

MINUTES For The REGULAR MEETING
Of The BOARD OF DIRECTORS Of
VGRC COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.

DECEMBER 16, 2014

At The RIVER CLUB

VENICE, FLORIDA

Board members in attendance:

John Moeckel
Roger Effron
Jerry Jasper
Bill Dwyer
Fred Baughman
Tom Jones
Carol Barbieri
Terry BeCraft
Bob Samuels
Bill Tvenstrup

Guests in attendance:

Venice Mayor John Holic

1. John Moeckel, President, called the meeting to order at 2:29pm. He introduced Mayor Holic, who was invited to attend our meeting to review the issue of the Venice Fire Dept. pension fund and the financial problem it presents to the City.

Mayor Holic said there are 4 options, as he sees them, to address the issue of the pension fund which is currently about \$30 million in arrears:

a) Remain the way the plan is currently funded, with an actuary figuring the required annual City contribution. Taxes would be raised, if necessary, to pay for this. If the VFD was part of the State FRS pension plan, it would cost the City \$2.7 million less per year.

b) Terminate the plan and turn it over to an insurance company, who would set up an annuity plan. This would cost Venice about \$40 million, which would be funded with a bond issue. The City would benefit by having a set bond payment each year instead of an unpredictable and escalating figure.

c) Set up a Municipal Services Taxing Unit. Work with other cities in Sarasota County to get relief from County taxes that pay for County sheriff patrol. Venice has its own police dept. This could mean lower taxes to city residents and higher taxes to residents of unincorporated County areas that depend on the sheriff patrol. This tax savings could be used to fund the VFD pension plan.

d) Do a feasibility study to determine if consolidating VFD with the Sarasota County fire dept. would make financial sense. This study would be done by a joint City and County committee. Venice would still have to fund the pension plan deficit. The Mayor envisions no changes in the response time if this consolidation were to happen. The County already operates the ambulance EMS/ALS service at Venice fire stations.

The second subject of discussion with Mayor Holic was the industrial site noise issue. The Mayor said that he and the City Council will listen to the input from this board, however it is very difficult to work with individual homeowners. The City is in the process of adjusting its noise ordinance, due to issues with noise from bars and restaurants, and hopes to coordinate it with the County and other cities.

John Moeckel thanked the Mayor and called a recess at 3:28pm.

John Moeckel called the meeting back to order at 3:30pm.

Board member Jerry Flood was now present

Venetian residents Constantin Petrescu and Donald Roth were present

2. Construction Noise: Carol Barbieri reported that, per her assignment, she talked to John Peshkin of Vanguard Land about noise coming from his Toscana Isles construction site. Submersible electric pumps, which are much quieter, are now being used for all major pumping.

3. Membership: Bill Dwyer, Membership Chair, reported that we are now at 485 members, with 153 previous members still not renewed. He is still getting returns from the re-mailing in November. He and Roger Effron attend the monthly new resident orientation meetings and that has been effective in bringing in new sign-ups. At Bike-O-Rama on January 10, we will have a membership table.

4. Town Hall Meeting: Roger Effron gave an update on the plan for this event. The speakers will include the principal of Laurel Nokomis School, postcards will be mailed as part of the marketing effort, Publix will contribute 1 or 2 gift cards, and we may have a tie-in with the Venice Symphony.

5. Industrial Site Noise Issue: Constantin Petrescu spoke to the board about this continuing issue. He stated that when he bought his home, he did not hear the amount of noise that is now a regular nuisance. This morning around 8am was very noisy, for example. Donald Roth said that the noise from normal operations seems to be unchanged. He keeps hearing grinding noises and some beeping backup alarms. Both Constantin and Donald said that WCI sales people misled them with statements that the sand and rock piles would be gone and so would the noise from the plants in a few years. Both residents said they were aware of some noise when they purchased their homes in Sept. of 2013, but later discovered the 3 plants located in the industrial area as well as an increase in the noise level.

There was consensus among the Board that the VGRCCA should stay involved in this issue and keep track of what Venice does to modify its noise ordinance. Jerry Jasper said he will check with Kimley Horn, a local development consultant, about professionals who could advise us on a course of action.

6. Policies: Research is needed to determine what policies the board has put in place. Where to collect it also needs to be decided.

7. Website: It is estimated that it will cost \$1,000 to place the membership list in a secure part of our website. This issue was deferred to another meeting.

8. Secretary's report: At this point in the meeting, there was not a quorum of board members so approval of the November minutes was deferred to January.

9. Treasurer's Report: Our current financials are \$66,932 in operating cash and \$37,865 in a restricted account.

10. By-Law Revisions: Due to no quorum of members, this issue was postponed to January.

11. Government Committee report: John Moeckel said that the Bold highway interchange program approved \$1.07 million to be spent in fiscal year 2016 on the I-75 & Laurel Road interchange. The MPO recommended this and FDOT approved it.

12. Meeting Start Time: John Moeckel suggested that we change our start time to 2:30 or 3 PM. He will survey the board members to ask for their preferences.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:19pm.

Our next meeting will be on January 27, 2015 at 3pm at the River club.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas W. Jones, Secretary