

**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 March 17, 2025**

**Board Members attending:**

Mark Faford – Co-president  
Tom Jones - Co-president  
Chip Melvin - Treasurer  
John Manoush – Secretary  
Sharon George – Membership Chair  
Joe Browne – Web Administrator  
Roger Effron  
Terry Leary  
Dr. Steve Hefler  
Darlene Schimberg

**Unable to attend:**

Taras Kowalczyn

**Guests present:** There were 7 residents attending in person and none via Zoom

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

**Board Liaisons:** **Rich Goodman** represented the CDD and **John DiPierro** the POA. John spoke at some length about efforts he and Bob Knight have been leading to help residents better understand “who does what” at The Venetian and more easily access needed information. We were encouraged by the steps the POA and CDD have taken to improve coordination and communication among VGRC organizations.

**Secretary’s report:** **John** had distributed a final draft of minutes from our February 17, 2025 meeting to all board members on March 13; they were unanimously approved.

**Public Comment:** Barbara Silkworth informed us of recent intermittent outages of **Comcast** fiber Internet. It has occurred statewide on a spotty basis, and residents may need to reboot as a first step.

**Hurricane Response Team:** **Mary Rau Foster** spoke about the “**Adopt-a-Radio**” campaign that she recommended at our last meeting. The newly created Revenue Team has prepared a communication that asks residents to sponsor one radio or a pair for a donation of \$35 or \$70, respectively. Mary introduced a new proposal to utilize **Facebook** to improve communication, not only to residents, but also to their family members. She envisions a FB page that would allow members to trade news and information more quickly during and after a storm. This would not replace Hurricane Corner but hopes to drive more traffic to the Corner. There was concern about possible misinformation, but Mary felt she could control this as administrator. We decided to form a **task force** to investigate the FB proposal (see “New Business”). **John** presented the **Revenue Team**’s recommendations, where prospective donors are asked to email Steve, who will in turn work with them to ensure their donation is properly handled. If donations exceed our current needs, Steve will give the donor the option to donate toward other HRT needs. Donors’ names will be affixed to the radios (with permission). **A motion** was unanimously passed to issue the Adopt-a-Radio email blast on or near March 27, following a final review by all board members and Mary.

**Treasurer’s report:** **Chip Melvin** stated that, thanks to the \$1,470 in donations received at **ShredFest**, we show a YTD profit of \$594, despite insurance payments in Jan & Feb. The donations essentially covered all expenses for the event. Our cash was \$57.3K at the end of Feb. There was discussion on the sponsorship of *Parcels*, where we missed a month. **Steve** asked if Chip could continue his investigation of our **insurance** needs and whether we need all of the coverage we are carrying. We have general liability, an umbrella policy and a D&O (directors and officers) policy. This will be on the agenda for April.

**Membership:** **Sharon George** reported that we are at 60% membership vs 63.5% same month last year. The number of homes for sale (42) is higher than any month since Jan. of 2024. Sharon plans to conduct a new resident orientation in April (date TBA). A new membership enrollment form that includes a new appeal for contributions was rolled out in early March. This affects only mailed contributions at this point.

**Seminar planning:** **Mark Faford** reported on progress from his team (with Steve, Darlene and Terry). Shredfest was very successful with 250 cars and the participation of Goodwill. He advised better traffic control down Portofino in the future. SharpFest is taking place during this meeting with Tim Schimberg coordinating, and is fully booked plus a waiting list. End of life doula occurred in late Feb. for a small but appreciative group. A session on FL friendly landscaping will occur next week. History of Ringling Circus will be the last River Club event on April 7<sup>th</sup>. A field trip to Venice Audubon will take place on April 10 with the help of Rick Cordner. Roger reported on the town hall, which was attended by 310 persons and went “like clockwork” with the exception of some errors on the agenda. A survey was done for the 1<sup>st</sup> time with around 27 responses. It will be distributed to all board members shortly. Roger’s early impressions are overwhelmingly of satisfaction, with a few comments regarding going too long plus the aforementioned errors on the agenda. Joe was acknowledged for the great photography and postings to our website.

**External Affairs:** **Joe Browne** informed us that the water booster station should be completed this Spring. Roger reported that the city has hired a search firm for a new city manager and that Mayor Pachota will be running for State Assembly in 2026. The shopping center appeal before City Council is April 9 at 10:00.

**Website:** **Joe Browne** reported that views were up 20% vs Feb of 2024, but the number of users was unchanged at about 600. Recent additions to the website include “buttons” that take the user directly to the Membership page from the Hurricane Corner or home pages. He has added emergency phone numbers to the Contacts page.

**Old Business – Roger** acknowledged the good work Sharon has done helping him prepare and issue communications to targeted groups efficiently, resulting in excellent “opening rates”.

**New Business:** **Mark** revisited the “Facebook team” proposal and asked who would be on this team. We resolved to have Mary as leader with team members Joe, Darlene, Steve and John.

**Board Member Comments:** **John** reported on the newly formed Revenue Committee (with Joe, Sharon and Steve), originally called the Donations Committee. The team’s mission is, “To ensure that the CA is financially solvent by developing a comprehensive revenue program”. The team would concern itself not only with donations, but with any means of increasing revenues including measures such as corporate donations, advertising and even raising dues. The team would have no authority to implement measures, but would develop programs subject to board approval. It was decided that Chip should join this team, while Sharon offered to drop off in order to concentrate on resident directory work. It was agreed that the Revenue team would meet and report as needed as part of the Treasurer’s report. **Steve** introduced discussion about the pros and cons of non-members having access to The Wall. Most board members felt that allowing wider access to this and other CA benefits had more positive than negative effects – an ongoing debate.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 12:19 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** Our next regular board meeting is on **Monday, April 21** at 3:00 p.m. at the River Club. Our annual meeting will be on **April 21** at 4:30 p.m., followed by a short officer election meeting. There are 7 board members up for election this year. A nominating committee of John, Steve and Roger will put together the slate of candidates. There will be no need to appeal for new members unless one or more of the existing directors chooses not to run. An announcement for the annual meeting must go out before April 7.

Respectfully submitted by John Manoush, Secretary