

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of  
The Venetian Golf & River Club Community Association, Inc.  
Held at the River Club and *via Zoom* on May 8, 2023**

**Board Members in attendance:**

Roger Efron - President  
Fred Baughman – VP & Treasurer  
Mark Faford  
Sharon George  
John Manoush  
Steve Hefler  
Taras Kowalczyzn  
Joe Browne

**Guests present:** There was one Venetian resident attending in person and 7 initially joining *via Zoom*.

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**Call to order:** Roger Efron called the meeting to order at 3:45pm.

**Secretary’s report:** The minutes of the April 10 meetings, both regular and annual, were unanimously approved.

**Public comment:** None

**Treasurer’s Report:** Fred Baughman reported income to date of \$22,901 and a net profit of \$6,198 as of May 7 (relative to budget). We have \$107,515 cash with just over \$30,000 of that considered available for current use. Steve inquired about the advantages of placing cash in CD’s vs. current money market; Fred replied that MM funds have been paying almost as much without the disadvantage of tying up our funds. No change is planned.

**External Affairs:** In Tom’s absence, Taras reported that there were no new initiatives to report on. An initial follow-up meeting from the retreat is planned for May 25 to address the assigned topics of controversial issues / distrust.

- **Laurel Rd widening:** Roger reported that the appropriation request was in the state budget ready for the governor to sign; however, signing is not certain. The contractor, Stantec, recently issued an information document that will be presented at the May 9<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting and will also included with the *Parcels* coming out this week. Roger, Fred and Taras plan to attend and to give a brief statement supporting a traffic light at Laurel and Jacaranda. Current estimates are for work to begin in October of this year and to be completed around March of 2025.

- Traffic Study: Fred had shared a preliminary copy of the Patel study dated March 2023. We did not discuss the study nor will it be referenced at tomorrow's Council meeting, since it remains for the team consisting of Steve Thomaston, Roger, Fred and Taras to meet with Patel to discuss the findings before reporting to the wider Venetian community. This should occur very shortly.
- Commercial Application (shopping ctr): The City Council will take this up on May 23 with possible continuation to May 24. In addition to attending the meeting, members of the CA plan to first send the council written support for the POA's position opposing the application. There is no intention for the CA to speak at this meeting since the POA's counsel is already representing VGRC with our support. It is not certain if these meetings will finalize the application or whether the process will continue through appeals, etc.

**HRT:** Fred Baughman reported that Mary Rau Foster has scheduled required training for May 23 from 6-8pm and May 30 from 3-5pm for all HRT volunteers, currently numbering 32, though it is expected that more volunteers will come forward. Mary has also revised the HRT manual.

### **Retreat Committee Reports:**

- External – Mentioned above. Will hold initial meeting May 25.
- Finance – Fred shared the results of the initial meeting. They created a spreadsheet that shows each CA position, the proposed backup persons and a list of currently known duties. They plan to add details on documentation and training for each position. All felt this was an excellent start to tackling this important subject.
- Membership – It has not been possible for this team to meet thus far.
- Communications – An initial meeting was held on April 20. Michelle took notes but they were not available for today's meeting. We recalled that Roger had prepared a summary of the many steps required to produce *Parcels*. Additional discussions concerned the Commercial Application and its effect on the credibility of the CA. A 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting is planned for May 16 at 10am.

**Wall of Something:** There is an appealing new section called "what's cooking" on the topic of restaurant recommendations. We had a little discussion about how to get more residents to use the Wall, but nothing resolved at this time.

**Membership:** Sharon again stressed that it is helpful if all will report new residents contact info. to her, since there is no automatic way for the CA to get that information. Roger requested that Sharon and Fred cooperate to report on new members by name at each meeting.

**Survey:** Results of the new "2 question survey" were released on 4/28 and indicated that 74% of the 953 respondents opposed the shopping center, while 64% agreed to budget an additional \$10,000 toward legal expenses (with attorney Lobeck) to fight it. Most members of our board felt this was the expected result and it will not affect our position to simply support the POA, which is representing the will of the majority of residents.

**Board member open comments:** Mark noticed a CA sign, originally placed to take credit for the Laurel Rd. cleanup, next to a pile of trash near the Dollar Store, inadvertently sending the wrong message. He and/or Roger will look into this and correct it as needed.

Joe attended a NFWS (Nat'l Fish and Wildlife Service) meeting on April 12 and had a short summary available. He also reported on his research on the Dona Bay Watershed restoration program. This is a complex and technical topic whose activities span many years. Roger stressed that most residents (and indeed many board members) need to have the topic simplified in terms of what it could mean to the average Venetian homeowner and what, if anything, the CA should do to represent Venetian interests. Joe replied that the long term positive results of the project might include a reduction in red tide, a greater supply of potable water for our region and possibly an increase in water pressure. It is not certain what, if any, negative consequences could result in the event of flooding or an extended power loss. Joe will continue monitoring activities and meetings and keep us apprised.

John suggested that the CA should inquire about having its meeting schedule included on the calendar posted on the Grand Manors website. If the calendar idea is workable, it should be the CA secretary's job to routinely notify Grand Manors of our meeting schedules. He also suggested that we look into obtaining a video/audio conferencing device that would improve the quality of our meetings over Zoom, much as the POA has done. Today's meeting suffered from being held in the "buffet" room with no microphones. It appeared that Zoom was so poor that 6 of 7 residents logged off before the meeting ended. For lack of eager volunteers, it appears John will look into both ideas and follow up at the next meeting.

**New Business:** Mark Faford reported that he and Michelle are well along with planning for the 2024 seminars with 18 program candidates already in mind, including one on alligators, snakes and turtles that is sure to attract a crowd. He expects to finalize the list by mid-October. He will be looking into whether the Bike-O-Rama might better be held in a different month from January, when the bike shop is very busy.

**Next Meeting(s):** We considered the need for summer meetings and decided to hold our next meeting on June 12. A July meeting appears unlikely but we will decide in June.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 5:05pm.

*Respectfully submitted by John Manoush, Acting Secretary*