



**Minutes of Board of Directors' Meeting
May 14, 2008
Affinity Bank Conference Center**

Directors Present: Chairman Jason Collis, Vice Chair Dave Armstrong, Secretary Jerry Breiner, treasurer Greg Smith and directors Glenda Lewis Grayson, Sandra Walker, Jim Luttjohann, Lori Moll, Clarey Rudd, Mark Hartley, Ed Warren, Maria Fiore, Zoe Taylor, the Honorable Cheryl Heitmann, Honorable Christy Weir and Seana Weaver.

Directors Absent: Jack Carter and Doug Wood

Other attendees: DVO Executive Director Rob Edwards, Sid White (City of Vta), Debora Schreiber (Kalorama Coalition), Kiley Olivier (Gold Coast Broadcasting), Jim Rice (Watermark Restaurant) and Robin Elander (City of Ventura)..

The meeting was called to order at 8:40 a.m.

Introduction of guests

Presentation/wrap-up of Nat'l Main Street Conference – Lessons Learned

- Sandra gave her views on the conference, as organization committee chair: We should most probably focus on 3-4 specific and measurable events for the year. She noted that it is critical, as is already planned, to have a yearly public meeting to garner interest, show accomplishments and get input on how we might better serve our constituents. A strong market position, looking at the current status and an achievable realistic goal, is key to the success of the ER committee. She stated that it is more efficient to retain and grow current retailers downtown, to help them develop a strong entrepreneurial spirit, than to recruit new ones, though both schemes need to be pursued. She also stated that recognition of volunteers is an important part of showing you recognize and care for those putting their time and effort in to the revitalization of downtown, showing the appreciation of the value of time. She feels that we are doing exactly what we should be doing and are in the right part of our cycle to do it.
- Seana said that getting downtown in to the best shape it can be is crucial (including streetscape improvements and historical reuse and upkeep). The positive aspects of a clean and lit downtown are priceless, and to that end we need to keep up the pressure of maintaining our downtown streets. Improving the image generates customers, income and investment by merchants and property owners alike. She suggested the continued use of "image campaigns" to help bolster our name and logo – things that will make people remember who we are. She noted that special events are great ways to increase this recognition though their impact is not felt into later. We need to build subcommittees that do the workload, putting on retail events that involved the whole of the downtown community. This will take a lot of input and volunteerism: only time will tell if we have the buy-in. She said in her opinion if we have a lot of people each doing a little we can accomplish a lot more than one or two people doing it all (burnout factor).

Approval of previous board Minutes

Passed unanimously.

Old Business - none

Committee Reports

- **Economic Restructuring Committee Report: Dave Armstrong** – The upcoming seminar on June 7, 8-10am, on doing business downtown will be getting a lot of coverage. We will have a consultant to help with business evaluation and financing options from EDCVC plus additional resources from Becky Walker. It is a fundraiser for DVO, with admission at \$10. Sid noted that the EDCVC provides the City support for things such as façade improvements, loans and the like as they administer the city loan program for these things. All these resources should go thru DVO as a “one-stop” location for the entire gamut of services. Discussion.
 - Jim Rice is launching as an ER subcommittee a Restaurant Owners Association. In the spirit of cooperation, the concept is to increase bargaining and networking power through positive interaction between the restaurants downtown. The group will police themselves, said Jim, and collective buying, sharing of employees and advertising can be some of the attributes. Jim agreed to start this much-needed subcommittee but it will be up to DVO to support it thru promotions.
 - Dave noted that the Elks Lodge is set for a number of events thru the summer with the tentative cleanup day set for June 14th.
 - VPD has just received a grant for security cameras downtown, and we spoke about the deplorable condition of the trestle. Jerry suggested a letter signed by the hoteliers community, the Chamber, the DVO, the Music Festival and other like-minded public entities and might go a longer way to getting the attention of the Chairmen of the boards of Caltrans and Union Pacific than a lot of individual letters. Design committee will take this on.
- **Promotions Committee Report: Seana Weaver** – Seana reported that the Zodiac Pub Crawl was very entertaining and fun with about 20 people off and on participating. She will be starring her Maria Sanchez show interviews this week, and one of her first bits will be on the Ventura Women in the City event, scheduled for end of month. Currently she is seeking street performers and musicians to participate in the event. There will be a light display on the side of the Erle Stanley Gardner Building during the event and on 5/29 KEYT will be doing a promo on it. She stated that a donation of \$10,000 is forthcoming to DVO and wanted to know how we might accept that and transfer it to the organization. A motion was made and seconded to approve the expenditure of \$7500 towards the light show and \$2500 to Women’s Economic Ventures, once the donation is made to DVO. Motion passed. Cheryl suggested we include in the bylaws a blanket gift acceptance policy. Seana said the latest Ventana ad campaign just came out this week.
- **Organization Committee Report: Sandra Walker** – Sandra reported we are currently working on four fundraisers including the Bank of Books/Affinity Bank, the Kevin Costner event in July and others. The deadline for articles for the newsletter is Friday. She also added that our townhall public meeting will take place end of July with a fundraiser, most probably at the Crowne Plaza. Finally, she added that the Volunteer Recognition documents will be available to be seen soon in the kiosk.
- **Downtown Operations Team (DOT) Report: Jerry Breiner** – Jerry gave a brief report on his two committees. He started out by asking for endorsement of the letter DOT has put together, in the form of a motion, asking for edits and changes to the City Housing Element the State of California requires from Ventura by end of June. Discussion on CUPs. It was suggested that he and Christy, along with Deborah Schreiber and Ariel Callone, discuss the concept of limiting the installation of program housing by the use of CUPs. The motion was tabled until next board meeting. He said the 4 public meetings on Parking Management (including meters) went well with sporadic but involved questions and answers which he has passed on to council. Discussion. Tom Mericle will be bringing his recommendations to DVO for endorsement at the next board meeting. They are as follows:

1. *Direct staff to prepare changes to the San Buenaventura Municipal Code for implementation of the Downtown Parking Management Program with a goal of creating 85% utilization of existing parking supply*
2. *Direct staff to prepare a Downtown Commercial Parking Benefit District*
3. *Direct staff to prepare a Downtown Residential Parking Benefit District*
4. *Direct staff to prepare changes to the San Buenaventura Municipal Code for disposition of Parking District #1, #2, and #3*
5. *Amend professional services agreement with Michael Kodama Planning Consultants for ongoing professional parking management services and parking structure conceptual design. Appropriate \$83,000 from Fund 88 (RDA Capital Projects) to 99352 (DT Parking Management)*

Jerry also brought up the subject of requesting that the City adopt a change in the ordinance prohibiting panhandling within 50' of an ATM, citing the parking situation as being one of the reasons that distance is too short. His suggestion is to ask Council to amend that ordinance to make the distance 200', or $\frac{3}{4}$ of a city block. That would prohibit panhandling within a 200' radius of the ATMs currently at the east end of the 500 block, the west end of same, the middle of the 400 block and the west end of the 300 block. Discussion.

- **Design Committee Report: Glenda Lewis Greason and Rob Edwards** – Glenda noted that the next meeting will take place 5/21 at Savory at 2:00. They will be discussing placement of new planters, benches and bulletin boards downtown. They discussed widening of the sidewalks at the last meeting as well.
- **Executive Directors Report (see below)**

New Business - none

Public Comments – none

- Mark announced that the Kevin Costner/Disney press conference will take place May 28 at noon at the Crowne Plaza.

Meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

The next DVO Board meeting is May 28, 2008 at 8:30 a.m. at the Crowne Plaza.

<> Indicates action item to be taken at next board meeting * Indicates that motion passed unanimously.