



Minutes

Present: Cherie Crutcher, Chuck Beaty, Damian Fussel, FeRita Carter, Jean Eiselein, Jesse De La Cruz, Joe Guzzetta, Jorge Barrera, Justin Tracy, Nanci Larsen, Philip Makhoul, Rachael Dzikonski, Shalini Lockard, Sherry Shimshock, Stan Morrison

Excused: Amy Hoyt, Brian Percy, Bob Nagle, Bryan Crawford, Joe Ramos, Lou Monville, Randy Hord, Shelby Worthington-Loomis

Absent: AJ Licon, Andrew Walcker, Collette Lee

Guests: Cindy Roth, Jennifer Gamble, Mike Futrell

Ex-Officio ABP / City Council: Melanie Bruns, Philip Falcone, Sarai Arellano

Staff: Janice Penner, Shirley Schmeltz

1) Call to Order

Acting as Chair, Shalini Lockard called the meeting to order.

2) Self-Introductions and Public Comment

Self-introductions and public comments were conducted.

3) Approval of Minutes of June 14, 2023.

Motion: To accept the Minutes of the Meeting of June 10, 2023

Motion made by: Chuck Beaty **Motion Seconded by:** FeRita Carter

Motion carried.

4) Chair's Report

No Chair's Report was given.

5) Items for Discussion

5a) Business Town Hall Meetings

Janice Penner said a number of issues are facing downtown businesses and RDP should take a strong lead in advocating for them. The issues include parking inventory, location of housing in the downtown core, and safety and cleanliness. To obtain input from downtown businesses on issues of concern to them, RDP is planning a series of "Town Hall" meetings. The first meeting is scheduled on Wednesday, July 26 at 1:30 pm. Shelby Worthington-Loomis has offered Loft 84 as the location. Email invitations will be sent out to downtown businesses. People will also be asked if in the future if they would prefer an early morning meeting at 7:30 am or late afternoon meeting around 5:30 pm for subsequent meetings.

Joe Guzzetta asked if City staff would be invited to attend. Janice Penner said the meetings are open so anyone can attend. She noted that the meetings would focus on obtaining input from businesses so the agenda would not include items from the City to have more time for people to speak their minds.

Joe Guzzetta asked if garages 1 and 2 would be part of the discussion. Janice Penner said not specifically as those garages are likely to be sold and that parking lost so the discussion needs to be where else parking can be put in the downtown core. There will be a temporary parking lot

where the Utilities Plaza used to be but that does not really address the need for parking in the core.

6) Financial Reports -

6a) Draft Financial Update at June 30, 2023

Nanci Larsen said the financial report for the month of June showed a year-to-date surplus of \$18,221 compared to a budget deficit of \$4,111. The \$22,333 positive variance was due largely to BID levy income being \$39,234 greater than budget. While certain expenses are less than budget, they were offset by the extension of the external security patrol to June 30, 2023.

As of June 30, 2023, RDP had \$210,856 in two checking and one money market account with Citizens Business Bank and Provident Bank. RDP reserves included two CDs with Pacific Premier Bank and one CD with Provident Bank for total reserves of \$275,306.

The accounts receivable was \$15,549 consisting of \$13,219 for the external garage patrol, \$2,000 for the Economic Impact Study, and \$330 for other. The accounts payable equaled \$3,309. These numbers are draft until the CPA does the review so no motion was required.

7) Adjournment of Meeting and Convening of Advisory Board of the Riverside Downtown Parking and Business Improvement Area for Approval of Annual Report for 2024 Renewal (separate agenda) followed by reconvening of meeting

8) RDP Security Update

As Bryan Crawford could not attend this meeting, an update was not provided.

Shirley Schmeltz said there are a lot of new homeless in the area and it is unclear where they are all coming from. Janice Penner said when the Ambassadors come across a new homeless, they take pictures and try to get information from them. The pictures and information are then sent off to Homeless Solutions.

Nanci Larsen commented that there has been an influx of more homeless coming into the Mission Inn Museum. Janice Penner said the influx is greater than the Ambassadors can handle and it will be worse during the summer as they look for cool spaces. Someone asked if there were cooling centers in downtown. Janice Penner and Nanci Larsen both stated the Dale Center and Main Library are cooling centers. Shalini Lockard asked if the Ambassadors should try to move the homeless to a cooling center. Mike Futrell said it would not be an issue for the City. Janice Penner said RDP would instruct the Ambassadors to move the homeless towards the Library.

9) County of Riverside Updates

Damian Fussel said the Board of Supervisors allocated \$7.6 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of which \$1 million will be going directly to Riverside to get more beds to get the homeless off the streets. Shalini Lockard asked if any of those ARPA funds could be used for security. Damian Fussel said only for impoverished areas, and while he doesn't think the downtown area qualifies, he will double check.

Janice Penner asked about the ARPA grant for small businesses. Jorge Barrera said they are currently in the process of awarding the contract to a program administrator who will then put

together the requirements/framework for the program, and then administer the program once the requirements are established. Janice Penner said that the grant was originally to assist businesses in sustainability in the aftermath of COVID, and wondered if the grant could be used for security. Jorge Barrera said ARPA has very stringent guidelines but there is a staff member looking into the various ways the funds can be utilized. Janice Penner said she was asking because of the security grant and how the police department ran out of money before it ran out of applicants. Mike Futrell commented the grant rollout did not go smoothly, and more staff members are being brought in to help with the distribution. He will be asking City Council for an additional \$1 million to allow for every applicant who applied for the security grant and was approved to be funded.

Chuck Beaty asked if there is any city or county that has been successful in dealing with the homeless issue. Mike Futrell said not in California, noting that while there has been some success in other counties, they are arresting those individuals and dumping them in other counties, namely Riverside, so it is no longer their issue. This practice is what is causing the major influx of the new homeless in downtown Riverside. A discussion broke out regarding the homeless issue in Riverside and the surrounding areas and how money being used for the homeless isn't necessarily being used in the correct manner.

10) Mayor's Office Update

Sarai Arellano said there was a press conference on the new project that would connect individuals being released from jail with their home location.

Philip Falcone said there are a few mural projects in the works including one that just started in the alleyway by Route 30 Brewery across from where Tiffany Brooks is creating her mural.

Public Works is marking up areas of the alleys that were recently repaved which need to be corrected for better quality of life.

11) City Council Updates

No updates were provided.

12) City Community Development Department Updates

Jorge Barrera said City Council approved five additional staff members for the Economic Development team. There is a new project manager who has been hired from the Palm Desert area named Denise Hamlet who has a significant amount of experience.

13) Items for Information

13a) Update on RDP Activities, Items, and News

Janice Penner stated she should be receiving the first draft of the Economic Study by the end of the week.

The luncheon on July 25 will feature presenters Drew Oberjuege and Marie Esther Fernandez who will provide a review of the first year of the Cheech. The meeting will be at Palenque by Mezcal.

Planning for Doors Open Riverside on September 9 is proceeding. There are currently 18 locations confirmed to be a part of the event with another 4 currently in the works. Participating locations include the Cesar Chavez Community Center, Calvary Presbyterian Church, Eden Lutheran Church, Evergreen Memorial Cemetery, First Church of Christ Scientist, Heritage House, Main Library, Riverside Woman's Club, and the Cheech. The time of the event has been expanded, running from 2 pm to 7 pm.

RDP is working with Bernie Edmonds to supply locks to two local downtown businesses, The Mission Inn Museum and Riverside Rustic, that would sell the locks on consignment to be placed on the Lock in Your Love monument in downtown Riverside. The locks would be engraved with Riverside Love on one side and the other side would be blank for people to be able to write their message on that side.

14) New Business

Shalini Lockard said Public Works will be providing a presentation on paving projects within downtown at the Land Use meeting on July 20.

Mike Futrell said it is Public Works intention to have the temporary parking lot open by Festival of Lights. The following Fall will be when they hope to start construction on the permanent parking structure at the old Utilities Plaza location. Cindy Roth said the Annual Festival of Lights switch on ceremony will be on Saturday, November 18.

The City is hosting a six week concert series in downtown every Thursday from 5 pm to 10 pm at the City Hall breezeway. Janice Penner commented that the first Thursday in August is Artswalk. Rachael Dzikonski stated she has spoken with Margie Haupt from the City and is coordinating with her to have vendors around the concert venue. For August, the Riverside Arts Council will not have a band at the Benjamin Franklin stage as the City will have a band already.

Justin Tracy said the City and County need to work together to pave the gravel parking lot behind the Provident Bank building and make it accessible for visitors to park. He also commented on the state of the alley in that area and the unsafe conditions because it is so uneven. He added that the trauma helicopters are still flying over the neighborhoods at 3 am waking people up, and that the building Wolfskill is located in is a mess with graffiti on the roof and the mural. Philip Falcone said they are trying to locate the artist for the mural because the mural is the property of the artist, so it cannot be painted over without their permission. The artist either needs to fix the mural or paint over it themselves.

15) Adjournment – Next Meeting Date September 13, 2023 at 8:30 am. No meeting in August