

**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 November 17, 2025**

**Board Members attending:**

Mark Faford – Co-President  
Tom Jones – Co-President  
John Manoush – Secretary  
Sharon George – Membership Chair  
Dr. Steve Hefler  
Joe Browne  
Roger Effron  
Darlene Schimberg  
Terry Leary

**Attending *via* Zoom**

Taras Kowalczyn - Exec. VP  
Salli Duncan – Treasurer

**Special Note:** This meeting followed a 10:00 AM talk at the River Club, open to residents, by Venice Mayor Nick Pachota. The mayor principally spoke about plans for Venice's Seaboard area, and also took some questions from attendees. Details and photos are on our website under News.

**Guests present:** There were 4 residents attending in person plus 3 to 5 on Zoom, including two board members.

**Call to Order:** Mark called the meeting to order at 10:52 a.m.

**Comments from CDD and POA Liaisons:** Barbara Silkworth mentioned that nominations for the POA board produced only existing member Tony DeMeo, such that vacancies will be filled by appointment. She also appealed for volunteers with aptitude in graphic design for a short-term project to update the Resident Handbook. Inspections are ongoing for issues like dirty roofs and sidewalks.

**Public Comment:** None

**Secretary's report:** The previously distributed minutes for October 20 were unanimously approved.

**HRT update:** Mary Rau Foster was unable to attend. Mark mentioned that Mary would provide an end-of-year update at a December meeting. Steve suggested that we consider some recognition event for the 50-odd HRT volunteers. After discussion the consensus was not to hold any special event, but to continue acknowledging volunteers in *Parcels* and on our website. We did not wish to set a precedent (of holding special events) since residents volunteer at VGRC in many other ways.

**Treasurer's report:** Salli reported a cash balance of over \$67K, YTD revenue of over \$23K, and expenses of \$20K, resulting in profit of \$2,357. YTD interest income of \$517 greatly exceeded 2024's \$172. On 11/13, she moved \$40K from money mkt. ("MM") to a 7-month CD paying 2.8%. The MM funds are available at any time with no penalty. We discussed YTD PayPal fees of \$881, which include both monthly and per-transaction fees. Tom floated the idea of defraying the per-transaction fees by giving residents the option of paying the extra 3%, as is currently done by many nonprofits, but withdrew the suggestion after discussion. Darlene asked if the PayPal monthly fees could be reported separately from the per-transaction, and Salli felt this would be possible.

**Revenue Team report:** John and the team met on Nov. 5 to review progress and brainstorm future initiatives. Concentration was on minor improvements to Your Donation Matters ("YDM"), with no new initiatives currently planned. Insurance costs were discussed despite being somewhat outside of the Revenue mission. Steve and Sally have had discussions on this, and Salli recommended a small workgroup to study options; but she saw no immediate solutions unless we are willing to reduce coverage – an unlikely prospect. Tom asked if Salli could put together a short summary of cost v coverage for our

current policies. The team recommended January for acknowledging our donors in *Parcels*. Despite our board's recent decision to refrain from mentioning YDM at every event, the team recommends mentioning it at a few strategically spaced events during the year, including the Town Hall Meeting ("THM") (Roger supports this). Darlene recommended we look at the monthly sponsorship of *Parcels* to see if we could not get closer to 100% (4 issues in 2025 had no sponsors). John discussed this with Roger earlier and they agreed that every issue should contain a brief mention of how to become a sponsor. Salli reports sponsorship revenue separately from donations. A QR code will soon be added to our YDM poster. We are working with Joe Santucci to have a link to the Membership and Donations web page included on the Wall of Something. John floated the idea of an annual fundraising event – possibly a residents' talent program, but more study will be needed. Due to the number of \$30 donations seen, the team is investigating the possibility that some residents may be mis-classifying their dues payments as donations. Roger stressed the idea of planned marketing for events and initiatives, since many residents may not pay close attention to Venetian emails and websites.

**Membership Report:** Sharon reported that membership stands at 65.6%, about 1% less than same time last year. She has been contacting all reasonable prospects, including new residents and members who have failed to renew. Her outreach to new residents (2022 and later) has resulted in 53.6% membership in that group, the highest yet seen. Sharon has shared lists of nonmembers with all board members and asks that all encourage membership in their contacts with neighbors. She relies on email rather than snail mail due to the cost of post. Orientation sessions are planned for January 21 and April 22 at 9:00. She is working with Joe to utilize the same feature just introduced for donations, which automatically send a thank-you email to each person who makes a dues payment. Roger suggested we consider giving the Wall of Something a "face lift" and consider new features, since it remains much the same as when it was initiated around 2020. Despite general agreement, it was not clear who was going to initiate this. Darlene said we should stress "Your Membership Matters" as much as donations, but some felt a different expression should be used. She will work with Sharon to propose one or more alternative slogans for membership.

**Seminars:** Mark briefly recapped completed seminars, which included Sarasota Memorial Hospital ("SMH") and the back-to-back sessions on AI and cryptocurrency. He complimented Joe for promptly posting summaries on our website. Coming up is CPR and AED training, SharPfest and avoidance of scams, the last 2025 seminar. We acknowledged the importance of "gate signs" as part of our publicity for events. Roger summarized the very successful **Fill the Barrels** campaign and thanked both Ajax Paving and the Golf Course for their contribution toward the collection of 15 barrels of food for donation to All Faiths Food Bank.

**External Affairs:** Taras had no news on Laurel Rd widening. Tom reported that the huge Venice Crossings development may be taking attention and/or resources away from the planned shopping center across from Veneto. Clearing is also taking place for a hotel and the Northeast Park, both on Laurel just east of Knights Trail. He mentioned that SMH/Venice is expected to attain a zoning variance for up to 150 feet of height, since this is not likely to affect any neighbors and will greatly increase efficiency.

**Old Business:** None not already reported.

**Board Member Comments:** Mark commented on the Veterans' Day flag placement by 6 volunteers. He will shortly be asking for a planning committee for the March 16 THM, and several board members indicated willingness to help. Joe is continuing to conduct computer training for small groups of residents, who have been most appreciative of the assistance. He covers a range of topics tailored to the group, including Facebook, cyber security and more.

**Next Meeting:** Our next meeting is on **Monday, December 15, 2025** at the River Club at 10:00 a.m.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 12:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by John Manoush, secretary