

MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
VGRC COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.

JANUARY 26, 2016

AT THE RIVER CLUB

VENICE, FLORIDA

Board Members in attendance:

John Moeckel – President
Roger Effron – Exec VP
Bill Dwyer – VP
Diane Maskol – VP
Fred Baughman – Treasurer
Tom Jones – Secretary
Jerry Flood
Bob Samuels
Carol Barbieri
Jill Facenda
Diane Bazlamit
Fred Williamson

Guests in attendance:

Jerry Jasper – non-board associate member of external affairs committee

Call to order: John Moeckel, President, called the meeting to order at 3:30pm.

Secretary's report: Tom Jones, secretary, was absent at the start of the meeting. A motion was made to approve the minutes of the December board meeting by Jerry Flood and it was seconded by Bill Dwyer. The vote for approval was 10-1 with Diane Maskol voting “no”.

Treasurer's report: Fred Baughman, treasurer, distributed the monthly financial report via email to all Board members. Our account balance is \$76,290 in our cash account and \$37,865 in a restricted account for landscape buffering. Deferred dues (paid for future years) are being indicated as such on our financial statement.

New Business

1. Homeowner comment: A Venetian resident in attendance asked the board about a place to post flyers, specifically ones regarding craft classes. She was told that this is an area outside of the responsibilities of this board, and it was suggested she contact the River Club manager. Her event could also be included in a future *Parcels* newsletter.

2. External Affairs issue #1: Jerry Jasper reported on a conversation with a director for Sarasota Schools about possible future sites for a new K-8 school, with Knights Trail, Laurel Road, and Border Road on the list. A rumored Laurel Road location is owned by Florida Power and is near high-voltage power lines, which would seem to make it unattractive, and is also near the fire station. It appears that it will be a lengthy period of time before any site is recommended to the school board.

3. External Affairs issue #2: Jerry Jasper gave details on the proposed concrete crushing plant.

- If approved by the City, it would be built on Gene Green Road (north of VG&RC and east of Knights Trail)
- the 9.8 acre site was annexed into the City some time ago
- the site development plan previously approved for this site was a concrete block manufacturing facility
- The rezoning application must be considered first by the Venice Planning Commission and then by City Council

Jerry Jasper and John Moeckel have met with John Peshkin, developer of the nearby Toscana Isles homes, and they agreed that joining forces with Peshkin makes sense. We could pool funds for legal counsel, acoustical engineering evaluation, and other measures. John said that Peshkin is a good businessman and it felt it best if Peshkin took the lead in this opposition.

Jerry Jasper and John Moeckel stated that the best direction for the board to take initially is to look for “good faith” ways to find a compromise rather than a demand that the plant not be built. This could include:

- contract with an acoustical engineer to measure sound levels at a similar plant in Tampa (cost estimate is \$3,000)
- hire a land use attorney

Discussion by the board included misrepresentation at the public workshop, a planned discussion with the attorney representing this applicant, value of an earthen berm to block the sound, and how this proposal will go through the Planning Commission and City Council.

4. External Affairs issue #3: A new member for the external affairs committee is needed, and Jerry Flood volunteered. He joins other members John Moeckel, Carol Barbieri, Bob Samuels, and Tom Jones. Jerry Jasper is non-board member of the committee.

5. Fire Department Merger: John Moeckel read a memo from the Venice Fire Dept. It appears that the County is interested in merging but wants the City to pay the costs, and the County's position is "take it or leave it." John said he plans to stay informed of developments and wants to work to ensure that the Venetian retains the same level of service. Discussions from the board regarded a cost analysis of doing this merger.

6. Affordable housing project: John Moeckel reviewed this proposed project. John Thaxton of the Gulf Coast Community Foundation has suggested that a future owner of the Foundation's "Bridges" land parcel on Laurel Road near Knights Trail use this property to build single-family affordable housing. We will be following the status of this property.

7. Sarasota Memorial Hospital project: John Moeckel reported that a bill is currently under consideration in the Florida state legislature that would eliminate the need for the legislature to review and approve hospital development. If passed, new hospital openings would be unrestricted and this Venice project would likely advance more quickly.

8. Venice Traffic Study: Carol Barbieri reported that there is now a trolley operating in the 3 block downtown Venice area from 9am to 6pm and also goes to the beach. It is free of charge and will run for the first 3 months of this year and then be evaluated for continuing next year. This pilot program is budgeted at \$75,000. She added that the Circus (south) Bridge opens on demand with no hours. The KMI (north) bridge is scheduled to open to boat traffic on the hour and half hour, and the Venice Ave. bridge opens at :10 and :40 past the hour.

9. Seminars: Roger Effron reviewed the Association's seminar plans for this season and asked board members to spread the word with friends. On Feb. 1, the Identity Theft seminar and Shred-fest will be held at the River Club. On Feb. 8, a Gardening seminar will take place. The Town Hall meeting is set for Feb. 22 at Laurel Nokomis School beginning at 5:30pm, with entertainment at 4:45pm. The program of speakers is scheduled to run about 1 hour and 15 minutes and is based on input from the survey. The room setup will be a modified "in the round". The survey of residents ran for just over a week and received an 18.9% response rate.

10. Annual meeting: The VGRCCA annual meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 22 at the River Club. It will start at 5:30pm, preceded by a board meeting at 3:30pm. John Moeckel said a 3 member nominating committee is required, and Bill Dwyer volunteered to head this committee.

11. Database: Bill Dwyer said that our database is working very well and conveniently manages our membership information. It now includes notes on houses for sale or closed.

12. Membership: Bill Dwyer reported that our 2016 membership count is now at 613 with over 100 new members. There are about 100 who have not renewed from last year. The February new resident orientation has been cancelled with the next one in March. This has been a good source for bringing in new members. The January *Parcels* is being re-sent to those who didn't open the first sending.

13. Neal Communities meeting: John Moeckel said a workshop to inform Venetian residents on Neal's plans for development on Laurel Road will be held at 5:30pm today at the River Club. A second meeting for other area residents will be held at the Elks Club.

14. Bold Highway Interchange Project plan: John Moeckel displayed a large drawing of the proposed landscaping plan for the Laurel Road & I-75 interchange. This will also be on display at the Town Hall meeting and the FDOT designer will speak.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:52pm.

The next board meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 23 at 3:30pm at the River Club.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas W. Jones, Secretary