

3/21/07

Members Present: Jason Collis - Chairman, Clarey Rudd - Vice Chairman, Glenda Lewis - Secretary, Jim Luttjohann, Christy Weir, Jerry Breiner, Seana Weaver, Dave Armstrong, Dan Frederickson, Sid White

Advisory Board: Gerhard Mayer

Members absent: Gregory Smith, Rick Stewart, Loretta Merewether, Zoe Taylor, Chris Bennett, Ed Warren, Mark Hartley

Also present: Robin Elander, City of Ventura Cultural Affairs, Jeanette L. Lombardo, County Commerce Bank, Debora Schreiber, Kalorama Coalition and Hilda Kilpatrick, Ventura Visitors & Convention Bureau.

The meeting was called to order at 9:07 a.m.

1. Introduction of guests:

Jason Collis introduced Jeanette L. Lombardo, County Commerce Bank and Debora Schreiber, Kalorama Coalition.

2. Approval of Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, March 7, 2007:
Jason Collis - Seana Weaver noted that Gerard Mayer's last name should be spelled Mayer instead of Meyer. Jim Luttjohann also noted that Chris Bennett was authorized to fill-out Rotary Grant Application instead of Christy Weir. A motion was made by Jerry Breiner to approve the Board of Directors Meeting Minutes of March 7, 2007 as amended and was seconded by Christy Weir.

3. Financial Committee Report:

- Financial Status: Jerry Breiner reported the DVO has lost donor who paid the rent for Police Storefront.

- Status on 501(c)(3) application: Dave Armstrong reported we should have a response from the IRS next week.

- Alternative funding sources from donors:

i. Board members suggested applying for a line of credit with County Commerce Bank. Motion to request meeting with bank was made by Christy Weir and seconded by Jerry Breiner.

ii. Seana would like to discuss a bank loan/line of credit with Affinity

Bank.

iii. Jim Luttjohann suggested checking the Ventura County Community Foundation resource library for list of grants.

iv. Sid White suggested that DVO ask Mary Walsh at the City for the name of the person who writes grants for them.

v. Jim Luttjohann suggested hiring a grant writer for beginning years of the organization.

vi. Jim and Seana will meet with Ed Summers, Affinity Bank, to consider sponsorship role promoting RV travel and having their publication at the Visitors Center. They will suggest use of CRA funds.

- Status on Rotary Grant - Jason Collis reported this item is still pending. Chris Bennett to report at the next board meeting.

4. D.O.T. Committee Report: Jerry Breiner - Jerry reported on the following:

- DTSP Update. Was adopted by City Council on Monday 19th.

- Parking Update. Parking Management Plan was approved Monday 19th by City Council.

- Assignments for block captains. Clarey Rudd will update at next meeting.

- Retail Strategy group plan. Dave Armstrong distributed a copy of a Draft Retail Market Analysis for Downtown Ventura. Committee to convene for preparation of City Council presentation. Date of meeting to be determined.

- Downtown Merchant list is updated and posted on DVO website.

5. Organization Committee Report: Jason Collis and Clarey Rudd - Jason Collis gave an update on the Executive Director recruitment interviews. Interviews were conducted on March 15 with Catherine Haskett Hany from Pasadena and Donald Knapp from Indianapolis. Donald Knapp has withdrawn.

The Committee needs to know funding sources to hire the Executive Director as they need to give a response next week. Organization Committee agreed to meet after today's DVO meeting to discuss this issue.

6. Promotions Committee Report: Seana Weaver

- Update on Public Relations Efforts
 - i. Seana and Gerhard are working on press release. Need feedback from board members. Board members suggested including the following in press release: Sidewalk cleaning machine and Marquis sign on California Street exit.
 - ii. Need to send thank you note to Jeff Becker for the great Ventura sign at California Street Exit. Jim Lutjohann volunteered to write letter.
 - iii. Dan Frederickson asked if DVO can get a weekly feature in The Star.
 - iv. Seana reported that the "Around My Town" magazine has offered a free full page 4 color ad. She requested input from board members. Board members agreed to promote "Have You Seen Your Downtown Lately"? ad should include a nice photo with no heavy text.
 - v. Seana gave some feedback from Retail Strategy Event. She mentioned that concerns were mostly about homeless.

- Update on Retail Strategy Event bill: No report was made.

7. Open Forum Questions/Comments From Guests:

- Jim Lutjohann commented that the Route 12 will double the number of buses for the summer.
- Glenda Lewis reported the Downtown Neighborhood Watch group will meet on April 11 at 7pm at the Bank of Books.
- Jim Lutjohann reported the Hilton Garden Inn will re-design their proposal and The Mian Companies will pursue an "Embassy Suites" Flag for the hotel. After the Downtown Strategic Plan was adopted by City Council on Monday, March 19, site plans have been changed. Now the design will incorporate second floor meeting space and the guest rooms will be housed in a "u" shaped structure with a swimming pool in the middle. Meeting space taking advantage of view and location and a limited amount of retail store space will also be incorporated. Estimated construction timeline: Conservative: 18 months to build.
- Christy Weir indicated that Downtown needs distinctive bus benches. Dan Frederickson suggested having donors and plaques on the benches to help with the cost.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10a.m.