

Downtown Economic Development Committee Meeting Notes

February 24, 2016

2:00 PM

Lower Level Meeting Room B-8

In Attendance:

Council: Mayor Jim Katapodis, Mayor Pro Tem Dave Sullivan, Councilmember Jill Hardy

City Staff: Fred Wilson, Kellee Fritzal, Michael Gates, Chief Rob Handy, Captain Dave Bunetta, Lieutenant Kelly Rodriguez, Jennifer Villaseñor, Janeen Laudenback, Bob Stachelski, Antonia Castro-Graham, Simone Slifman, Denny Bacon, Chris Cole, Dottie Hughes, Joyce Zacks, Corinne Hoffman

Public: Patrick Brenden, Susan Welfringer, Nicole Thompson, Stephanie Wilson, Kelly Miller, Karen Mayer

Mayor Jim Katapodis called the meeting to order at 2:03 PM.

1. Public Comments – None

2. Minutes – Councilmember Hardy made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Sullivan, to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2016 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Updates:

- **BID Organization/Event Update:**

Nicole Thompson reported that Jennifer Kramer of Fred's Mexican Café has resigned her position on the Board as she is relocating to Northern California. The Board is evaluating the results of the last election and it is likely that Scott Blakeslee, General Manager of the Pasea Hotel will be appointed at the next Board meeting. Thompson indicated that Steve Daniel has put together a committee to do outreach to local residents to obtain their perceptions of Downtown. The BID has also reached out to Kellee and Simone in the Office of Business Development regarding free parking requests during the holiday season of 2016 and Valentine's Day 2017. Thompson distributed an event update from Susan Welfringer, and remarked that thus far there are 400 entries in the Love in the HB Contest. A committee is meeting to discuss the future of the Downtown Artwalk. On March 16th, the BID, assisted by member Jeff Kleid, will host the first Coffee and Connections networking event, and this will continue on the third Wednesday of each month. Thompson indicated that the BID

will be contacting Scott Hess regarding what can be done to storefront windows in the Downtown when vacancies occur. She remarked that the former American Apparel space looks empty and unattractive and the BID would like to find a uniform way to make the windows look better during vacancies.

- **Strand Update:**

Karen Mayer reported that Pizza Press is in progress of preparing their move into the former US Taco space. She also indicated that there has not been a lot of interest thus far in the former RA Sushi space, but a protein bar restaurant has expressed interest in the former Crocs space and there is interest in the former Crocs space temporarily occupied by Jolyn.

- **Visit Huntington Beach Surf City USA:**

Kelly Miller reported that he just returned from a Visit California event at which the Big Board event received the Poppy Award, and also won three gold Adrian Awards, as well as a Platinum Award for the segment on Good Morning America and the Best of Show. Miller reported that December 2015 REVPAR for Huntington Beach was up 8% , as was occupancy at an increase of 5.3% and the average daily rate was up 2.6%. He said that that the first three months of the calendar year are typically soft for beach hotels because the snow makes an impact but feels that Pacific City has made a difference in attracting people to the area. Miller announced that the Orange County Visitors Association will hold an event on May 2nd at the Segerstrom Center and information is forthcoming. VHB will hold a community partner meeting on June 28th at which time they will unveil the new branding and website identities. Mayor Pro Tem Sullivan asked what the TOT rate is for Newport Beach? Miller advised that it is 10% and that the hotels keep 19% of the 10% collected.

- **Community Services/Specific Events**

Chris Cole reported upcoming events in March, including the Beach Cruiser Meet and various services and observances for the Easter holiday.

- **Downtown Development**

Jennifer Villasenor reported that The Strand has submitted plans for a repainting of their buildings as part of their planned remodeling, and that the repainting will be going to the Design Review Board. She also reported that the Hilton Expansion permits were issued on February 12th.

- **Public Works Update**

Bob Stachelski reported that street marking is continuing around Pacific City and that curb painting has been completed on the first block of Main Street. Mayor Katapodis inquired about the crosswalk at First Street at Stachelski replied that the City is currently in discussion with CalTrans.

- **Downtown Economic Development Update**

Kellee Fritzal reported that a total of 743 redemptions were made under the 2-hours of free parking promotion during the Valentine's Day weekend. Of those, 588 were redeemed at the Main Promenade Parking Garage and 155 at The Strand Parking Garage. Fritzal also reported that staff has met with the owners of the American Apparel site and is making efforts to try and help locate tenants.

Chief Rob Handy reported on continuous updates that are being made to the beach patrols in the Downtown, so as those evolve, the businesses and residents will see things happening. The Chief also mentioned that the Homeless Task Force will make their recommendations to the City Council on March 21st.

4. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:21 PM.