

Downtown Economic Development Committee Meeting Notes

September 23, 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, Teri Baker, Chief Rob Handy, Captain Dave Bunetta, Lieutenant Kelly Rodriguez, Bob Stachelski, Debra Jubinsky, Denny Bacon, Antonia Graham, Jennifer Villasenor, Simone Slifman, Janeen Laudenback, Chris Cole, Dottie Hughes

Public: Nicole Thompson, Steve Daniel, Kelly Miller, Susan Welfringer, Michelle Clark/Rainbow, Susan Thomas, Rich Alot, Mary Ann Senske, Jennifer Kramer, Trevor Blythe/ECONomics

Mayor Jill Hardy called the meeting to order at 8:03 AM.

1. **Public Comments** – None

2. **Minutes** - Councilmember Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Mayor Hardy, to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2015 meeting.

3. **Discussion Items** –

- **Request by the Downtown Business Improvement District for Two Hours of Free Parking in the Main Promenade Parking Garage from Nov. 22nd-Dec. 31st.**
Susan Welfringer and Steve Daniel presented their request for a coupon to be used again in 2015 during the holiday season. Dottie Hughes provided an estimate of the prior fiscal impact, and commented that it was relatively minor. Councilmember Sullivan made a motion, seconded by Mayor Hardy, to direct staff to take the request to the full City Council for approval.
- **Presentation by Michelle Clark of Rainbow Environmental Regarding the Implementation of the AB 1826 Food Waste Program**
Michelle Clark provided an overview of the various requirements with which restaurants and food-related businesses will be required to comply with as of January 1, 2016. Rainbow is beginning to distribute information to their commercial customers in a newsletter that will be sent to them starting October 1st. Ms. Clark indicated that Rainbow is working with the City to create programs

to mitigate any downtown issues associated with new food waste regulations. Initial thresholds, which apply primarily to larger businesses, will gradually be lowered in 2017 and 2019, at which time it will also apply to multifamily residential as well. Options for how the waste will ultimately be processed are composting, an anaerobic digester, or also through pig farms. Rainbow is still evaluating these methods.

Debra Jubinsky commented that the City will have to amend its solid waste ordinance to include food waste and organic materials and that it will be coming to the Council by the end of the year. In the meantime, they are working with Rainbow on programs and outreach.

Susan Welfringer inquired about businesses downtown that share trash service and how that would be accomplished. Ms. Clark replied that they will have to work on a case-by-case basis to determine a solution to those issues and make it both convenient and effective.

Trevor Blythe of ECONomics, currently working with the City on the creation of the Sustainable Business Certification Program, said that a business-approach should focus on how this saves money for customers and inquired whether Rainbow has figured out their service costs. Ms. Clarke indicated that the rates will depend on the selected processing method.

4. Updates:

- **BID Organization**

- Steve Daniel thanked the Council for renewing the BID for another year and remarked that the BID will need to be better prepared for future renewal processes. Daniel reported that the BID is preparing for the upcoming holidays through the end of 2015, and the new board has been elected. Goals for the upcoming year include cleaning up the Main Promenade Parking Structure, and getting people to understand how nice it is downtown, but he feels that they have come a very long way from where they used to be.

- **Downtown Huntington Beach Activities/Future Events**

- Susan Welfringer reported on the artwalks that had occurred since June and on the success of Surf City Days, which included a VW Bus Collection Display, for which proceeds were given to the Wounded Warrior Project; the upcoming stakeholders meeting, scheduled for October 7 from 4-6 at Coach's; and National Dessert Day on October 14, for which there are 19 businesses participating that will provide a scratcher card and eligibility for prizes. Welfringer also reported that US Taco had closed their location at The Strand, but new businesses downtown include BLK, Thunderburger, a new art gallery, a new gem and bookstore, and a café called Milk and

Honey going into the former Avocado Café space. Welfringer also introduced TJ, a bear that is being used in photos and on social media to promote the downtown.

- **Restaurant Association**

- No report.

- **Visit Huntington Beach Surf City USA**

- Kelly Miller reported that TOT is up 35% over the last six months and that it is the second month in a row in which there was a double-digit increase. In the past 4-6 months there has been \$32 collected in TOT, and that REVPAR is also up. He commented that with 20-22% additional rooms coming to the City as a result of the new hotels planned and under construction, VHB is being very aggressive in its marketing to bring people to the City. Miller reported that they have hired Rich Alot to head up VHB's digital marketing efforts. They are also redoing their web design, introducing a responsive design and also increasing their blogging. VHB has hired a new agency of record and are looking at strategies that will keep people in HB for a longer period of time. They have also hired a new PR agency, DCI, which will be driving stories on a monthly basis. VHB is bringing a MegaFam Tour in the spring to show the City to meeting planners, they are developing an action sports app and walking tour, a historical map and a map of Sunset Beach, and continuing to participate in the Ambassador program. Miller also commented on the possibility of the future airshow, which could bring in about \$30 million in revenues to the City and that the Big Board is scheduled to be mounted on the wall of the International Surf Museum in November.

- **The Strand**

- No report.

- **Community Services/Specific Events**

- The calendar was distributed with the agenda and Chris Cole briefly described the upcoming events in the remainder of September and in October, including the Green Expo, SUP Tour, Surf City Surf Dog, Corgi Meetup and Halloween. Cole also provided detail on the proposed Surf City USA Airshow. IMG is interested in being the promoter of the event, which could set a new standard for airshows. There is a possibility that bringing the event to HB in 2016 will be part of a celebration of 100 years of aviation. The FAA has provided preliminary approval of the show, including the appearance of the Thunderbirds in 2016, and the Blue Angels in 2017. Final approval on the federal side is currently with the Pentagon.
- Mayor Hardy announced that she has put together a Youth Employment Workshop at City Hall on October 24th and is working with the National

Society for Human Resources Administration (NHRA) to organize the event. She is looking for community members to serve as mock interviewers. Janeen Laudenback volunteered to participate.

- Janeen Laudenback reported that the quarterly steam cleaning of the Main Promenade Parking Structure will begin in mid-October, and that they have received direction to move forward with putting lids on the trash enclosures at the beach and in the downtown.

- **Downtown Development**
 - Jennifer Villasenor reported that the Planning Commission approved a permit for live entertainment at Old Crow Smokehouse at Pacific City; that Hilton expansion plans are currently in plancheck; and that both the Pierside Pavilion expansion and the Pacific City Residential plans are both currently in their second plancheck.

- **Public Works Update**
 - Denny Bacon reported that PW has completed structure repair on the parking garage wall and that they are preparing to steam clean the downtown gutters.

 - Bob Stachelski reported that the PCH paving project has resumed between Golden West and Warner, and the PW is in process of creating design plans for the lighting upgrades on Walnut and Olive. Mary Ann Senske commented that she is hearing very positive feedback about the lighting and that it is helping the transition to The Strand via Walnut.

- **Downtown Economic Development Update –**
 - Kellee Fritzel reported that The Strand is looking at doing some physical upgrades to the property and is in the early stages of discussing them with the City. She also reported that she has been working with potential property owners on 3rd Street interested in new development.

 - Kelly Miller commented that he has seen a growing homeless population along and near the flood control channel on Newland.

 - Chief Rob Handy gave a brief presentation on updated crime statistics. He reported that it was a successful summer with crime being down by 18% in the downtown, while the rest of the City was actually up by 18%. However, this is lower than other cities, which have increased by an average of 27%. Major assaults are down citywide, but public intoxication downtown is up significantly.

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