



**Minutes of Board of Directors' Meeting  
July 8, 2009  
Watermark Restaurant**

**Directors present:** Chairman Dave Armstrong, Vice Chair David Comden, Secretary Jerry Breiner, and directors Cheryl Heitmann, Lori Moll, Jennifer Livia, Jim Rice, Jason Collis, Mark Hartley, Greg Smith, Christy Weir, Seana Marie and Ed Warren,

**Directors absent:** Tom Wood, Clarey Rudd, Doug Wood, Maria Fiore, Lucas Johnston, Zoe Taylor, Jim Luttjohann.

**Other attendees:** Executive Director Rob Edwards, Dave Wilson (VPD), Jeff Smith, Mike Merewether, Barbara Evans, Sid White, Sherry Cash, Tom Mericle, Denise Sindelar, and Vincenzo D'amaco.

**The meeting was called to order at 8:47 a.m. by Chair Armstrong.**

**Old Business | Executive Committee Report | David Comden** – None.

**Executive Director's Report | Rob Edwards** – Rob reported we are now going thru our final audit with the accountant. We have a new business downtown, PURE, opening this week. Rob is helping Ventura Values publishers and the Panomatics website in doing cross-promotional work. Vincenzo D'Amaco is a promoter, putting together the first California Beer Festival here in town at Mission Park. Discussion on permitting process. He will be on the Restaurant Committee agenda later to discuss. The Artwalk Planning meeting is this week, with Rob, Jennifer and David attempting to get more face time and interface time with artists who may be interested in participating. There is a new blues and jazz festival being considered for downtown thru Paladin agency.

**Approval of previous board minutes** – A motion was made to approve the previous board minutes. Seconded and approved.

**Ventura Police Department update: David Wilson** – Dave and David spoke on the subject of the proposed sleeping in cars ordinance, David mentioning that he has heard there are a number of people who will be showing up to have the ordinance repealed. Discussion (see notes below under NEW BUSINESS).

**DVO-DVP formal relationship: Dave Armstrong** – Dave handed out an outline of what he and Jeff Smith of DVP see as the principles of our proposed relationship. It is important, said Dave, that our communication be as streamlined as possible to gain the most from each organization's strengths and attributes. We certainly don't want to lose momentum as we go forward, with all the terrific and effective branding work already in motion thanks to Rob and the Promotion Committee. Suggestion is to have DVO committees propose their budget ideas to the DVP board for approval, keeping the DVO intact and as-is. Discussion. The proposed structure of the meetings would be that the committee reports would be in a "group session", if possible, so DVP can be updated on the latest DVO progress (alternatively, the DVP board members NOT already members of DVO board, could show up for both meetings). Suggestion was to research the real differences between 501C3 and 501C6 to determine strengths for each board and its members. Cheryl Heitmann agreed to take this on. Consensus from the board was to take this to DVP for consideration.

**Special Presentation: California Street Bridge Project 2009 / Denise Sindelar and Tom Mericle. City of Ventura** – The improvement project deals with the part of the bridge above the support system, the part that the public sees. There are many aspects to the project, said Tom, including a new stop light and pedestrian enhancement crossing on the Harbor Blvd side. The width of the bridge is set, we are stuck with it, and to that end we need to work with what we have, the idea to make it attractive to not only users but drivers on 101. There will be a public showing of the plans in Late July, early August and we are all invited to attend. Tom said there are no plans to put a physical barrier for the pedestrians at the rail crossing, having been discussed at higher levels, though he did not say a median on the bridge is out of the question. There will be a promenade rehabilitation scenario as part of the overall work plan, to help with erosion and access

issues, including new steps a little further south than the ones currently at the end of California. Work is due to begin within 6 months. The Oak Street offramp is now back on the list of things to do. Discussion. The work could conceivably be in 2.5-3 years time with everything going according to plan. There may be federal monies available at that time as well.

### **Committee Reports**

- **Economic Restructuring Committee | Dave Armstrong and Jim Rice** – Dave noted that Jeff Lambert, new Planning Director for the City, attended the last meeting which was a brain-storming session on funding and our relationship with the City. Jim noted that the Restaurant Committee has been dealing with the same issues as last, and they did have a presentation from Vincenzo D'Amaco regarding the proposed California Beer Festival September 26 in Mission Park. Idea is to have it gated off, for a beer garden, and he would like to copy the demographic makeup of the visitors to Casa Pacifica as a goal. Discussion. Environmental Health issues from the County have dogged him to date, and he is seeking input from the committee members on how to deal with the County. Jim will be asking Brian Brennan to get involved for some clarification and assistance. Next steps would be for the committee to bring it to the board for recommendation.
- **Design Committee | Lori Moll** – Lori noted the committee met yesterday and spoke with Cynthia Thompson about the history of Ventura's Christmas holiday décor. Cynthia worked at the Pierpont, putting on a magnificent display of Ventura History, and Lori and the committee are thinking of trying to emulate some of those features.
- **Organization Committee | Lucas Johnston** – Lucas said the committee has no update, though he noted that we have had a few board members missing multiple meetings. We agreed to adjourn the discussion on appropriate actions for the those board members to next meetings agenda.
- **Promotions Committee | David Comden** – Dave is working Eric Wallner and Jennifer to put on the Arty Party for support of the Artwalk on July 18. There will be \$10 donations at the door. At this point, David said Eric has less than half of his budget needs and Artwalks future, at least for the fall, is in serious jeopardy. Discussion. There will be a merchant briefing 9:00am July 29<sup>th</sup>.
- **DOT – DAT - SSTF | Jerry Breiner** – Jerry handed out the Communications Policy as a reminder to all board members of our agreement, regarding public information and how it relates to DVO. Discussion.

**New Business** – Long discussion took place on the letter sent from Councilman Neal Andrews. Dave took the helm, reminding us all that after much deliberation and much input, both from Peter Brown, Bill Finley, and SSTF representative Jerry Breiner, the DVO board voted unanimously to send our letter to Council, asking that the ordinance not be changed. Discussion on Mr Andrews tone in the letter, as well as loss of factual information to back up his complaints and allegations. Rob received an email from Jan Christiansen of the Universalist Unitarian Church, clarifying that in her opinion only the churches were looking for approval. Mark Hartley asked if Neal then represents Council in this letter? Christy responded immediately with a "no" response, and went into detail about the May 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, where council instructed staff to come back with recommendations. Jim Rice received a personal email from Neal which he did not elaborate on, except to say that it was a threatening attack and irritating at the very least. He will be following with a face to face meeting with Neal later today. The letter, said Dave, is irritating and only seeks to cloud the real issue of this ordinance, which is in place for a reason. There are serious health and safety issues related to it, which the board felt in our letter, could not be shuffled under the rug. Long discussion. Mike Merewether asked if DVO could request an apology from Mr Andrews, either in writing or at the dais Monday night. The thought was to stay away from personal issues and just stick with the ordinance problem itself. Christy suggested that Dave and Rob, who will be attending as our representatives, have suggestions in hand. Suggestion was made to the various board members who might like to voice their opinion, that they make sure they do it as individuals and to state what you WOULD approve, rather than focusing on what you would not.

**Public Comments** – Sherry Cash spoke out against the concept of being allowed to sleep in cars, having been herself on the reporting end on more than one occasion at her home. She also heard from a member of the Task Force that they will be pushing hard to have the law rescinded. She plans to come Monday night to speak. She, like the rest of us, agree there is a bigger picture here than just the ordinance.

**Meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m. | Respectfully submitted, Jerry Breiner – secretary, 2009-2010**