



8:30 AM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
WEDNESDAY JANUARY 10, 2024
WALLING BUILDING 3rd FLOOR

Minutes

Present: Bryan Crawford, Chuck Beaty, Collette Lee, Denise Hamet, Jean Eiselein, Jesse De La Cruz, Joe Guzzetta, Joe Ramos, Justin Tracy, Lou Monville, Nanci Larsen, Philip Makhoul, Rachael Dzikonski, Shalini Lockard, Shelby Worthington-Loomis, Ron Loveridge

Excused: Amy Hoyt, FeRita Carter, Damian Fussel, Randy Hord, Bob Nagle, Stan Morrison, Samuel Precie

Absent: Andrew Walcker, Brian Percy, Cherie Crutcher, AJ Licon, Clarissa Cervantes

Ex-Officio ABP / City Council: Erin Edwards, Paloma Montes, Sarai Arellano, Bill Kester

Staff: Janice Penner, Shirley Schmeltz

1) Call to Order

Shelby Worthington-Loomis called the meeting to order.

2) Self Introductions and Public Comment

Self introductions and public comments were conducted.

3) Approval of Minutes of December 13, 2023.

Motion: To accept the Minutes of the Meeting of December 13, 2023

Motion made by: Joe Guzzetta **Motion Seconded by:** Collette Lee

Motion carried.

4) Chair's Report

Shelby Worthington-Loomis said the Executive Meeting was canceled due to lack of a quorum as nearly everyone was ill or out of town.

5) Items for Discussion

5a) Ward 1 Candidate Forum

Janice Penner said RDP was partnering with the Downtown Area Neighborhood Alliance and the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce on the Ward 1 Candidate Forum. The Forum would start at 5:30 pm and all candidates agreed to attend. There would be no RDP January luncheon due to the forum. The press release and the flyer for the forum were provided as attachments.

Janice Penner said each organization would have three primary questions to be put forward to the candidates by each organization's selected moderator, with several additional questions should time allow. RDP's questions were sent to the Executive Committee for review and agreed upon by the other organizations.

5b) Economic Impact Study – Update

Shelby Worthington-Loomis said the completion of the Economic Impact Study had been delayed for several reasons outside RDP's control, but it was anticipated to be completed by January 15. A Zoom meeting was held with senior Beacon Economics staff along with Lou

Monville, Andrew Walcker, and Janice Penner to resolve outstanding issues with the content and focus of the study.

Janice Penner said one of the main issues was that the study was still was not as forceful in driving the point as desired. The fourth draft is expected to be delivered shortly.

5c) RDP Board Election

Shelby Worthington-Loomis said the ballot was mailed out to eligible members and noted a copy was attached for reference. She said the Executive will review the results of the election at their February 6, 2024 meeting and the Board will then ratify the results and formally approve the slate at its February 14, 2024 meeting. The Board term starts March 1, 2024 and the new Board officially will be officially welcomed at the March 20, 2024 Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony.

6) Financial Reports

6a) Financial Update at December 31, 2023

Nanci Larsen said the financial report for the month of December showed a year-to-date deficit of approximately \$20,971, compared to a budget deficit of \$50,608, resulting in a positive variance of \$29,636. BID Levy income was \$15,678 higher than budgeted which accounted for a portion of the variance. The remaining variance was primarily due to timing and some expense savings such as the new internet phone based system.

As of December 31, 2023, RDP had \$213,036 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 \$279,618.

The accounts receivable was \$193. The accounts payable equaled \$3,516.

Motion: To Accept the Financial Reports at December 31, 2023 as presented.

Moved: Chuck Beaty **Seconded:** Justin Tracy

Motion Approved.

7) RDP Security Updates

Bryan Crawford said when RDP was no longer able to fund an external security patrol for downtown, the police took two officers from the Downtown Entertainment District night patrol and put them on day shift to patrol the Main Street Mall area. The City Manager has now hired private security to walk the pedestrian mall during the day, so starting January 19, the two police officers will return to night shift to better staff the evening bar crowds.

Crime was down during the Festival of Lights, possibly due to the higher number of CSC security personnel in downtown that were hired to guard the light displays during the event. A meeting is planned with the security team to discuss what it will look like moving forward, now that the CSC security has left.

A lot of resources had to be diverted due to some big cases that popped up. One involved a three year old that was murdered by his father. There was a carjacking/kidnapping case of a hospital employee which was a targeted situation. Daniel's Jewelers at the Plaza was robbed again losing about \$600,000 worth of merchandise. The police are short staffed in nearly every department, so when big cases such as these come up, their resources are diverted from patrol and homelessness issues.

Janice Penner asked for an update regarding the business security grant. At the last security meeting it was indicated that all the money had been allocated and the police were now going through all the requirements to reimburse the businesses. Bryan Crawford said 100 businesses were approved with roughly \$10,000 given to each business. The businesses have to have the security upgrades done, and then submit their paid invoices for reimbursement. This method has taken much longer than anticipated as businesses are having issues getting people to install gates, do the electrical work, install the security cameras, etc. The deadline when the work had to be finished and paid invoices received has been extended a few times to try and accommodate these issues. If approved businesses are not spending the entire \$10,000 given to them, the extra money will be given to another business on the list which hadn't been approved in the first round.

8) County of Riverside Updates

Damien Fussel was excused so no update was provided.

9) Mayor's Office Update

Sarai Arellano said State of the City address will take place on January 25 starting at 5:30 pm.

The special edition of Coffee with the Mayor held at the Downtown Bookstore had great attendance with good discussions. The Who to Call list that the police and the Department of Housing and Human Services have created is a great resource so Sarai Arellano is working to get the list distributed as quickly as possible. Janice Penner said she asked for a PDF of the list but they are waiting until after January 19 as some contact information will be changing shortly.

The Summit of Excellence was a great event.

The Mayor's Office will be starting a neighborhood group tour. More details will be released once it is launched.

10) City Council Updates

Erin Edwards said the City Council Retreat yesterday was a good opportunity for the Council to share what their priorities are for the next 12 months, and to hear from City staff within the strategic plan what goals will be accomplished this year. One specific pillar of the strategic plan is regarding infrastructure, mobility and connectivity, and that will have many capital projects this year including restoration of the Harada House. Erin Edwards said for the year there are 5 key items that will be addressed; 1. outdoors, open space, and agriculture for the future, 2. public safety, 3. solutions to housing and homelessness, 4. vision, support, and acceptability for businesses and corridors of commerce, 5. short and long term planning within budgets and work plans.

Lunar New Year Festival will be January 27 and 28 starting at 11 am each day.

Ron Loveridge commented on the concept of having a downtown in every ward and wanted clarification on what that means. Erin Edwards said her understanding is that they are going to think on ways to have thriving business centers in other areas of the City. Janice Penner said it is more like a commerce center than another downtown. A discussion broke out regarding this concept.

Another discussion took place regarding the Summit of Excellence and the different break outs sessions that happened throughout the day. There were multiple sessions people were separated into including arts and culture, and air and transportation. Collette Lee commented that there should be minutes or some type of documentation released which will highlight what was discussed in each division. She went with the arts and culture division but wanted to know what was discussed in the other areas.

Bill Kester said Melanie Bruns will be out of the office for awhile.

The MLK walk is on Monday and will start at the Straton Community Center and go into downtown.

The small and micro business grant is still open for applications. There is six million dollars to be allocated for that grant. The grant is specific to businesses, not for non-profits.

Janice Penner said at the Summit one of the items discussed was artist housing. She wondered if an update could be provided regarding the artisan residents park. Bill Kester said he could provide an update at the next meeting. He mentioned that they are looking at reframing the artist and residence terminology.

11) City Community Development Department Updates

Denise Hamet said the City is consolidating the notes from the Summit. There was a lot of good information provided during the event.

If anyone has any questions on the ARPA micro and small business grant, they should check the website because it goes into detail on who would be eligible to receive funds and who isn't.

They are currently working on a new Homeless Tracking App where the outreach team can get information about how many homeless there are, where they are currently located, and what their current situation is. Janice Penner asked if the app tracks the number of contacts each specific individual has had. Denise Hamet said she thought so but would find out for sure.

Philip Makhoul asked if it was confirmed that the bus stops on University Avenue near Lemon were being removed. Janice Penner said the bus stops are not being removed, rather the bus transfers will take place at the Vive Street mobility hub from now on which will hopefully help with people waiting for their connection at the bus stops. A discussion took place regarding the bus stop near Lemon Street and how it is causing nothing but trouble at that location. Shelby Worthington-Loomis and Philip Makhoul both stated that it is the bus stop causing all the issues in the surrounding area of that corner of downtown, and how much better the area would be without it. The issues of drug dealers, homeless, trash piles, and issues in the parking lot were all mentioned.

12) Items for Information

12a) Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony

Shelby Worthington-Loomis said all of the awards recipients have been sent notifications via email and mailed letters. Once all have acknowledged receipt, the press release will be issued. Solicitation of Roy Hord award nominations started in December and will continue through the first part of January.

Requests for donations for the Opportunity Drawing went out in the first week of January. Staff is obtaining quotes on related costs such as Audio Visual and Awards to finalize ticket prices and sponsorship levels. Save the date emails will go out in late January. Invitations will be sent out in mid to late February.

The event will be held at the Mission Inn Hotel and Spa on March 20, 2024 in the Grand Parisian Ballroom. Janice Penner said she worked the prices out and tickets will be minimum \$150 each with early bird being \$140. Event sponsorship will be around \$2,000 which will give a complementary table of 10.

Janice Penner mentioned the Riverside Arts Council will be hosting the Mayor's Ball on Saturday, March 23. Rachael Dzikonski said the event is being restructured and will be more focused on celebrating the arts for the previous year, similar to RDP's Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony but recognizing specific artists, art organizations, etc.

12b) RDP Activities and Items Update

Shelby Worthington-Loomis stated staff attended the announcement of the City's new website, Visit Riverside, to be formally launched in January. Kaitlin Reiersen, the City's Marketing Manager, will be the presenter for RDP's February 27 luncheon and speak about the new destination website.

Staff attended the City's Summit on January 8 at the Riverside County Office of Education conference center. The invitation was sent to the Board.

RDP is partnering with Keep Riverside Clean and Beautiful and the Arlington Business Partnership on a spring clean-up scheduled for Saturday, March 16. RDP will be offering clean-up kits to downtown businesses provided through KRCB. KRCB is handling the majority of logistics.

Ron Loveridge said the LA Times Weekender had a stunning article regarding downtown Riverside and Riverside in general. Erin Edwards said she had a copy of the article and will do her best to send a copy to Janice Penner so she can distribute it to other members of the Board.

13) New Business

There was no new business.

14) Adjournment – Next Meeting Date - February 14, 2024 at 8:30 am.