

**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 April 21, 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
Taras Kowalczyk
Terry Leary
Dr. Steve Hefler
Darlene Schimberg

Guests present: There were 6 residents attending in person. Technical difficulties prevented coverage of this meeting via Zoom, but fortunately no residents were on Zoom.

Call to Order: **Mark Faford** called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. This special time was due to the annual meeting, following at 4:30. He announced that the treasurer and membership reports would be covered in the annual meeting in order to help end this meeting on time.

Public Comment: **Barbara Silkworth**, POA President, asked the help of the CA to support efforts to keep The Venetian attractive to visitors and prospective buyers (a “wow factor”). This will require a special effort when construction begins on the shopping center and road widening.

Secretary’s report: **John** had distributed a final draft of minutes from our March 17, 2025 meeting to all board members on April 14; they were unanimously approved.

Hurricane Response Team: **Mary Rau Foster** reviewed the proposal she made at our previous meeting (and further described in emails to board members in early April) for the use of Facebook (FB) as a communication tool for the HRT. The goal is to get information out to residents more quickly during a storm emergency. Joe Browne and Tom Jones expressed concern that this might place an undue burden on Mary. She intends to ask for others to help, and welcomed Joe’s offer to help develop a tutorial for residents who are not current FB users. Mary said she currently spends a lot of time responding to emails and that FB might reduce the need for repetitious one-on-one communications. Aside from such concerns, there were no serious objections to the FB initiative, and the board approved moving ahead by consensus. Mary will include this topic at the annual VGRC community Hurricane Preparation meeting June 2nd at 5:00 p.m. She will also be participating in the Venice Hurricane Expo on Friday, May 30, 2025, at the Venice Community Center.

John Manoush reported on the success of the Adopt-a-Radio campaign. Forty donors contributed a total of \$2,615, crushing our goal of \$420. Steve or John thanked each donor individually and donors were also acknowledged, with permission, in the April *Parcels*. Chip will track these funds separately. John proposed that the surplus funds be made available for the HRT to use according to its sole discretion, but the consensus was that our board should continue to be consulted for major expenses.

Treasurer and Membership reports: As noted above, reports will be given at the annual meeting.

Seminar planning: **Mark Faford** recapped recent events including Sharpfest, FL friendly landscaping, history of Ringling Circus and a field trip to the Venice rookery. Sharpfest was so successful that two

sessions will likely be held next year. Reserving the River Club has become increasing difficult and error-prone (The Club “lost” our reservation on at least one occasion). Alternative times such as breakfast, or paying for use of the facilities, may be considered. Our team will meet with the General Manager, Julie, to address this problem. The committee (Mark, Darlene, Steve and Terry) will be working on events for next year and welcomes resident suggestions, trying to maintain a balance between popular “traditional” events and new events.

External Affairs: **Tom Jones** recapped the denial of the 4/9 appeal to City Council regarding the shopping center plan. It appears the center will be moving ahead, though a further appeal is possible. We expect to include an article and diagram of the site plan in the May *Parcels*. He mentioned an *ad hoc* residents’ committee that will be attempting to work with the developer and county on road safety issues at our entrance. Other expected development will include a hotel in front of the Treviso Grand area and another near the Circle K Gas station. A Panda Express is planned across from the Publix on Laurel. Taras reported that the road widening is still in the land acquisition stage. The Northeast Park work has not started to date, but is expected soon.

Website: **Joe Browne** reported that the previous month saw record activity for our website, helped by four email blasts on various topics.

Old Business – John reviewed a proposal he had sent to the board *via* email a few days ago, and requested board approval for the expenditure of \$705 for our web designer, Joe Santucci, to begin development work that would enable our website to accept and track donations separately from dues payments. Due to the short time available at this meeting, he requested that we postpone discussion of ideas and questions related to publicizing and rolling out the initiative, which is not planned until after hurricane season. A motion to approve the expenditure as recommended passed 10 to 1. Chip dissented due to increased accounting difficulties and concern that the initiative might not raise enough to cover the expenditure.

New Business: **Roger** complimented Sharon on responding to various resident questions and concerns so reliably. He presented an idea he had previously shared via email, called “Club 90”, as another way to personally connect with residents. The idea is to have a Club 90 section in *Parcels* where resident who opt in will be congratulated on reaching this milestone. There was general agreement with the idea, but some questioned why we should celebrate this particular group, as opposed to those turning 80 or celebrating anniversaries, etc. Consensus was to give it a try at Roger’s discretion.

Board Member Comments: **Tom** informed us that the Laurel Rd cleanup currently lacks a leader/coordinator. He volunteered to coordinate the June cleanup and asked for a volunteer to manage this quarterly function going forward, but no hands shot up. Roger pointed out that once construction begins outside our gates, cleanup may be difficult or impossible for some time. Tom acknowledged this but made the point that our entrance area, at the very least, should be kept free of debris. To be continued.

Chip mentioned that he had not received an invoice from the city for Shredfest, and that Venice Print Center was once again failing to issue invoices on a timely basis and to the proper parties. He asked that anyone who gets an invoice from them promptly forward it to him. Roger will contact them to point out these issues.

Darlene asked how the Parcels sponsorship program was going. Roger reported that although a couple of sponsors were “on tap”, activity seems to be waning. Darlene recommended more promotion and Steve recommended more outreach to advertisers, but no decision was reached. John suggested that this was an appropriate fit for the Revenue Team and that they would address it over the coming months.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting is on **Monday, May 19** at 10:00 a.m. at the River Club. Mark, Tom and John will be unavailable for our normal June 16 meeting. Options considered were moving the meeting up to June 9 or skipping the June meeting entirely. We will decide on this at the May meeting.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by John Manoush, Secretary