

**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 Nov. 18, 2024**

Board Members attending:

Tom Jones - Co-president
Mark Faford – Co-president
Chip Melvin - Treasurer (present *via* Zoom)
John Manoush – Secretary
Sharon George – Membership Chair
Joe Browne – Web Administrator
Roger Effron
Dr. Steve Hefler
Taras Kowalczyk – *via* Zoom Board member Terry Leary was unable to attend

Guests present: There were 4 residents attending in person and 1 to 3 on Zoom

Call to Order: Mark Faford called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Secretary’s report: The minutes from the previously distributed October 21, 2024 meeting were unanimously approved.

Public Comment: Comments included the hope that tonight’s POA candidate forum would be well-attended, and a compliment for the CA’s recent CPR training sessions.

Hurricane Response Team: Steve Hefler reported that Mary has been looking into communications devices and plans on making recommendations in an upcoming meeting. John explained that he and Mary had further discussed grant opportunities and had agreed that our project (purchase of walkie-talkies) is not a good fit for the grant application processes they have looked into. Instead, they recommend a fund-raising campaign. Tim Carr was present and discussed the technical capabilities of various devices. We decided to proceed by first having the HRT determine specific needs and costs, followed by planning for fundraising by a team initially consisting of Steve, Roger and Mary.

Treasurer’s report: Chip Melvin reported on a strong month due to dues receipts, resulting in a YTD profit of \$382 despite the recent cost of approx. \$2,000 for the candidate forum. He has created an insurance bid package and expects replies by next meeting. Tom inquired about our liability coverage. Chip felt that the HRT presented the greatest exposure but Roger pointed out that earlier legal advice stated we had no liability due to the “Good Samaritan” law and the fact that HRT members are unpaid volunteers. With a lack of consensus on this question, Chip agreed to look into this for review at our next meeting. Mark raised the problem of the Venice Print Center sending invoices to multiple people. Roger agreed to speak with the owner to try and avoid the duplication.

Membership: Sharon George seized the opportunity of the recent hurricanes to remind residents of the work of the CA-supported HRT, and the results have been most positive. We had 100 renewals plus 15 new memberships, for a dues income of nearly \$6,000 the past month. Membership stands at 66.7%, the highest since Dec. of 2022. She plans new resident orientation with Jan. 7 as the tentative date. The POA, CDD and HRT will each be invited to inform attendees about their organizations.

Seminar planning: Mark Faford referred to the updated Knock Your Socks Off II flyer that listed 18 events, 5 of which have been successfully completed. Steve is coordinating board members to serve as

leads or alternates for each event. He thanked Joe for publicizing all events promptly on our website as well as handling registration for some events. Mark thanked the River Club staff for its cooperation.

Fill the Barrels Campaign: **Roger Efron** reported that we collected 2,300 lbs. of food for the drive, coordinated with Ajax Paving. Although not a CA event, Roger informed us that the veterans charity golf event held here on Nov. 7 raised nearly \$30,000 for the Fisher House in St. Petersburg.

External Affairs: **Tom Jones** mentioned that another self-storage facility was likely on Knights Trail, just S. of the Dollar Tree. Overall, he stressed that retail facilities were rapidly filling in the Knights/Laurel area. Roger recommended our team keep abreast of the difficulties Venice is having attracting and keeping firefighters as well as police and public works employees.

Website: **Joe Browne** reported that Hurricane Milton resulted in much higher-than-normal activity on our site Nov. 7-8, with the total views of 3,940 far surpassing any month on record. In addition to Hurricane Corner, visits to our membership and Wall of Something pages were significant. Joe is contacting web consultation to receive additional web training for seminar registrations.

Old Business: **John Manoush** reported on activities with the “Outreach” initiative. For the past 2 months he has issued and updated for board members a chart showing upcoming meetings of interest, both internal and external to the Venetian. He encouraged other board members to continue collaborating on this chart to keep it current and relevant. We considered making it available on our website but decided we were not ready to take that step due to technical complications. Roger is on Venice’s Citizen Advisory Board and shares relevant information with us from time to time, such as a recent report on the impact of Milton. The structure for the “Reach Out” initiative (sending cards to residents after significant life events) has been developed, but there has not yet been an occasion to employ it. This depends on all of us keeping our ears open to events such as births, deaths, honors, etc.) and notifying our co-presidents.

New Business: **Roger Efron** discussed past THM surveys and recommended our board develop one prior to the March 10 THM in order to learn which topics are of greatest interest to residents. There was consensus on sending out a survey to members in early January, with details to be worked out at our next meeting. We selected a THM planning committee consisting of Roger, Mark, Steve and John.

Board Member Comments: **Tom Jones** asked for input on the preferred time and day for our board meetings, currently the 3rd Monday of each month at 10 a.m. After reviewing our individual preferences, we resolved to continue with the same schedule for December and consider the option of the 1st Mondays at 10 starting in January. **Steve** mentioned that 3 of the 4 City Council candidates visited the Venetian polling site on election day and complimented the CA on a well-run candidate forum.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting is on **Monday, December 16** at the River Club at 10:00 a.m.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by John Manoush, Secretary