



8:30 AM

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 12, 2025
WALLING BUILDING 3RD FLOOR
USE RDP OFFICE ENTRANCE**

Minutes

Present: Amy Hoyt, Andrew Walcker, Brian Percy, Chuck Beaty, Jean Eiselein, Jennifer Gamble, Jesse De La Cruz, Joe Guzzetta, Joe Ramos, John Adkins, Broc Yoshida, Nanci Larsen, Philip Makhoul, Amber Schmeltz (RAC), Randy Hord, Ron Loveridge, Shalini Lockard, Sorelle Williams, Stan Morrison,

Excused: Chad Collopy, Cherie Crutcher, Collette Lee, Emilio Ramirez, Justin Tracy, Lou Monville, Mercedes Serrano, Bob Nagle, Samuel Precie, Zoe Ridgway

Absent: Shelby Loomis, Clarissa Cervantes, Kyle Warsinski

Ex-Officio ABP / City Council: Sarai Arellano, Melanie Bruins, Philip Falcone

Staff: Janice Penner, Shirley Schmeltz

1) Call to Order

Shalini Lockard called the meeting to order.

2) Self-Introductions and Public Comments

Self-introductions were conducted.

Jennifer Gamble mentioned the Monopoly Game event happening at Citrus Park on February 23rd. Amber Schmeltz mentioned the Riverside Arts Council's Mayor's Ball which will be taking place on April 5th at the Culver Center.

3) Approval of Minutes of January 8, 2025.

Motion: To Accept the Minutes of the Meeting of January 8, 2025

Motion made by: Chuck Beaty **Motion Seconded by:** Nanci Larsen

Motion carried.

4) Chair's Report

Shalini Lockard thanked RDP staff for their hard work on the Annual Meeting, and reminded Board members to attend the event and help with ticket sales. Janice Penner said they are at 171 attendees and would like to get up to 200. The menu tasting at the Convention Center took place and the food was great. Brian Percy commented that everyone would be pleased with the quality of the food. Chef Brad will be recreating the entrée as a vegan meal with a vegan apple crisp as dessert.

5) Items for Discussion

5a) Update on Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony on February 20, 2025

Janice Penner said staff is working on event logistics, seating, the script, and PowerPoint for the Awards Ceremony. Staff is also working on the 2024 Annual Report.

Sponsorship has gone well with all seven awards sponsored and four sponsors in the new Event category. Ticket sales are somewhat behind target due to two other events that evening, including the firefighter event. Shalini Lockard thanked Amber Schmeltz for all the work she

does for the Opportunity Drawing portion of the Annual Meeting. Shalini Lockard also thanked the Board members for the sponsorships, donations, and attendance to RDP events.

6) Financial Reports

6a) Financial Update at January 31, 2025 – Motion

Nanci Larsen said the financial report for the month of January showed a year to date surplus of approximately \$58,357 compared to a budget deficit of \$934, resulting in a positive variance of \$57,423. BID Levy income was \$48,385 higher than budgeted which accounted for the majority of the variance. Timing of expenses accounted for the remainder.

As of January 31, 2025, RDP had \$353,439 in two checking and one money market account with Citizens Business Bank and Provident Bank. RDP reserves include two CDs with Pacific Premier Bank and one CD with Provident Bank for total reserves of \$289,672.

The Accounts Receivable was \$11,520 of which \$11,310 was attributed to the Annual Meeting. The Accounts Payable equaled \$6,265. The liability for accrued staff benefits (vacation and other time) as of January 31, 2025 was \$53,655.

Motion: To Approve the January 31, 2025 Financial Report.

Motion made by: Chuck Beaty **Motion Seconded by:** Brian Pearcy

Motion Carried.

Joe Guzzetta asked about a comment in the last meeting minutes about the City negotiating the BID. Janice Penner clarified that there are certain situations where an organization/company has not paid their business tax or their BID levy. As the City is the one who collects those payments, they are in charge of negotiations. The City Manager was expecting to conclude those negotiations soon, and so RDP would receive that outstanding BID levy.

Brian Pearcy commented it was important for Board members to understand that BID levy income fluctuates. Janice Penner said RDP maintains cash reserves because BID levy income can fluctuate depending on the time of year, circumstances, and so forth. The money received in January is in respect of December and many businesses make BID payments at the end of the year. RDP expects more money to come in January as a result.

7) RDP Security Updates

Chad Collopy was unable to attend the meeting and provided an update for the record.

Staffing levels are getting better for the Police Department. Last year, the department hired over 70 new officers, with additional officers set to graduate from the police academy over the next 5 months. The new hires are helping with staffing levels for patrol and increased staffing for special assignments like Traffic and PSET.

As the Mayor mentioned during her State of the City, approximately 300 special events are expected this year. These special events range from large festivals such as the Festival of Lights, Show N Go, to events held in locations such as the Riverside Art Museum, and to events in parks such as White Park and Fairmount Park. The Police Department works very closely with the City's Economic Development Department to insure the proper permitting and safety measures are taken. RPD constantly evaluates these events to see what improvements can be made to ensure a safe and successful event. One of the safety measures RPD is constantly evaluating is road closures and the equipment needed for such closures.

There were no issues with the Lunar Festival, Martin Luther King Walk and Black History Parade and Expo.

There is an increase in protests/demonstrations, not only in the downtown area, but through the city and county. Most, if not all, demonstrations are pertaining to the President's new immigration policies. The Police Department has been monitoring these events.

There have been complaints regarding a few businesses in the Downtown area. Police are working with the Planning Department and Code enforcement to ensure proper permitting for their operations i.e., Conditional Use Permits, Fire, Occupancy, Tobacco and Entertainment Permits, etc.

Meetings have started up to discuss 4th of July Celebration. There were no notable incidents to report in the Downtown within the last month.

8) County of Riverside Updates

Emilio Ramirez was unable to attend the meeting and provided an update for the record.

Immigration Resolution:

Supervisor Medina is proud to announce that the Board of Supervisors recently passed a significant Immigration Resolution, reaffirming Riverside County's commitment to supporting and protecting our immigrant communities. Immigrants are the backbone of our economy, especially in industries like restaurants, hospitality, agriculture, and construction. They bring innovation, diversity, and a tireless work ethic that drives our local economy and enriches our communities.

This resolution strengthens access to local resources, legal assistance, and community programs to ensure all residents—regardless of immigration status—can thrive. Immigration is not just a policy issue; it's about real people who contribute to the heart of Riverside County. Supervisor Medina will continue to advocate for inclusive policies that reflect our shared values of opportunity, dignity, and respect for all.

Ongoing Priorities:

Supervisor Medina is dedicated to addressing the core issues that matter most to Riverside County residents. His focus includes:

Economic Development: Expanding job opportunities, supporting small businesses, and fostering innovation to grow our local economy.

Infrastructure Improvements: Investing in better roads, public transit, and essential services to improve quality of life.

Affordable Housing: Crafting policies to address housing affordability and availability for working families.

Public Safety: Enhancing resources for first responders while ensuring accountability and fairness in public safety services.

As always, Supervisor Medina is committed to open dialogue and collaboration with community members to make Riverside County a better place for everyone.

Supervisor Jose Medina's Recent Board Appointments include:

Chair, Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space District

Vice Chair, Waste Resource Management District

Meet the Team:

Supervisor Medina is supported by a dedicated team working tirelessly to serve District 1 residents:

Emilio Ramirez, Chief of Staff

Cesar Gomez, Deputy Chief of Staff

Araceli Ruiz, Senior Legislative Assistant

Darlene Trujillo Elliot, Communications Director

Aaron Dill, Legislative Assistant

Samuel Roberts, Legislative Assistant

Lynn Anderson, Legislative Assistant/Scheduler/Office Manager

Chani Beeman, Legislative Assistant

Gaby Plascencia, Legislative Assistant

Together, this team is committed to advancing policies and initiatives that create opportunity, protect our communities, and uphold the values of Riverside County.

9) Mayor's Office Update

Zoe Ridgway was unable to attend the meeting and no update was provided.

10) City Council Updates

Philip Falcone said this is the year of Arts and Culture. The 300 events mentioned previously will be put on a calendar/website which will soon be up for people to view. The list will also be put in the Raincross Gazette.

The Cal Tower request to the County Oversight Board for 5 million to redo the façade of the ground floor businesses was approved and going to the State Department of Finance in April. They hope to have scaffolding up and work started within a year from now to beautify that area. Once the lease negotiations with the State are concluded, the City can start leasing out the vacant store fronts as right now the State has them in limbo.

The Fox Theater will be getting new plaster, paint, and other improvements, including restoring the original letter marquee. The project will be started before the end of the fiscal year.

The State Restaurant invested almost \$2 million in tenant improvements to make that space what it is. The Dapper Dining and Lounge is very popular and successful. Fleming's Steak House has signed the lease to take a space in the Mark. The space is currently a vacant shell, so all tenant improvements still need to be made. The projected opening is the end of 2026. The Salted Pig restaurant on Main Street did close but plan to reopen at their original location at Twelfth and Main in the fall, although no plans have been filed with the City.

Funds have been approved for road repaving; Main Street from Tenth to Fifteenth, Orange Street from Fifth to University, and a few other smaller side streets.

A large increase in graffiti both in downtown and in the La Sierra area has occurred. The faster the graffiti is reported, the faster the graffiti can be taken care of. There is also someone who is painting grey on top of the graffiti, thinking they are being helpful. In reality the graffiti crew then has two layers of paint to deal with, the graffiti and the grey cover-up paint. They are looking at adding two more full time graffiti crew members to deal with the increase in graffiti issues. The only way to really stop the issue is to remove it as soon as possible.

Melanie Bruins said on March 29 at 10 am, the Farmhouse Collective will be opening its doors to the public. In the University Village, Qamaria Yemeni Coffee Co. recently opened. They have been widely successful in Orange County and are excited to open a location in Riverside. The application for the Artist in Residency program is still open until February 21.

11) City Community Development Department Update

Kyle Warsinski was unable to attend the meeting. Shalini Lockard asked Philip Falcone if there were any updates he was aware of. Philip Falcone replied that they are still reevaluating cannabis, its rules, and ordinances for the City. It will be going back to City Council in April. One location that was proposed in the downtown area was by Yoli's Mexican Restaurant on Market near Third Street. There were two locations proposed in Ward 1; one in the eastside and one in downtown but City Council sent it back for reevaluation on the rules, parameters, location, etc. for cannabis locations.

12) Items for Information

12a) FOL Business Recap Meeting Rescheduled for February 19, 2025

Shalini Lockard said Ward 1 Council member Philip Falcone rescheduled the meeting for downtown businesses to get their feedback on the 2024 Festival of Lights (FOL) to February 19 at 3:30 pm due to unforeseen events. The meeting will still be at Game Lab and will end at 4:45 pm.

To obtain some initial feedback, RDP asked the downtown businesses the three questions below.

- What was the most positive part of the 2024 Festival of Lights in your opinion?
- What was the most negative part of the 2024 Festival of Lights in your opinion?
- What would be the most important change to make to the 2025 Festival of Lights in your opinion?

The responses will be shared prior to the meeting. A discussion took place regarding various businesses not wanting to attend the meeting because they feel like no matter what they do, they are never heard and feel defeated as a result. Philip Falcone said that type of mentality just perpetuates the problem and nothing gets resolved in the end. Janice Penner said there are certain things that are beyond the City's control, such as safety precautions. They can't get away with not having barricades.

Philip Falcone said not everyone will get everything they want, but they can hopefully reach a compromise that works for all. Janice Penner commented that there were improvements from 2023 to 2024; additional signage for the businesses, and the barricades placed to better allow pedestrian traffic to access the businesses off Main Street more easily. Sorelle Williams said most of the retailers say their regular customers stop coming during FOL because they don't want to come down to deal with the lack of parking and crowds. Philip Falcone mentioned that the purpose of the meeting will be to identify problems and then come up with partial solutions. FOL is not going away so cancelling FOL is not an option.

12b) RDP News, Activities, and Other Items

Janice Penner said RDP will be sharing an information table with the Riverside Arts Council at the Riverside Dickens Festival on February 22 at White Park. The intent is to promote downtown businesses and events, including the Mayor's Ball for the Arts in April. RDP is a sponsor of the Mayor's Ball.

The Land Use Committee had a presentation by the City on paving plans for the next fiscal year. Details are in the minutes of that meeting.

The March 25, 2025 luncheon is scheduled at the new The State Restaurant in the Walling Building with Erin Edwards speaking on Blue Zones in Riverside. The April 22, 2025 luncheon is scheduled for the Riverside Game Lab with Bricks and Birch providing the food, and Matthew Taylor presenting on the City's General Plan update. Staff is working on the May luncheon for location and speakers.

13) New Business

There was no new business.

14) Adjournment – Next Meeting Date March 12, 2025 at 8:30 am.