

Downtown Economic Development Committee Meeting Notes

April 28, 2015

8:00 AM

Lower Level Meeting Room B-8

In Attendance:

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

City Staff: Ken Domer, Kellee Fritzal, Janeen Laudенback, Chief Robert Handy, Captain Dave Bunetta, Lieutenant Kelly Rodriguez, Jennifer Villasenor, Rich Massi, Cathy Schooley, Bob Stachelski, Terri Baker, Antonia Castro-Graham, Chris Cole, Dottie Hughes, Simone Slifman, Max Daffron, Corinne Hoffman

Public: Steve Daniel, Susan Welfringer, Mary Ann Senske, Kelly Miller, Lori Eckman, Bob Bolen

Mayor Jill Hardy called the meeting to order at 8:06 AM.

1. Public Comments – None

2. Minutes - Steve Daniel said there were items discussed at the March 24 meeting not included in the minutes specific to the parking garage maintenance and the BID's meeting with Public Works. Kellee Fritzal stated that the written notes of two staff members were reviewed and those items were discussed at the February meeting, not the March meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Katapodis made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Sullivan, to approve the minutes of the March 24th meeting.

3. Discussion Items –

- **Newsracks – Process/Fees –** In response to Councilmember Sullivan's request at the March 24th meeting, Senior Code Enforcement Officer Rich Massi reported that the City has seven publications with a total of 205 permitted newsracks, each with an annual maintenance fee of \$15 per newsrack. There is no specific permit fee. When a rack is in need of repair or removal, the ordinance requires that the rack owner be given a 10-day notice to cure before the rack is removed by the City. Code Enforcement Officer Cathy Schooley reported that she is working on obtaining a new contact person for the LA Times. Susan Welfringer inquired about the possibility of Sowers School receiving an abandoned rack, and Officer Massi detailed the process. Welfringer stated that Malco does a good job of cleaning the racks on public property in the Downtown, but that the ones on private property are not well maintained.

- **Film Update** - Janeen Laudenback distributed an article from the Orange County Register with a listing of various productions recently filmed in the City. She reported that Community Services has processed 50 permits since October, and is presenting a very positive image for HB as production location. Kelly Miller commented that film shoots do create tourism as people want to visit a destination where something was filmed and that there is a lot of information about available film locations on their website. Mayor Hardy commented that putting information on the City's website about where something was filmed might be a good idea. Mayor Pro Tem Katapodis asked whether any film permits are ever denied, and Laudenback replied that this does happen occasionally but that staff does their best to work with productions in this situation, while remaining sensitive to the needs of the public and our community. Councilmember Sullivan asked whether the industry is aware of the old quarry, and Chris Cole indicated that he has taken location scouts there in the past.

4. Updates:

- **BID Organization** -
 - Steve Daniel reported that the HB Community Forum has started talking about the garage and the walkway from Pacific City to the Downtown. Resolution of the issue needs to be determined in order to ensure proper lighting and circulation when Pacific City opens. He also stated that the gutters Downtown need cleaning due the surf wax that gets stuck there. Daniel also mentioned that the car show over the prior weekend was again very positive for the Downtown.
- **Downtown Huntington Beach Activities/Future Events** –
 - Susan Welfringer inquired as to the timing for painting the curbs. Bob Stachelski replied that it is happening soon and he will check on the dates. Welfringer stated that the car show was good despite the weather, that the BID Board is meeting with various vendors regarding holiday décor, the Artwalk is on May 21st, and Chili at the Beach is on June 20th. She also indicated that they are very happy with the Ambassador and his efforts to not only greet visitors, but to point out areas of improvement so they can be taken care of.
 - Mary Ann Senske reported that Surf City Nights vendors are reporting sales are 8% higher over last year. In the next four weeks, there will be the Pier Plaza concert, Cinco de Mayo Celebration, Police Appreciation Night on May 12th, Public Works Night on May 19th, and a Princess Party in June. Due to the number of visitors during the summer, no additional marketing is planned for that time.
- **Restaurant Association** -
 - Susan Welfringer reported on behalf of Brett Barnes that the Taste of Huntington Beach was successful and well-attended, and that the Association now has an updated website – www.hbrestaurants.com.

- **Visit Huntington Beach Surf City USA -**
 - Kelly Miller reported that VHB would like to possibly bring the Taste of Huntington Beach to Downtown and combine it with a bridal expo the day before to help attract people to consider HB for more destination weddings. He also reported that overall sales for February were down by 5.3% due to some big cancellations. VHB is working with the City on programs for the shuttle pilot program and wayfinding, and is hard at work on the June 20th surfboard event. The board is in California now and is getting ready for its next phase of building. There is a lot of celebrity interest in riding the board when it makes its recordbreaking attempt. VHB plans to put the board in the 4th of July parade, and also feature it in a display at the US Open, and then would like to mount it permanently on the outside wall of the Surf Museum. Their goal is to launch a surf culture walking tour of Downtown, which will be connected to a smartphone app. The new visitors guide is coming out in May and they hope to have them available to hand out at their annual meeting on May 14th.

- **The Strand -**
 - Lori Eckman reported that there does seem to be more foot traffic from a younger demographic coming through, but sales are not up. They are planning a 4-day street closure during the US Open of Surfing with various family-friendly activities. She also reported that RA Sushi has closed, as has 2-5 of their other US locations due to sales; Ritter's can now serve beer and wine, and US Taco is awaiting the arrival of their liquor license, and Shake Away is finishing their construction with a projected opening of May 7th. They are looking for employees and all must be 18 and older. The Strand is hosting a craft fair next week during Surf City Nights to encourage kids to come and make a gift for Mother's Day. The new owners from Dallas have visited again and are in process of determining their next steps for the property. Councilmember Sullivan inquired as to whether one protest can hold up a liquor license and was that why Ritter's license was held up. Chief Handy replied that there were other reasons for that delay, but that holding up licenses varies based on the specific location and particular protest.

- **Community Services/Specific Events –**
 - The calendar was distributed with the agenda and Chris Cole reported on various events happening in the City during May, including Surfin' Sundays, the Sunset Beach Art Festival, the Duck-a-Thon, and the Great Strides Walk. Kelly Miller inquired about the status of the beach parking lot paving, and Bob Stachelski replied that completion is due within about 2 weeks.

- **Downtown Development –**
 - Jennifer Villasenor reported that a few of the tenant improvements have been submitted for Pacific City and that the residential is in plancheck. An

application has been submitted to construct a 2-story retail/office mixed use building at the former Jax bicycle shop.

- **Public Works Update –**

- Bob Stachelski updated his earlier response and stated curb painting started that morning, with estimated completion in 2 weeks and that the beach lot paving will also be complete in 2 weeks. Mary Ann Senske inquired about the new bike racks. Stachelski replied that installation has begun and final steps are in process. Councilmember Sullivan stated that former Councilmember Debbie Cook saw a bike theft in process and reported it, and Chief Robert Handy reported that Lieutenant Kelly Rodriguez physically tackled a suspect in process of stealing a bicycle. Chief Handy reported that there are cameras watching the racks and the bike theft program is going very well and that repeat offenders are being apprehended.

- **Downtown Economic Development Update –**

- Simone Slifman reported that the 23 green recycling containers along Main Street will be removed the week of May 11th. They will be taken by Public Works, and prepared to be put back into service along the blufftop. The advertising panels will be used exclusively by Public Works to promote litter education and beverage container recycling and the program with Rainbow has been terminated. The merchandise sold at businesses on Main Street did not generate enough recyclable materials so the blufftop is anticipated to be a far more productive location. There are seven existing containers on/under the pier and near Pier Plaza, and those will remain.
- Kellee Fritzal and Ken Domer reported that the draft study from Walker Parking Consultants is being reviewed by staff. They have identified \$2.6 million in maintenance items over a 10-year period, which includes various life safety and other non-emergency items. They are meeting with staff on Thursday and there will be a presentation at the next DTEDC meeting. They have recommended that the parking stops be removed, and that the lot be treated with sealant and coating as a longer-term maintenance effort. There is money available in the CIP for some of the proposed maintenance. Susan Welfringer stated that she is still trying to understand who has the various responsibilities for maintenance in the parking garage.
- Welfringer asked whether there is an option to obtain more credit card meters because people don't often carry coins. Laudenback stated that we are limited to a specific number of meters that accept credit cards due to costs, but are in process of relocating some of those meters around the Downtown and will bring a report back as to where they will be installed.

5. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 AM.