



**Minutes of Board of Directors' Meeting  
June 10, 2008  
Affinity Bank Conference Center**

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

**Directors Absent:** Glenda Lewis and Doug Wood.

**Other attendees:** DVO Executive Director Rob Edwards, Annie Campbell, Tag Gilbert (Ventura Realty), Sid White (City of Vta), Debora Schreiber (Kalorama Coalition), Marni Brook (Montecito Bank and Trust), Dan Frederickson and David Wilson (VPD).

**The meeting was called to order at 8:37 a.m.**

**Introductions**

**Approval of previous board Minutes –** Moved/seconded/passed with changes.

**Old Business - none**

**Committee Reports**

- **Economic Restructuring Committee Report: Dave Armstrong** – The ER/Organization seminar on business improvement is scheduled for 6/17 from 8-10am. A PowerPoint-based presentation, there will be reps from American Valometrics, Affinity Bank, Small Business Development Center and the City of Ventura there to answer questions. Dave reminded us that the Elks cleanup is set for this coming Saturday morning from 9 – noon. The Children's Theatre rehearsals start Monday, so we need to nearly finish all we are going to be doing that day, including replanting part of the courtyard in front. Rob and Jim Rice have edited the initial introduction letter for the Restaurant Association and their first meeting is this week. Dave also noted that preliminary discussions have begun in regards to relocating the Farmer's Market; there are a number of options, each being addresses in committee. The question of "what's wrong with where it is?" was answered by "it may not be able to stay there with development plans." We hear complaints from merchants in the 200-300-400 blocks who say parking is taken up all day by some of the users of the market, and parking plans for the corner may facilitate a move sooner than later. Discussion.
- **Promotions Committee Report: Seana Weaver** – Seana noted they met last week and went over the current list of promo targets. The Zodiac Pub Crawl continues on, and the committee is looking at adding additional internet marketing to aid in the cause. The TimeOut section in the Star will be utilized on a consistent basis with an ad campaign of 1/8 page. DVO will get 4 editorials/year for our contract in TimeOut. Rob is also working on the next Ventana ad, subject being "What's to Do Downtown in Summer?" or something along those lines. Discussion. The Women in the City event went very well, from all indications, with returning visitors giving positive feedback. Seana suggested that anyone with positive viewpoints of the weekend event add them to the blog on the VCStar website. Zoe reported phenomenal buzz from the Chamber about the event as well. Mark reported that the Kevin Costner event permitting is almost done. Jim and Rob will be meeting with the business owners in the 400-500 blocks to what we can do to help them that day.

- **Organization Committee Report: Sandra Walker** – Sandra reported that the newsletter is now out, larger than the last. Jerry noted it is also on the site. Thanks to Marie Lakin and Affinity Bank for their participation in the production! She said there are currently two fundraisers set for the summer, and currently there is a fund-raising effort with Bank of Books. Next meeting is tomorrow, 6/12, at 4:00.
- **Downtown Operations Team (DOT) Report: Jerry Breiner** – Jerry brought forth DOT's recommendations to Council regarding the City Housing Element. Brief discussion. It was moved and seconded to endorse the letter and have Jerry send it on the Council and others. Motion passed. Since their last meeting, the City has had to extend the sewer and watermain work till June 19<sup>th</sup>. Discussion on lack of acceptable levels of communication with merchants. It was agreed that Jason, as point person, would contact Mark or Brad and ask where OUR signs are, the ones we created per the City and the Contractor's specs, to let customers know when its alright to park. We need a contingency plan set aside when things like this occur. DOT should create a report card on this phase One of the work project for the City Facilities services to review, in anticipation of the work to happen in the fall. Jerry asked the board to send him their own notes on the subject so he can include them in the letter. Zoe suggested an alternate sign be created, much bigger, well-written and permanent, perhaps with our logo/branding, telling people that downtown is open. Discussion. Dan suggested that Rob get much more face-time with the merchants, as constant contact with our constituency is key to our survival. Long discussion.
- **Design Committee Report: Rob Edwards for Glenda Lewis Greason** – see E.D.
- **Finance Committee/Treasurer's report: Greg Smith** – Greg brought forth the current balance sheets and accounting. Discussion.
- **Executive Directors Report: Rob Edwards - see below**

**+ Parking Management and Fundraising:** *Applying for a permit to manage several city-controlled parking lots on July 26<sup>th</sup>. DVO must represent our stakeholders by securing adequate parking for business owners that day; Both City corps and DVO could be rewarded for managing parking as well. (Discussion followed on special event parking and how to go about helping the merchants, the city and the promoter in a win-win-win at the Kevin Costner event. The first goal should be to secure parking for our businesses, perhaps with a one-day permit pass. The City has no plan to manage the parking for this event, and since the Costner people are not required to do so, it is incumbent on DVO to help manage this situation. Tim Hctor, Kevin's friend, has asked us to get involved. Shuttling from the fairgrounds COULD be a possible scenario, but there is an event there that day and the fairgrounds would charge us. 3 City lots are not being used, but Christy noted we will need LOTS of BIG signs, maps, arrows and human beings helping to sort out the problem if the turnout will be as expected. She said the City has to take charge of the management of their lots, and would be a cooperative deal if DVO could somehow get involved. Sandra made a motion, and Ed seconded, that the board direct Rob to pursue and engage in this proposal with the City and the Costner people. Discussion. Passed. Zoe said she would be willing to help facilitate some sort of agreement with the Fairgrounds if it comes to that. DOT will handle logistics, if it comes to needing interfacing with the City. **It was suggested that the Costner parking management discussion take place early in next meeting's agenda.)***

**+ Communications:** *Newsletter was completed early in the month and mailed this week; two more e-newsletters were mailed since last board meeting. E.D. continues to remind the committee chairs that all aspects of our stakeholder surveys should be included on their agendas each month; Website overhaul will begin by early July.(Discussion on State-of-Downtown public meeting in August. Rob suggested each board member sell 10 tickets to raise funds. Dan Frederickson purchased all of Rob's tickets at that point. Thank you Dan! Jerry noted that, in his opinion as well as some others he has spoken with, that Rob needs to get out more in front of the merchants and they need to know him and who he is. Ramping up digital communication, both on the web and via email is terrific, but it is no substitute for in-the face connection. Discussion.*

**+ Visibility:** *Sat for an interview with Bella of CNN Local Edition, an opportunity delivered to DVO by volunteer Janet Fukumoto of Time Warner. The ten minute segment will air in Ventura*

over the next two weeks, five minutes before CNN Headline News.

+ **Partnerships:** Met with the organizers of the Ojai Film Festival to collaborate and bring business opportunities to our downtown merchants; Met with Robin Elander to discuss future participation by DVO in ArtWalks.

+ **Grant Won:** A \$1,500 Keep America Beautiful grant was awarded to City Corps and DVO. The International Downtown Association encouraged DVO to apply and City Corps actually filled out the paperwork so it was they who were awarded the check. Cigarette urns for downtown businesses will be purchased with the funds and an educational campaign will be developed.

+ **Staff and Finances:** Adding Annie Campbell to our payroll as a P/T employee [rather than continuing as an independent contractor]; we are under budget for May, but will likely be spending all allocations in June on major purchases like tree lighting and landscaping; Kick-off meeting with our special financing district coaches was held Monday June 9 with good attendance from property owners.

+ **DVO Fundraiser:** Org Cmte will choose a date soon. Tickets prices should be set and board members committed to selling ten each

**New Business - none**

Discussion on ordinance enforcement regarding cigarette butts: ABC requires the user to sweep parking and the sidewalk end of workday, Jason reported.

Dave Wilson noted that it would be possible to utilize the City's emergency phone system in the event of another downtown sewer/watermain screw up.

Deborah Schreiber reminded us all about the Kalorama Coalition street fair/block party the afternoon following the Elks Cleanup this Saturday. She urged DVO representation.

**Public Comments – none**

**Meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.**