

# DOWNTOWN VENTURA PARTNERS



## Minutes of Boards of Directors' Meeting November 11, 2009 Pacific Western Bank Conference Room

**DVO Directors present:** Vice Chair David Comden, Secretary Jerry Breiner, Treasurer Greg Smith and directors Jim Rice, Jim Lutjohann, Christy Weir, Doug Wood, Lucas Johnston and Zoe Taylor (absent were Lori Moll, Steve Hoganson and Clarey Rudd, excused absent were Seana Marie, Michele Olsen, Jason Collis, Cheryl Heitmann, Dave Armstrong and Maria Fiore)

**DVP Directors present:** Vice Chair David Comden, Secretary Jerry Breiner, Treasurer Greg Smith and directors Mike Merewether, Jeff Becker, Christy Weir, Jeff Smith, and Ed Warren (excused absent were Dave Armstrong, Mark Hartley and Cheryl Heitmann)

**Other attendees:** Executive Director Rob Edwards, Bonnie Wiegel and Barbara Evans.

**Quorums were met and the meeting was called to order at 8:45 a.m. by Vice Chair Comden.**

**Accolades & Introductions** – Dave asked the members of the public to introduce themselves and their affiliations. He also noted that Mayor's Arts Awards was a great event last night at the top of the Crowne Plaza, hosted by board member Doug Wood. Approximately 200 people attended.

**Old Business & Executive Committee Report | Comden** – David reported that the executive committee continues to meet with Rob to work on various issues, including the 2010 budget.

**Approval of previous board minutes** – A motion was made to approve the previous DVP board minutes. Seconded and approved with 8 in favor, no opposing, no abstentions. A motion was made to approve the previous DVO board minutes. Seconded and approved with 9 in favor, no opposing, no abstentions. Jerry requested that anyone present please sign up on the sign-in sheet.

**DVO | DVP Draft MOU | J Smith** - Jeff brought forth the final edited draft Memorandum of Understanding between the DVO and DVP ("MOU"), created by Jeff with assistance from non-profit attorney Mark Barney. Discussion. Jeff noted an errant apostrophe in the last page, and there was a motion by the DVP to approve the MOU with the change. Seconded, no discussion. Motion passed unanimously with no opposing nor abstaining. There was then a motion by DVO to approve the MOU with the change. Seconded, no discussion. Motion passed unanimously with no opposing nor abstaining.

**Board meeting of 11/25 discussion – Comden** – David noted that there is a board meeting scheduled for the day before Thanksgiving, and he wanted to get a straw vote on whether the board members present felt it would be worth meeting that day, due to possible travel plans for the board. Short discussion. It was the consensus of those there to continue with the meeting, as we have items that must be addressed in a short time frame. Jeff encouraged everyone to attend, Zoe will not be in town and asked to be excused from the meeting.

**PRESENTATION: Food Share of Ventura County | Bonnie Wiegel** – Bonnie gave a brief synopsis of what her organization does and what her current product placement is (appr 54,700 meals per month in the county). She said there is probably another 60,000 meals that DON'T get delivered that really need to, based on income criteria publicly available. They have increased their capacity almost 35%, but a great amount of food is wasted everyday when restaurants, schools are at the end of their day. She and her organization have worked local food banks to get access to over 3.5M pounds of grade B produce. Her request to DVO today was to enlist our help in putting together a pilot program, whereby local restaurants would be able to easily donate end-of-day food items directly to Food Share. Q: Will the program come up with a list of needed foods? A: She would like to put together a list, based on their partners needs. Jim Rice said that the

restaurant subcommittee would like Bonnie to present her concept to them at the earliest possible date, Watermark being happy to work in the pilot program. He suggested packaging may be a key element, having ONE container, noted for FOOD SHARE, where at the end of the day, a participating restaurant simply fills it up, calls an easy-to-find phone number, and the package gets picked up. Q: are the volunteers trained in food handling? A: Yes, some of the staff is already trained and more about set to. Q: Hotels should also be listed as a great source, with their restaurants and catering events, perhaps considering the idea of voluntourism as another source of assistance in this venture. Discussion. Mike M asked if there were liability issues associated with the handling and delivery. Bonnie suggested that farmers want to have some sort of liability release for those gleaning from their fields. She also said that, though food donations are wonderful, FOOD SHARE really needs cash more than anything to parlay connections and deals they have. Q: Has the county Health department been involved to this point? A: FOOD SHARE is on their radar and they are being cooperative and said they would help in this new collaboration, if it happens. Carrows will be supplying pies starting this week. Doug noted that the Crowne Plaza and FOOD SHARE started a program where the guests are asked if they would like to donate \$1 extra to their room fees towards the project. Discussion.

## **Executive Director's Report | Edwards –**

### **ADMIN & ADVOCACY**

**Planning Report due to City Council on Dec 1:** Per the California Streets and Highways Code, DVP must deliver a report on our activities to city council annually. Our first report is due Dec 1; will be authoring that report by then.

**Assessments & Tax bills:** Breakthrough: I've determined the path by which downtown property owners can indicate that their assessment is incorrect due to square footage inaccuracies. I've contacted three property owners thus far and sent formal letters to the county assessor and county auditor requesting corrections on their behalf.

**DVP Bylaws:** Making the necessary edits per the bylaws committee so that you can vote to adopt them at a December meeting.

**Budget Formulation:** Met with most members of the DVP board over the past two weeks to get further input on what priorities each board member supports per the Management Plan; Met with two committee chairs to determine near final budget line items for you all to consider at the next board meeting. Speak up now if you have something specific you want to see in the 2010 budget.

**Advocated for New Ordinance:** At the "open mic night" at city council this week, I represented the DVP and our businesses on the subject of externalities created by some businesses in the public realm. The city manager agreed such an ordinance should be considered by the council and would deploy the community development staff to work with us on the specifics of such an ordinance. Details I requested reflected those you all agreed our chairman include in a formal letter to council last meeting: thrift store drop-offs, trash management, and other ancillary eyesores.

**Chamber Executive Committee:** Invited to join the executive committee for the next year by chairman Randy Hinton; I declined citing lack of time to dedicate to the effort.

### **PROMOTIONS, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS**

**Holiday Lamp Post Banners:** Installation of holiday banners will occur the week of Thanksgiving. Cost will likely be \$2500. Thirty will be hung on Calif Street and Plaza.

**Press Release:** Finishing a dense press release for release later this week that focuses on our continued progress and low retail vacancy rates despite the economy. With several new businesses about to announce openings, I'm gathering details to write detailed press release for Rocket Fizz, Sespe, Tradition, Chill.

**Ventura Art Festival:** November 14th in Mission Park. Assisting Chamber staff with load-in that begins at 6 AM Saturday.

**Third Thursdays** this month is at Wine Rack on the 19th. December = Café Fiore

**Holiday Media Buy:** Promotion cmte chairman Comden and I discussed our commitments to advertise our Dec 5 event at the Mission.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**New businesses:** Spent several hours with a new credit card company focused on restaurants will be launching their nationwide campaign from Ventura.

**Restaurant Week:** We need event co-chairs to further this effort.

**Holiday tree lot** next to the VVCB will return!

## **CLEAN, SAFE & DESIGN**

**Contracting with City Corps:** Developing a “town keeping” contract with Bart Bleuel to deploy City Corps to maintain our sidewalks, parking lots, and landscaping per the Management Plan.

**Financial report | G Smith** – Greg handed out current financial reports for DVP and DVO. After brief discussion, it was agreed that going forward we would agendaize the financial report for voting on the approval of same, either quarterly or bi-yearly. Greg will provide the report for the second meeting of every month as an update. Q: Do we know how much of the Project Encore grant remains? A: Dave Armstrong will know as he has had the helm of running the project from its inception. He has also donated considerable sums of his own money to the cause. Greg noted we just finished the audit and we will have a report on it at the next meeting.

**Holiday Plans | Rice** – Jim reported for Lori that the lights are starting to be installed Tuesday with \$17,000 so far delivered in fees for the work. He also reported that all liability releases are signed and in hand. He, Lori and Rick Raives of the City are meeting next week regarding the work, and he also stated that the workers comp forms are in hand for Mike Merewether to review. Christy noted she has called S.C.Edison to see if they can help with the \$5000 shortfall (over-budget commitments of \$23,650 approximately), and she said she is confident the committee can get that shortfall covered between sponsorships and grants. The plan is to get everything installed pre-Thanksgiving. After discussion, there was consensus from the board that we should make payments to the installers in three tranches: (1) deposit already delivered, (2) when job has completed 4 blocks, and (3) upon completion and signoff. We also agreed that future contractual relationships such as this should have all the insurance requirements met up front, with payments split as above. Jim also reported that there are approximately 100 people committed to the stroll from Reardon’s down to the Mission on 12/5. All “12 Days of Christmas” displays are now reserved. Mike M asked if the Workers Comp Certificate of Insurance has auto liability for the contractor. He asked for the right to contact the insurance company, and consensus of the board gave it to him. Mike will send Lori the requirements for the contractor to meet.

**Announcements** – none.

**New Business** – none.

**Public Comments** – none.

**Meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m. | Respectfully submitted, Jerry Breiner – secretary, 2009-2010**

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