

# Minutes

## of the La Jolla Village Merchants Association

### Board Meeting – January 8, 2014

Cuvier Club, 7776 Eads Avenue, La Jolla, CA 92037

#### **Call to Order**

The general meeting of the La Jolla Village Merchants Association (LJVMA) was called to order at 8:34 a.m. by president, CA Marengo.

#### **Roll Call of Directors**

All directors present except Levin. Collier arrived at 8:57.

#### **Non Agenda Public Comments**

David Alvarez, council member and mayoral candidate came by to introduce himself, and speak about his views on San Diego's issues. He has been by the Cove, and is familiar with the stench issues.

Muriel Biby with Regus Group. Offers temporary executive office space and is opening February 3<sup>rd</sup> on Prospect.

#### **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Motion and second by Krasner/Bonner to approve minutes from monthly BOD November 13, 2013. Passed with a vote of 13 and one abstention by Warwick.

#### **President's Report**

La Jolla Cove / Village smell information update provided by Marengo. City has stopped looking at any type of cleanup. They feel gate has solved issue. City is non responsive at this point. Stacy Lomedeco with city said there would be no more cleanup. A group has filed suit, and has asked LJMA to support suit. Marengo asked for comments. Krasner addressed involvement of suit, and made mention that the association is dependent on the city for funding. Feels board is faced with difficult decision. We can either become co-complainants or individually join non-profit LLC for one dollar, or not get involved at all. Marengo pointed out that the city does not actually support us monetarily, but is instead responsible for processing the funding. Smith referenced the businesses leaving town or being injured by stench. Smith referenced that LJMA has no money to actively support suit. Krasner mentioned that suit is being handled on a pro bono basis. Krasner was asked to be co-council for suit. Warwick noted that the law suit is not seeking monetary damages, only action from the city. Baroudi asked for opinion regarding the issues of this suit in relation to the issues to date regarding the seals at the children's pool. Berwin and Niebling both support some sort of action. Warwick mentioned the solution in Monterey which utilized trained harassers. Krasner suggested that LJMA join for the dollar. Motion by Berwin for LJMA to support the efforts of the current litigation to become a member of the LLC at the cost of one dollar, and encourage its members to join individually. Second by Niebling. Collier suggested addition "we advise our members to take up individual membership." Passed with a unanimous vote.

Marengo presented Collier with a ceremonial gavel in appreciation of and to commemorate his service to the LJMA as President.

Marengo began 2014 Strategic planning session. Marengo asked Collier to comment on what he sees as current problems in the village, and Fortune to present a recap of different ongoing projects. LJMA members are

businesses, and we don't know who all are and are having difficulty collecting all fees. We can't get accurate information from the city. It's very difficult to engage merchants as a whole, only core participants to date. Collier sees that as the main problem. If all were involved, the village would be very different. We need to engage market about the positives in the village. Fortune reviewed ideas for 2014. Many businesses are doing business without a business license. Collier feels that local realtors should be educated to refer potential new businesses to contact the association for assistance. City does not check to see if an operating business has a license. Lena Lewis with Mayor's office and Liz Studebaker our city BID advocate were present. Fortune gets a sheet each month from the treasury department regarding the merchants count, and referenced that our main income is from the PROW, associate members, new businesses and we are missing many functioning businesses that do not have licenses. Collier stated that there is currently no functioning method to collect business improvement taxes for La Jolla. Liz Studebaker spoke about how the list is formulated and the difficulties involved. Fortune proposed designated areas for the board members to be maintained throughout the year to review active businesses and educate and create a relationship with the merchants. Check license and PROW violations, offer education to the merchants and try to enhance contact with local merchants. Collier stated that 140k which is 70-80% of our income comes from BID assessments. This is our key money. Bonner stressed the importance of literature in order to educate the merchants. Marengo wants to look for merchant willing to support association with trade for advertising etc. Marengo also feels that we need to re-brand La Jolla and try to seek some of the grants we have not been eligible for. We are the second largest BID district in San Diego. Marengo and Fortune suggested that based upon the policies in other associations, they would like to see each board member bring in one associate member for the year, try to sell one TV ad and one website ad, and join a committee of interest.

Fortune is looking to upgrade the current website and include a blog page. Many upgrades needed at this point.

Marengo wants to see more of a hub for merchants to draw from, and look towards additional advertising opportunities. Bailey suggested a LJMA sticker for window, as was done in Palo Alto. Berwin referenced the need for a welcome packet; Chow already has a start package. Warwick spoke about the group Newcomers and their services, but they are geared mainly towards residential market. Marengo would like to see advertising beyond what we are currently doing. Fortune mentioned that the plastic bag ban is happening... Encinitas and Solano Beach has already done this. Manufacturing a reusable bag was discussed.

Will get block captain program initiated for next month. Goal of 2014 will be heightened communication and village involvement. Fortune stressed the importance of finalizing some of these issues because the budget is due to the city by the end of the month. Marengo called a special meeting to continue discussions for 2014 on Jan 16th.

### **Next Meeting**

Marengo announced the next board meeting, February 12, 2013

Marengo adjourned meeting at 10:19am

**Dated: 2/12/14**



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**Krista Baroudi, Secretary** Motion/first to approve minutes with spelling correction by Niebling/Smith. Passed with unanimous vote of 14 yes.

