

THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY
444th MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
August 29, 2019

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 August 29, 2019 pursuant to notice, at the Rhode Island Convention Center, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

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

George Nee was unable to attend.

Also present were James P. McCarvill, Executive Director, Rhode Island Convention Center Authority; Larry Lepore, Beth Johnson, Amanda Wilmouth, Cheryl Cohen and Kristin Murphy the Convention Center and DDC; Kristen Adamo, PWCVB; Michael Gravison, the VETS; Michael Crawley, Citrin Cooperman; Rick Hall, Keough Construction; Harry Cann, SMG; Burnell Goldman, Omni Hotel; Chantale Sarrasin, House Finance; Bernie Lane, Department of Administration; Leach, Legal Counsel and Eileen Smith, Recording Secretary.

Mr. Buonanno called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. **Mr. Buonanno** asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the June Board Meeting. Upon a motion duly made by **Mr. MacDonald** and seconded by **Mr. Butler** it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the June meeting.

Mr. Buonanno asked Mr. Hall to update the Board on the construction of the Courthouse Garage. Mr. Hall reported that the Providence Design Review Committee had signed off on the materials mockup and toured the garage. Mr. Hall presented pictures of the construction site showing progress with the concrete. Mr. Hall stated that pre-cast was completed at the beginning of August approximately 2 weeks ahead of schedule. He said that security and PARCS system remain. A mockup of the exterior materials was assembled at the marshaling yard in May. Mr. Hall reported that site work is moving along. Mr. Hall reported that coordination with security and pedestrian flow is going smoothly and the Arts Council met on May 17th to interview three finalists for the art element. Mr. Hall noted that the next Arts Council meeting is scheduled for Mid-August. Mr. Hall stated that precast will continue for the next sixteen weeks. Substantial completion is scheduled for late January 2020.

Mr. Buonanno asked Kristen Adamo to address the Board. Ms. Adamo reported that the CVB had hired a company to produce a virtual tour of the City that will include the Convention Center.

Ms. Adamo reported that occupancy was up 2.4% from the previous year although rate was down 5%. She noted that the increase in the number of rooms impacts rate. Ms. Adamo stated that definite bookings for the Convention Center include New England Appliance & Electronics Group for March of 2020. Ms. Adamo continued that there are some very nice tentative prospects such as UiPath, the International City/County Management Association, the Cultural Association of Bengal-NABC and Varsity Spirit Corporation. Ms. Adamo reported that the sales team had attended the DI Annual Conference in St. Louis, MO to learn about current trends in the industry and they attended and exhibited at Cvent Connect in Las Vegas, NV where they hosted 25 appointments. **Mr. Mendez** asked if there are any video tours in RI at this time that we can see on Google. Ms. Adamo answered that she does not know of any. **Mr. MacDonald** commented that he had an opportunity to take a group of visitors on a Providence River Boat tour and he and his guests loved it. He said that he learned a great deal about the Port of Providence. Ms. Adamo stated that the direct spend numbers for the RICC bookings in July was \$284,036.81.

Mr. Buonanno asked Mr. Gravison to update the Board on activity at the VETS. Mr. Gravison informed the Board that Dan was on a much needed vacation. **Mr. Hooper** said that he was surprised that Mr. Schwartz was not here to deliver this great news. Mr. Gravison reported that for the month of June the VETS Net Income was \$8,177 to budget and \$5,843 to the prior year. Year to Date Net Income was \$19,709 to budget and \$61,095 to the prior year. **Mr. Buonanno** noted that Mr. Schwartz took the wrong time for a vacation. He said that Dan should be here to bask in the glory of a profitable year. For the month of July, Mr. Gravison stated that the VETS Net Income was \$12,196 to budget and (\$18,848) to the prior year. **Mr. Hooper** commented that Dan appears to be getting better at taking risks. Mr. Gravison reported the Black Violin will be returning, which is a First Works production. **Mr. Mendez** asked about other First Works events. Mr. Gravison stated that there are no others at this time but we will co-promote and also rent the building. Mr. Gravison presented upcoming events for the VETS and stated that it appears that this fiscal year should be even more successful. **Mr. Hooper** asked Mr. Gravison to pass along a message to Dan from the Board congratulating him on his success. **Mr. Buonanno** stated that we are all happy for him. **Ms. Venturini** noted that we all love Dan. Mr. Gravison reported that capital projects for the fiscal year include replacing the banners on the outside of the building that are beginning to show their age.

Mr. Lepore presented the financial statements for the Convention Center and the Dunkin' Donuts Center. Mr. Lepore reported that the Net Income for the Convention Center for the month of June was \$70,288 to budget and (\$321,822) to the prior year. Year to date Net Income was \$321,165 to budget and (\$991,834) to the prior year. Mr. Lepore reported that the Net Income for the Convention Center for the month of July and year to date was (\$95,131) to budget and (\$314,068) to the prior year.

Mr. Lepore said that this is a great story at the Dunk. He said that this is only the second time in his 20 year history that the Dunk Made a profit. He reported that the Dunk's booking people, working with different promoters, have brought some very good events to the arena. Mr. Lepore reported that for the month of June Net Income at the Dunk was \$168,126 to budget and \$52,314 to the prior year. Year to Date Net Income was \$829,398 to budget and \$1,367,021 to the

previous year. Mr. Lepore stated that for the month of July Net Income at the Dunk was \$133,064 to budget and \$203,447 to the prior year. Mr. Lepore stated that we are beginning to see savings in energy credits for electricity. **Mr. Hooper** noted that he had attended the John Meyer concert and stated that it was a great concert and the building was impressive. Mr. Lepore said it was the best crowd of the year. Mr. Lepore reported that the Big3 Basketball was not a huge crowd but did make a profit. He said that the City and State got some great exposure. Mr. Lepore said that we have to convince agents that Providence is a great place. Conversation ensued regarding Phish Concert. It was noted that Phish fans are like no other. Where once they slept anywhere or in their cars they now stay at hotels. All hotels are sold out. **Mr. Hooper** asked how we got them. Mr. Lepore said that they like Rhode Island and we had many conversations. This will be a repeat of their concert from 20 years ago.

Mr. McCarvill reported on the Authority and the Consolidated Financial Statements. He stated that the Authority's net income for the month of June was (\$104,445) to budget and (\$106,831) to the prior year. Year to date net income was (\$31,627) to budget and (\$327,958) to last year. The Authority's net income for the month of July was \$22,706 to budget and (\$16,070) to the prior year.

The Consolidated net income results for the month of June was \$142,146 to budget and (\$370,496) to the prior year. Year to date consolidated net income was \$1,138,645 to budget and \$108,324 to the prior year. The Consolidated net income results for the month of July and year to date was \$72,835 to budget and (\$145,539) to the prior year.

Mr. McCarvill reported that the 2019 Capital Projects are nearing completion and we are getting ready for the 2020 projects. He also noted that we are beginning to see some credits from our turbines and improvements in energy consumption. Mr. McCarvill thanked Bernie Lane for his assistance in getting the funding for the projects.

Mr. McCarvill stated that we are very close to an agreement on the SMG contract.

Mr. Butler asked how the new garage will help our bottom line. Mr. McCarvill said that it should help but he is unsure of how much it will add. He said that Wexford is not fully occupied and will most likely not use the spaces that we have contracted with them.

Mr. McCarvill presented a rendering of a proposal to place the 911 Wall of Hope tiles on the Convention Center. He said that the tiles were removed from Waterplace Park and Arthur Robins has asked if we could find a home for them. The Board was in favor of placing them on our building and asked Mr. McCarvill to have a conversation with Mr. Robins outlining our responsibilities for maintaining the project. Mr. McCarvill said that the understanding is that the Authority will have no financial burden for the project. Mr. Leach reminded the Board that because this item was not on the agenda a vote would have to be taken at the next meeting. All Board members present agreed that the Convention Center should be the home for the wall.

Discussion ensued regarding Bold Point in East Providence. Mr. Lepore said that they will compete with us as well as Twin River and the VETS. He said that we should keep up with what is being planned for the waterfront in East Providence. Mr. Lepore noted that DOT is planning to put a new exit ramp from I 195 to access the amphitheater.

Mr. Buonanno asked if there was any new business. **Mr. Hooper** announced that he is now a new proud, full time resident of Rhode Island. **Mr. Buonanno** asked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by **Mr. Butler** and seconded by **Mr. Hooper** it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn at 10:45 AM