

**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, 2026**

Board Members attending:

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

Attending via Phone

Taras Kowalczyn - Exec. VP

Guests present: There were up to 6 residents attending in person and 3 on Zoom.

Call to Order: **Mark** called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Comments from POA Liaison: Barbara Silkworth advised us that the POA is ramping up inspections. She and Tony made a personal inspection on Jan. 19. The POA seeks a person with graphic design experience.

HRT: Mary Rau Foster was unable to attend, but expects to provide an update at a future meeting.

Secretary's report: The previously distributed minutes for December 15 were unanimously approved.

Public Comment: A question on the status of the welcome center, for which the CA had no answer.

CA Workload/backup: Mark asked for board feedback on possible concerns about workload for some individuals, and Joe in particular on web management. We seek an individual with web management skills. Tom asked all members to speak up if they felt they were overburdened. Taras suggested we reach out to local colleges, but John felt a resident would be better versed. Sharon requested backup for using the Owl, and Tom volunteered to take this on, working with John. Steve brought up the general topic of “succession planning” that was covered at our 2023 retreat, and Joe located the document Fred had created at that time. Although it is out of date, it is a good framework to build on. This led to a more general discussion about backup for all key CA functions and about administrative authority for various services we use, such as banks, PayPal or Zoom. It was not clear to this writer who was leading this effort and what the next steps will be, so it appears more discussion is needed.

Treasurer's report: Salli provided 2025 year-end figures, including cash position of \$70K, total revenue of \$29.5K and expenses of \$24.6K, for a profit of \$4.9K. \$40K was moved to a 7 mo. CD on 11/13/25. Salli had provided new and helpful graphs of revenue and expense items prior to this meeting. Insurance was 42% of our expenses. After some investigation, she expressed little hope of achieving a significant reduction in insurance costs. Premium comes due in February.

She will create a separate expense category for seminars, which are currently combined with events.

Salli recapped the work she has been doing to ensure we comply with Chapter 496, Florida Statutes, “Solicitation of Funds”. In part, this requires annual reporting of income and other data with the FL Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDAC) to maintain an exemption to those requirements.

By-Laws Update - Board affirmation of new conflicts policy: As a direct result of the Chapter 496 work discussed above, John presented a 1/20/26 addition to our by-laws that was previously distributed to all board members via email. Salli, Tom and John collaborated in writing the new policy. A new section, VIII, “Conflicts of Interest”, was added that requires annual affirmation from all board members (“Directors”) and

documentation of such affirmation in our minutes. These minutes confirm that all board members today verbally confirmed their agreement to abide by the stated Conflicts policy.

Revenue Team report: John had prepared an article for the January *Parcels* reporting on the progress of Your Donation Matters (YDM) and listing the names of our Gold and Platinum donors, but will delay this until February due to the discovery that some donors were listed as “anonymous” when they did not really wish to be. This list will be revised prior to publishing the article. Through year-end we have had approximately 100 donors of which just over 50% were gold or platinum. John will speak briefly about YDM at the March Community Forum and will also hand out YDM palm cards at the Bike-O-Rama this Saturday. Although we do not want to pester residents about donating, he felt that a minimum of publicity is required to ensure residents (especially new ones) are aware of the program.

Web / YouTube report: Joe reported that our website had record high web activity in Dec., and came on the heels of 2 previous record months. The average no. of users is now 763. He feels that more people are using our site as a central communications hub. Special emails tend to create a visible boost in activity. Most viewed posts remain Suni Williams, followed by the Christmas golf cart parade. Roger reported on the Super Bowl contest, which has a goal of driving more user engagement on our site, as opposed to passive viewing. There have been 79 participants.

Membership Report: Sharon reported on a drop in membership for January from 66 to 56% owing to December expirations (a similar drop occurs each year). She will be contacting those with expired membership to urge them to renew. A “Your Membership Matters” placard has been made along parallel lines to the YDM placard. Roger recommended that Sharon continue sending lists of those with expiring membership to board members. A resident orientation meeting is planned for January 21. Sharon continues to administer the Wall of Something and reported steady activity there.

Seminars: Mark updated us on recent and upcoming seminars, as well as what will be called the 2026 Community Forum (formerly Town Hall Meeting). The resident orientation is now targeted at both new and existing residents, since many existing residents have expressed an interest in learning about the various VGRC organizations (i.e. who does what?). Bike-o-Rama takes place this Saturday, developer approval process this coming Monday, estate planning on Feb. 3 and history of Sarasota Feb. 10. ShredFest is Feb. 21.

External Affairs: Tom updated us on the status of the huge Venice Crossings development, which will necessitate a traffic light on Laurel near the school. Hotels, storage and shopping are coming to the Laurel/Knights Trail vicinity. There is no news on the shopping center across from The Venetian. Taras speculated that the completion of the Laurel Road widening could occur in 2028.

2026 Community Forum (“CF”): Seven board members participate on the planning committee. The CF will be held at the River Club. Issues to be addressed include club capacity (189 for dining room) and parking. Four residents have been selected for gratitude awards. We will carry the meeting on Zoom and also make it available later on YouTube. Roger conducted an online survey to gauge members’ preferences on topics and speakers, and received 367 responses. There was a balance between external and internal interest. The #1 issue, as expected, was curiosity about the local shopping center, followed by the Laurel Rd. widening. Also prominent were interest in the status of the Welcome Center and possible changes to the Ciltadella Rd. exit. There was low interest in hearing from Fire and Police representatives this year. Roger offered to arrange for a Venice Symphony woodwind player to provide music during the pre-meeting period, and this was supported by the board. Salli and Darlene proposed making the CF more interactive (i.e. Q&A) than was possible with the former THM’s, and the planning team will consider this. This led to extended discussion about the changing role of the CA and the “Advocating for our Community” tag line on our logo. Suggestions were made for redesigning the logo and a related “rebranding” of the CA. John and Salli felt a change in motto/logo should not be rushed but rather explored at a retreat or special meeting. John proposed picking a date for a retreat at our next meeting. The CF planning team had

recently developed a list of “tag lines” that Mark will send to all for consideration, and the CF planning team will discuss this topic at its upcoming meeting

Public Comment (2): A resident questioned how the CA board could amend its by-laws without a member vote. We confirmed that our by-laws permit this and that there is no law that prevents this for a private association like the CA (as opposed to an HOA or condo association).

Board Member Comments: Roger suggested modifying our meeting agendas to place topics of higher interest to residents earlier in the meeting. In that way they could leave earlier and leave us to discuss issues with less public interest later. There was general agreement on this.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting is on **Monday, February 16, 2026** at the River Club at 10:00 a.m.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by John Manoush, secretary