

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY**  
**439th MEETING OF THE**  
**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**January 24, 2019**

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A meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority (hereinafter referred to as "Authority", the "CCA" or the "Board") was held on January 24, 2019 pursuant to notice, at the Rhode Island Convention Center, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

Board members present were Bernard Buonanno, Catherine Parente, Stan Israel, Peri Ann Aptaker, Jeff Hirsh, Paul MacDonald, Dale Venturini, George Nee, Tony Mendez and Patrick Butler.

John Hooper was unable to attend.

Also present were James P. McCarvill, Executive Director, Rhode Island Convention Center Authority; Larry Lepore, Beth Johnson, Amanda Wilmouth, Kristin Murphy and Cheryl Cohen, the Convention Center and DDC; Tom Riel, PWCVB; Dan Schwartz and Michael Gravison, the VETS; Alan Chille, PPAC/PFM; Ray Keough, Keough Construction; Mark Liff and Steven Wendeborn, J.P. Morgan; Michael Crawley, Consultant CFO, Citrin Cooperman; Bruce Leach, Legal Counsel and Eileen Smith, Recording Secretary.

**Mr. Buonanno** called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM. **Mr. Buonanno** asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the December Board Meeting. Upon a motion duly made by **Mr. MacDonald** and seconded by **Mr. Nee** it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to approve the minutes of the December meeting.

**Mr. Buonanno** asked Mr. Keough to update the Board on the construction of the Courthouse Garage. Mr. Keough presented pictures of the construction site showing progress with the concrete. Mr. Keough reported that we have about 2 more months before the concrete is complete. Mr. Keough said that things are moving along without any major issues at this time. **Mr. Buonanno** asked the expected completion date. Mr. Keough said that he expects the job to be finished in December or January. **Mr. MacDonald** asked how many people are working on the job. Mr. Keough answered 45 to 50 on any given day.

**Mr. Buonanno** recognized Tom Riel and asked him to present the PWCVB monthly report. Mr. Riel distributed the CVB's report on industry growth and development. Mr. Riel stated that there is significant growth in New York City, Dallas, Houston, Nashville, Los Angeles and Boston. Mr. Riel's handout showed what facilities have undergone expansion or will be in the near future. He stated that it is getting more difficult to compete. Mr. Riel commented that big box hotels are now competing with convention centers. **Ms. Venturini** asked Mr. Riel to explain big box conference centers. Mr. Riel stated that ballrooms are very large with breakout space under one roof or attached. Mr. Riel noted that in a destination like our where attendees are

spread out they sometimes don't have an opportunity to interact with other attendees. **Ms. Venturini** recognized the effort that has been taken by Larry, Amanda and Kristin regarding renewal & replacement but there is only so much that can be done.

**Mr. MacDonald** departed at 9:30 AM

**Mr. Buonanno** asked Mr. Schwartz to give an update the Board on activity at the VETS. Mr. Schwartz reported that the VETS hosted several successful Christmas shows. Mr. Schwartz said that December was a very good month. He noted that Wifi was billed in December and had an impact on the budget. Mr. Schwartz stated that the Philharmonic had offered free tickets to government workers during the shut-down. Mr. Schwartz reported that the contract for metal detectors has been signed and installation should take place in March. Mr. Schwartz reported that for the month of December net income for the VETS was (\$8,203) to budget and (\$45,820) to the prior year. Mr. Schwartz stated that year to date the VETS net income was \$27,936 to budget and \$44,393 to the previous year.

**Mr. Buonanno** asked Mr. Lepore to address the Board. Mr. Lepore presented the financial statements for the Convention Center and the Dunkin' Donuts Center. Mr. Lepore noted that parking was less than budget in all areas except monthly. He stated that a review of parking rates is being done with the expectation that rates will be adjusted to competitive levels with surrounding facilities. Mr. Lepore was pleased to note that due to better operational controls indirect expenses were better than budget. Mr. Lepore reported that the Net Income for the Convention Center for the month of December was (\$17,475) to budget and (\$79,727) to the prior year. Year to date Net Income was \$105,998 to budget and \$759,637 to the prior year. Mr. Lepore stated that there were two events that did not do as well as budgeted but CVS had a short notice event that will put us back on track.

Mr. Lepore reported that net income for the Dunk is doing better than budget. Mr. Lepore reported that for the month of December Net Income at the Dunk was (\$45,489) to budget and \$188,488 to the prior year. Year to Date Net Income was \$333,243 to budget and \$607,062 to the previous year. Mr. Lepore noted that things are looking positive at the Dunk. Panic at the Disco is doing great and is almost sold out. He said that the concert business is doing very well.

Mr. Lepore reported that we have been contacted by Alex & Ani looking for parking spaces for their employees when the firm moves to Providence. He also reported that talks continue with Enterprise Rent A Car. Mr. Lepore said that we have some options available here as well as the new garage. Mr. McCarvill stated that we are looking to increase rates to be in sync with other parking facilities in the area. He noted that we have a safe well lit 24/7 operation who's spaces are in demand. **Mr. Butler** voiced his concerns regarding Enterprise spaces in the new garage. He noted that in this South Garage the entire right side of the first level is blocked for Enterprise. **Mr. Butler** asked if that will be an issue at the Courthouse. Mr. McCarvill said that he will look into **Mr. Butler's** concerns.

Mr. Lepore continued that the Boat Show was taken over by a new promoter and is attempting to resurrect the show of the past. Mr. Lepore noted that she did as well as the other promoter in her first year. Mr. Lepore stated that the Johnson & Wales wrestling event held in conjunction with gymnastics was a success. Mr. Lepore stated that the Globetrotters are also offering tickets to government employees.

Mr. Lepore reported that he had met with the State Council of the Arts. He noted that they were pleased that the neon lighting had been replaced with LED. Mr. Lepore reminded the Board of the ceramic wall that was in the Convention Center in front of the bank of telephones. The wall was removed because we no longer have need (no telephones) and it needed some repair. Mr. Lepore said that the wall will be moved to the Dunkin' Donuts Center. Mr. Lepore stated that the felt tapestries will be given back to the Arts Council for installation elsewhere.

Discussion ensued regarding Capital Projects. Ms. Murphy distributed a list of projects for both facilities. **Mr. Nee** asked how much work is being done by in-house labor. Ms. Murphy said that she will have a breakdown for the March meeting.

Mr. McCarvill reported on the Authority and the Consolidated Financial Statements. He stated that the Authority's net income for the month of December was \$9,854 to budget and \$1,912 to the prior year.

The Consolidated net income results for the month of December were (\$61,313) to budget and \$64,863 to the prior year. Year to date consolidated net income was \$492,453 to budget and (\$821,444) to the prior year.

Mr. Crawley presented his report and stated that there have been no issues, all entries have been reviewed and signed and better use of the accounting software is ensuring more accurate settlements. He noted that accounts receivable is under control. Mr. McCarvill said that we make a serious effort in not letting anyone walk out owing us money. Mr. Crawley said that overtime hours are trending in the right direction.

**Ms. Venturini** reported on the search for a new CVB President. She stated that Mr. Riel is not looking to take over that position. **Ms. Venturini** commented that Tom and his team are working very hard together to keep things running smoothly. **Mr. Nee** voiced his concern that a new person will not appreciate the work that Tom has done in the Martha's absence. **Mr. Hirsh** said that everyone seems to have a positive outlook that the right person will be found. He said that Mr. Riel is well respected by his team

**VOTED:** to approve the amendment to the PSE contract. **Ms. Venturini** voted no because she did not have enough information to make an informed decision.

Mr. McCarvill reported that there have been discussions of expansion of the Hilton with the Procaccianti Group. He said that in order for them to keep the Hilton flag they need to add a ballroom and therefore need our help. They would need to expand over Aborn Street. **Mr. Nee** asked what Mr. McCarvill was looking for. Mr. McCarvill said that he wanted the consensus of the Board whether to continue talking with them regarding Aborn St. **Mr. Buonanno** said it can't hurt to talk with them.

**Mr. Buonanno** asked if there was any new business. Hearing none he asked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by **Mr. Nee** and seconded by **Mr. Isreal** it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to adjourn at 10:13 AM