Convening of Advisory Board of the Riverside Downtown Parking and Business Improvement Area for Approval of Annual Report for 2021 Renewal (See Separate Agenda)

In accordance with past practice, the meeting of the Board of Directors adjourned so that the Board, acting as the Advisory Board of the Riverside Downtown Parking and Business Improvement Area, could review and approve the Annual Report for the 2021 renewal of the BID levy. Once that has been done, the report will be submitted to City Council for setting of the Public Hearing to approve the BID levy for 2021.

9) Reconvening of Board Meeting

Bill Gardner motioned to reconvene the Board meeting after the Advisory Board meeting was adjourned. Shelby Worthington-Loomis seconded the motion. The Board Meeting was reconvened.

10) City Council Updates

Erin Edwards said she understands the frustrations voiced by everyone during the meeting so far. She is also frustrated by the way the pandemic is affecting her and her family. However, she pointed out the pandemic is still going on and Riverside is in the purple tier meaning COVID-19 is wide spread in the area. If Riverside was to “pack people in like sardines” in restaurants and businesses, it would mean that Riverside would not move to the next tier in the system. The City is trying to make changes that will help businesses in the long run while still

maintaining a healthy environment during the pandemic. The outdoor flex permits were revised again so fitness centers and gyms can apply to use public parks as a location to conduct their business without paying a fee. Erin Edwards said there are obviously more conversations which need to be had. She asked RDP to draft a letter to send to her highlighting all additional concerns, frustrations, and items for discussion, and send it to her so she can get them addressed.

Erin Edwards stated the City received \$28 million in funding from the CARES Act, and the allocation plan was approved in the beginning of August. There is a new grant for small businesses which has between 1 – 50 employees. It is for a onetime payment of \$10,000 and applications are being accepted on a first come first serve basis. This grant is in addition to the grant which was passed with the CDBG of \$1.8 million funding back in June for low to moderate income businesses with 5 employees or fewer. The City is actually struggling to spend this money, which is surprising because there are over 2,000 businesses in the City of Riverside with 5 employees or less. This could be a result of the word not getting out to the businesses that need the help. Erin Edwards asked for RDP's help in publicizing the information. The CARES Act funding is for the non-profit sector as well, and applications for non-profits opened up last week where they can apply for grants of up to \$24,000. More information can be found on the City's website at riversideca.gov/cares.

The RDP BID levy renewal is on the council calendar for 2 different dates. On October 20, it will be on the City Council's consent calendar where the Council will decide if/when a public hearing needs to be set. If the Council decides to set a public hearing that hearing would be on December 1, where the Council will review the annual report and have the official public hearing to adopt the assessment of the BID levy.

On September 10, the budget engagement commission is conducting a hearing on the surplus properties at 5 pm. September 15 is the next council meeting for strategic planning. It will also include a public hearing on increases in trash and recycling rates for both residents and businesses. The proposed rate increase would be for 5 years starting on October 20.

A discussion took place in regards to the surplus properties, and on the Mount Rubidoux Cross and the committee which was created to save the cross in question.

A discussion also took place about the City keeping people updated about where Riverside falls in the tier system for the reopening phases.

11) RDP Security Update

Shelby Worthington-Loomis provided the security update for Chris Wagner. The homeless have been cleared out of the area on Massachusetts Ave. Many were sheltered and the rest who did not want services were moved along. Many of the displaced homeless have moved into the downtown area, Chris Wagner thought this may happen and for the next few weeks during this transition time he has added two more officers for downtown during lunch and early dinner and one more for later in the evening. If anyone has any questions for him, please email Janice Penner and she will get the information to him.

12) City Community Development Department Update

Nathan Freeman said Kaz Ramen, located by Simple Simons, and Slater 50/50 will open their doors in October.

The business support grant project is the most pressing issue for him and his team at this moment. They received \$3.6 million of the roughly \$28 million which was allocated to the City through the CARES Act. From that they are providing grants in the amount of \$10,000 to businesses which have been impacted by COVID-19. With RDP's help the word is getting out, and over 230 applications have been received during the first weekend alone. The Inland Empire Small Business center in downtown will help, at no cost, any business who wants to apply for the grant but may not necessarily be the best with computers.

The new umbrellas were installed in the CalTower block, and the ones which were there that are still in good shape will replace the broken ones in front of Simple Simon's. The new tables and chairs will be installed on Main Street within the next week.

The development on Merrill is going to be the site of a new apartment complex. They broke ground late last year but have run into some environmental problems which have slowed them down a little bit. It turns out there were some underground storage tanks from the previous gas stations which used to be there which no one knew about. Once the issue has been mitigated construction should start within the next couple of months.

Shelby Worthington-Loomis commented on the new library and how nice it is coming out.

Shelby Worthington-Loomis also stated the regulations for the grant are too high and no one is able to qualify based on it, and that the numbers need to be lowered. Erin Edwards said that because it is part of the CDBG funds from HUD, the requirements and regulations cannot be changed.

13) Arlington Business Partnership Update

Oz Puerta provided the Arlington Business Partnership update via the chat feature in Zoom. He stated ABP cancelled the 18th Annual Chili Cook-Off because of the shutdown order leaving them unable to obtain permits for the event. ABP has been focusing its efforts on their Physical Improvement Grants and RING Camera Program. They have seen a spike in vandalism and theft within their BID and have worked on 16 different grants to date, mostly on Magnolia Street. The Winter Wonderland event is scheduled for December 5, 2020 but they have a firm deadline for their permits to be issued. Otherwise the event will also be cancelled for this year.

14) New Business

There was no new business.

15) Adjournment and Next Meeting Date – October 14, 2020