

**5/2/07**

Members Present: Jason Collis - Chairman, Clarey Rudd - Vice Chairman, Glenda Lewis - Secretary, Jack Carter, Christy Weir, Jerry Breiner, Seana Weaver, Ed Warren and Gregory Smith.

Advisory Board: Gerhard Mayer, Sid White, Dave Armstrong.

Members absent: , Rick Stewart, Loretta Merewether, Mark Hartley, Dan Frederickson, Jim Luttjohann, Chris Bennett, Zoe Taylor. Also present: Robin Elander, City of Ventura Cultural Affairs, Jeanette L. Lombardo, County Commerce Bank, Debora Schreiber, Kalorama Coalition, Lisa Zaid, Public Art Project Manager, City of Ventura, Jim DeArkland, Irene Henry, State Farm Insurance and Hilda Kilpatrick, Ventura Visitors & Convention Bureau.

The meeting was called to order at 9:06a.m.

1. Introduction of guests:

Jason Collis introduced Lisa Zaid, Public Art Project Manager for the City of Ventura; Jim DeArkland and Linda Braunschweiger, People's Self Help Housing & Affinity Bank.

2. Approval of Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, April 18, 2007: Jason Collis - A motion was made by Ed Warren to approve the agenda as presented and was seconded by Glenda Lewis. Motion passed.

3. Presentation by Lisa Zaid; Public Art Project Manager on the Downtown public Arts Project.

Lisa Zaid made a presentation about the Downtown Streetscape Project, Ventura Public Art Program. The City of Ventura's Public Art program is seeking artists to aesthetically treat utility infrastructure in the downtown. Artists will be commissioned to transform utility boxes along Main Street from functional infrastructure into colorful and inspired works of art by painting them. Five artists or group of artists will be commissioned and painting will take place during the Summer ArtWalk. The City is inviting members of the DVO to serve in the review panel to select work. The deadline to apply is May 11 and the panel will meet in June.

4. Group discussion on the Retail Strategy presentation to Chamber of Commerce on May 11th: (Jerry, Seana, Mike, Dave and Sid White)  
The board members discussed the need to prepare Retail Strategy presentation including the Action Plan for the Chamber's Economic Development Committee Meeting on May 11th. After some discussion, a motion to make presentation to Chamber of Commerce (GET info FROM SEANA) was made by Jerry Breiner and was seconded by Ed Warren.

5. Presentation from Jim DeArkland about parking letter to present to the City on the 200 block

Jim DeArkland reported the concern of property owners and merchants regarding parking in the 200 block. Contract with Trader Joe's was terminated because of lack of parking. Christy Weir reported the City has hired Jessica Kusick to deal with parking issues and that she will be talking to key property owners and merchants. She will make a presentation to City Council in June.

6. Presentation by Clarey Rudd about Ventura being recognized as an International Book Town and the benefits

Clarey made a presentation about Ventura being recognized as an International Book Town. Only two other cities in the US have been designated "Book Towns." He encouraged the DVO to send letter to City Council and get signatures to apply for this nomination. A motion to support and write a letter to City Council encouraging Ventura to become a Book Town was made by Ed Warren and seconded by Glenda Lewis.

7. Presentation from Jason on a quote to rent the trolley from Limoneira Company for weekend use this summer.

Jason presented a copy of the letter and estimate from Limoneira for the rental on a regular basis of Limoneira's trolley. The preferential rental features: experienced Limoneira Driver with each rental, transit time to/from downtown not included in rental period, DVO to provide standard signage to be temporarily affixed to the trolley and insurance. After some discussion, the board agreed that it would be useful to rent the trolley for special events as the Ventura Fair.

Board Business:

a. Financial Committee Report:

- Update on 100k bridge loan from County Commerce Bank:

Loan was approved and funded. The County Commerce Bank donated \$500 to the organization. The board agreed to send thank you note to County Commerce Bank.

The board discussed the need to open a checking account with County Commerce Bank. Motion to open checking account with County Commerce Bank was made by Ed Warren and seconded by Jason Collis.

The board discussed the need to have more signatures in the bridge loan from County Commerce Bank. After brief discussion, Christy Weir made a motion to include The Chair, Jason Collis, the Treasurer, Greg Smith and the Secretary Glenda Lewis as co-signers for the County Commerce Bank accounts and to amend the By-Laws as needed, the motion was seconded by Ed Warren.

- Status on 501(c)(3) application: Greg Smith reported they have re-send letter to the IRS and will have a response in the next 4 to 6 weeks.

- Greg Smith reported the balance in the current bank account is \$2,852.33. He also mentioned it is important to start fundraising plans.

b. D.O.T. Committee Report:

- Jerry Breiner reported the D.O.T. didn't meet. They will meet tomorrow, Thursday, May 3 at 9am. They will discuss parking issues and will address homeless issue as a general topic.

c. Promotions Committee Report:

- PR Material Update: Seana Weaver reported that 3 press releases were mailed to local media. The Promotions Committee will follow up in a monthly basis.

d. Organization Committee Report: Jason Collis and Clarey Rudd

- Introduction of Catherine Haney (Candidate for Executive Director Position). Catherine Haney was introduced to the board.

Catherine answered some questions from the board as what is her expertise in working with downtown organizations, merchants and how would she achieve promoting the Downtown Ventura. She mentioned different options as property owners and merchants agreeing to asses themselves, meet with stakeholders, City and County to asses taxes, then it goes to City Council for approval. This takes approximately 1 year. Non-profit organizations get 50% off. The other option is become a membership association similar to a chamber of commerce. An Action Plan for the next 5 years would be highly recommended.

She was also asked if she had experience in organizing and promoting events. She said she has a strong background in marketing, website and promoting downtowns.

Catherine was also interested in the following:

o Are there any surveys that can help with demographics? ArtWalk surveys and VCB Visitor Spending Study.

o What is the greatest challenge for DVO? Jason responded that permanent funding, parking and more foot traffic are some of the greatest challenges.

o What is the relation with VCB and conferences/conventions? Some merchants are very supportive, but need more merchant participation.

e. Action Log: Jason reported that except for the loan approval there were no changes to the Action Log. He suggested postponing for the next board meeting.

f. Open Forum Questions/Comments From Guests:

The meeting was adjourned at 11a.m.