

**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 January 20, 2025**

Board Members attending:

Mark Faford – Co-president
Chip Melvin - Treasurer
John Manoush – Secretary
Sharon George – Membership Chair
Joe Browne – Web Administrator
Terry Leary
Dr. Steve Hefler
Taras Kowalczyn

Unable to attend:

Tom Jones - Co-president
Roger Effron

Guests present: There were 9-10 residents attending in person and none on Zoom

Call to Order: Mark Faford called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Welcomed Board Liaisons: Mark welcomed and thanked the recently named liaisons: Rich Goodman for the CDD and John DiPierro for the POA.

Secretary's report: The minutes from the previously distributed December 16, 2024 meeting were unanimously approved.

Public Comment: One resident thanked the CA for its work and its apparent internal harmony.

Hurricane Response Team: Steve reported that Mary Rau Foster and the team have continued investigating communications devices that would be reliable if Wi-Fi and cell service should fail. John questioned the need to spend significant sums for systems that would rarely be needed, but if such expenses were contemplated, that the CDD and POA might share the cost. Discussion of various cell and satellite (Starlink) options ensued. We will await a recommendation from the HRT.

Treasurer's report: Chip Melvin has filed two required reports, the 990 and FL business report. He highlighted items from the December financials. Discounting the traffic study refund of \$9,100, we lost \$5,500 for 2024, largely due to legal expenses and increased insurance costs. He obtained two additional insurance quotes and provided a handout. Chip led discussion of the options, making the point that, with our current provider, we would be paying close to \$10K for insurance, compared to our total revenue of only \$21K! One quote (Jester) offered savings on the D&O portion (Directors and Officers) for the same coverage, and we voted unanimously to approve the change of agents/insurers. A motion to eliminate umbrella coverage was made but withdrawn to allow more time for study. Mark stated the 3 events that cost money: Shredfest, THM and Candidate Forum (the latter 2 for audio-visual work). [Note: subsequent to this meeting, Chip was informed that the lower Jester quote was withdrawn]

Membership: Sharon George reported that we ended 2024 at 67% membership compared to 66% for 2023, a net gain of about 10 households. As in past years, we are starting January with a reduced figure of only 57.3% owing to members dropping out at year end. Fifteen residents attended a new owner orientation on Jan. 7 that the membership team organized. It included short presentations from the POA, CDD and River Club, and feedback was positive. Sharon then led a discussion about options for increasing revenue. The \$99 per issue *Parcels* sponsorship program is going well, and a space has just been placed on the membership form for "additional voluntary contribution". She presented a handout with 7 projections of revenue that would be raised by increasing dues by various amounts. There was also discussion about

charging for or requesting donations at certain events, notably ShredFest. Led by the membership team, we expect to continue this discussion at our next meeting to ensure that any change is carefully implemented without discouraging membership.

Seminar planning: **Mark Faford** reviewed the January events, both completed and planned. February will include history of Venice, Shredfest and end of life doula. Steve and Terry have worked with Mark in planning our seminars. Taras suggested we look into whether separating metal from other refuse might save us money at ShredFest next year.

External Affairs: **Joe Browne** briefly reviewed the status of the water booster station, whose construction could be completed as early as April of this year, and the Dona Bay watershed restoration project. The latter is relevant because water from Cowpen Slough, which has been stored in an at-capacity facility just north of us, will instead be injected into an underlying aquifer *via* deep injection wells, including one that is close to our NE border. It's not believed that the project presents any particular hazard for the Venetian, but is worth keeping abreast of. Joe will continue monitoring updates. **Taras** continues to stay in touch with the county transportation department regarding the widening of Laurel Rd. The county is engaged in acquiring land for the road. **Steve** was credited with responding to resident complaints by contacting the county about the many potholes on Laurel Rd, leading to a prompt repair the first week in January. **John** briefly reviewed the Jan. 7 Venetian Planning Commission meeting that approved the Shopping Center site plan, and restated the CA's support for the POA's proposals for stipulations that will reduce negative impacts. Work on the Northeast Park is expected to commence this Spring with completion by year end.

Website: **Joe Browne** reported that views for December (typically a slow month) were similar to prior year, led by visits to the home page, membership and the Wall. He is working with Rick Corder on a feature about eagles' nests in the area. He and John have been updating the CA Accomplishments page and will shortly send their draft to the full board for review.

Old Business - Town Hall: Our planning committee has begun meeting. Mark invited the board and attendees to feel free to contact him with ideas for speakers. John gave a short description of the Gratitude Award.

New Business:

CA Board opening – **Mark** reported that an invitation for a new member was included in the January *Parcels* and that any interested person should contact him or another board member by the end of January. A selection committee consisting of Tom, Joe and John will make recommendations to the full board with the goal of announcing a decision at our next board meeting.

CA Liaisons - Following recent appointments of liaisons from the POA and CDD to the CA and other Venetian organizations, we discussed the advisability of selecting our own liaisons. The consensus was that this might create unnecessary overlap and would not likely add value to the cross-contact already occurring. Our CA co-presidents are always accessible to discuss any ideas or questions from the other boards, and it is a rare meeting of the CDD or POA that is not attended by at least one CA board member.

Board Member Comments: **Mark** first invited the attendees to make additional comments. He asked for opinions on whether we should have a collection campaign for the California fires, but there was no response. He also brought forward Tom's recommendation that we consider replacement of the flag at the Venetian entrance. **Rich Goodman** offered to introduce this at the next CDD meeting on 1/27. Mark mentioned that our membership enrollment form was just updated to include a space for voluntary donations.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 11:32 a.m.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting is on **Monday, February 17** at the River Club at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by John Manoush, Secretary