



Minutes of Workshop Meeting of the Ventura Port District Board of Port Commissioners Held February 10, 2016

The Workshop Meeting of the Ventura Board of Port Commissioners was called to order by Chairman Jim Friedman at 11:39AM at the Ventura Port District Office located 1603 Anchors Way Drive, Ventura, CA 93001.

Commissioners Present:

Jim Friedman, Chair
Everard Ashworth, Vice Chair
Gregory L. Carson
Bruce E. Smith
Nikos Valance

Commissioners Absent:

None

Port District Staff:

Oscar Peña, General Manager
Brian Pendleton, Business Operations Manager
Jennifer Talt-Lundin, Marketing Manager
John Higgins, Harbormaster
Robin Baer, Property Manager
Lauren Yunckers, Marketing & Events Coordinator
Richard Parsons, Consultant
Jessica Rauch, Clerk of the Board

Legal Counsel:

Chris Chan

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER: By Chairman Jim Friedman at 11:39AM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: By Chairman Jim Friedman.

ROLL CALL: All Commissioners were present.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

ACTON: Commissioner Ashworth moved, seconded by Commissioner Carson and carried by a vote of 5-0 to adopt the February 10, 2016 agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of January 27, 2016 workshop meeting were considered as follows:

ACTION: Commissioner Smith moved, seconded by Commissioner Valance and carried by a vote of 5-0 to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2016 regular meeting with the following revision:

- **Consent Agenda Item C - This item was pulled from the consent agenda for the discussion of the Commissioner appointment process.**

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS: None.

CLOSED SESSION REPORT: Mr. Chan stated that the Board met in closed session; discussed and reviewed all items on the closed session agenda. Staff was given instructions as to how to proceed as appropriate and there was no action taken that is reportable under The Brown Act.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS: Commissioner Ashworth reported on the Economic Impacts Meeting that was held on Wednesday, February 3rd. He also updated the Commission on the Shellfish Initiative and reported on dredge funding. Commissioner Carson also commented on dredge funding and the economic impacts to our businesses.

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS: General Manager, Oscar Pena, thanked staff and the Commission for their hard work in helping to acquire dredging funding and in getting the word out on the harbor entrance channel conditions. Business Operations Manager, Brian Pendleton updated the Commission on the Holiday Inn Express addition, the RFP for Parcels 5 and 8, the Parking Management Plan, new businesses in Harbor Village and ADA Phase 2. Marketing Manager, Jennifer Talt-Lundin reported that Marketing has been working with Harbor Patrol to get the correct message out to the public that Harbor Village is open and the Harbor Channel Entrance is closed.

ACTION ITEM:

1) Update on Emergency Conditions at 1691 Spinnaker Drive

Recommended Action: 4/5ths vote.

That the Board of Port Commissioners determine by a four-fifths vote that there is a need to continue the emergency action adopted by the Board on January 13, 2016 to award a contract to Letner Roofing Company to replace the tile roof system on 1691 Spinnaker Drive without giving notice for bids to let a contract.

ACTION: Commissioner Smith moved, seconded by Commissioner Carson and carried by a vote of 5-0 to determine by a four-fifths vote that there is a need to continue the emergency action adopted by the Board on January 13, 2016 to award a contract to Letner Roofing Company to replace the tile roof system on 1691 Spinnaker Drive without giving notice for bids to let a contract.

2) Notice of Completion for the ADA Parking Access Improvements

Recommended Action: Resolution No. 3296.

That the Board of Port Commissioners adopt Resolution No. 3296, accepting the work of J & T Engineering and Construction for the Ventura Harbor ADA parking access improvements and authorize staff to prepare and record a Notice of Completion with the Ventura County Recorder.

ACTION: Commissioner Carson moved, seconded by Commissioner Smith and carried by a vote of 5-0 to adopt Resolution No. 3296, accepting the work of J & T Engineering and Construction for the Ventura Harbor ADA parking access improvements and authorize staff to prepare and record a Notice of Completion with the Ventura County Recorder.

3) Update on Harbor Entrance Conditions, Dredging and Economic Impacts to Businesses

Recommended Action: Informational.

That the Board of Port Commissioners receive an update from Harbormaster, John Higgins on the Harbor Entrance Conditions, a report from Dredging Consultant, Richard Parsons on the status of the dredging project and a report from Business Operations Manager, Brian Pendleton on the economic impacts to businesses.

ACTION: The Board of Port Commissioners received a report from staff on the Harbor Entrance Conditions, the current status of the dredge and the economic impacts meeting held last week for businesses.

WORKSHOP ITEM:

1) Overview of Ventura Port District Marketing Plan

Recommended Action: Informational.

That the Board of Port Commissioners receive a presentation on the Ventura Port District's Marketing Plan.

ACTION: The Board of Port Commissioners received a presentation on the Ventura Port District's Marketing Plan. The following comments were made by each Commissioner:

1. Commissioner Smith

- Commented that staff engagement with tenants, the webpage, and print ads have vastly improved over the years.
- What are our measurement criteria or tools to ascertain what is effective and what is not?
- Suggest as a future topic that we invite our partners; especially the Ventura Visitors and Convention Bureau (VVCB) to discuss what the appropriate measurement criteria are and how do you measure engagement?
- Page 20 of the staff report talks about personnel expenses going down 4%. It hasn't gone down; it has actually increased by 6.5% per year over the last 5 years. Make sure to double check information in public reports.
- What effect does the advertising of the Harbor by the VVCB or the City have on Harbor revenues?
- What advertising do we do for the City or the VVCB? I think there is a symbiosis here. We are in a partnership with the City and VVCB; we are bringing people to Ventura, we are all benefiting. We do not have any links to the City or VVCB websites on our webpage.
- For clarification, Commissioner Smith and Valance did not give direction; staff asked us for our input.
- If can't measure it, you can't improve it, so think it is a fair question to ask what are the measurements to ensure that funds are being spent correctly? At this time, we do not know what percentage the staff has spent on advertising versus social media, etc.

2. Commissioner Carson

- For the eight years I have been on the Commission, we have only increased the marketing staff and budget, even in economic declines.

3. Commissioner Valance

- Thanked Jennifer and Oscar for the report and good presentation.
- Wants to see a way to determine metrics; how can we track the money that is spent by Marketing?
- Out of the Marketing budget, we are spending 43% on personnel when the industry standard is 32% and the VVCB is spending 28%. Need to know if that 43% is bringing in the revenue. Just because revenues in the businesses have increased, we can't necessarily think that it is the marketing efforts of the Harbor because we also have VVCB marketing the Harbor. We do not know whose marketing money is having the biggest impact. A lot of money is going out, but we do not know what is coming in as a result.
- An idea is to bring in an outside consultant on these types of metrics and have them assist us in the development of a model for our own use and make improvements from the results.

4. Commissioner Ashworth

- The Board is the one that gives staff direction, not individuals, that is how we function. We do not have sub-committees.
- Marketing is an investment and we should promote the Harbor as a destination and collaborate with the City.
- Agree that we should always tune ourselves and understand how our value of money is spent, but not sure if metrics is the way to go.
- Would like to hear from tenants what they are tracking, for example, Andria's tracks license plates.
- We are not here to run this business; we are here to make sure the business is run properly. I do not need to know how staff spends their time. I want to make sure we deliver for our clients, deliver for our customers and have a performance.
- Suggest including tenant ideas in monthly staff report.

5. Commissioner Friedman

- With regards to Commissioner Valance's comment about the budget and the salary expense, I am assuming that is including benefits and retirement? And this puts us at a little bit of a disadvantage, because benefits of public agencies are more often times considerably higher than those of private industries. So we have costs involved as a public agency that pushes over where a private entity would not have those costs. Need to take this into account.
- With regards to Commissioner Ashworth's comment about meeting with staff, Commissioner Smith and Valance did not meet as a subcommittee, but met to give suggestions.
- The amount of information provided by staff was excellent and appreciated the thoroughness of the presentation.

- **Appreciate the tenants who came and participated in the discussion. If we do not hear from you, we do not know what is working and not working. It is good for the Board to hear your comments.**

Public Comment: Wendy Guionnet, owner of *Le Petit* suggested more events Monday – Friday and in the fall. She suggested a loyalty program for locals, more live music, and chowder cook-offs. The bike races and beer festival do not help the tenants. Alex Hong, owner of *Coastal Cone and The Parlor* commented that his businesses have experienced healthy growth rates and his social media has been increasing due to work with the marketing team. Mr. Hong has also been able to collaborate with other businesses like Andria's Seafood, which has been very beneficial. Lynn Mikelatos, owner of *The Greek* commented that nothing has been done with the entrance to Harbor Village; it should create a sense of arrival to bring patrons in. The tenant meetings are very productive and there is good merchant feedback. Ms. Mikelatos also suggested more water features around Harbor Village, especially at the entrance. Cappi Patterson, owner of *The December Store and More*, commented that she use to be downtown and had to do everything herself. Now that she is part of Harbor Village, she loves being included in everything and having help from the Marketing Department. Sam Sadove, owner of the *Rhumb Line and Ventura Harbor Marina and Yacht Yard*, agrees that events are not needed in the summer months, but in the fall and winter and suggested a squid festival. He also recognized Harbormaster, John Higgins for his work with the Channel Entrance closure and commented that the public needs to know that the Village is open because they think it is closed. Mike Wagner, owner of *Andria's Seafood*, commented that all business need to continue to market, even if you have good food, staff and location. Mr. Wagner also commented that the Board cannot cut the marketing budget; do not micromanage; suggest ideas. Andy Fernandez, owner of *The 805* commented that the tenant meetings have been great and it is nice to see Mr. Pena attend them all. Mr. Fernandez suggested more nighttime entertainment and asked what can we do that doesn't cost?

REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: The Commission would like staff to discuss the issue of metric measurements with our partners and report back on what they believe is the best most cost effective way at getting at the fundamental question of "How do we measure effectiveness of our strategies in marketing?"

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 1:49PM.



Secretary

