

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING  
April 25, 2023**

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A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, April 25, 2023, pursuant to notice at the AMP, One LaSalle Square, and the RI Convention Center, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

Ms. Venturini called the meeting to order at 12:04 PM.

Board members participating were Dale Venturini, Edward Feldstein, Steve Iannazzi, Ernie Almonte and Patrick Butler.

Also in attendance were Dan McConaghy, RICCA; Larry Lepore, Cheryl Cohen, Veronica Vanjura, Chris Spolidoro, Rebecca Ponder, RICC and AMP; John Gibbons, PWCVB; Dan Schwartz and Michael Gravison, Vets.

Ms. Venturini asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the March meeting. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Mr. Feldstein it was unanimously:

VOTED to approve the minutes of the February meeting.

Ms. Venturini began the meeting by informing everyone present that going forward, the committee would focus part of each meeting on a subject matter that requires a deeper dive to generate solutions or to inform/educate members of the committee. This commenced the previous month with the parking challenges at the Convention Center which culminated in a list of recommendations which will be presented later in the meeting.

Ms. Venturini also thanked members of the AMP/RICC marketing team for sharing upcoming events with her team at RIHA. Ms. Venturini shared those events with local restaurants and businesses who interact with RIHA. Those neighboring businesses were particularly thankful that they could plan staffing and hours of operation to support patrons visiting the facilities.

Ms. Venturini asked Mr. Gibbons to present the Marketing Report for the PWCVB. Mr. Gibbons reported that bookings by the CVB for the Convention Center are up substantially over 2022. These events will generate more than \$40m in direct spending in the Rhode Island economy. Mr. Butler urged the teams to share that information as it is a successful story. Ms. Venturini asked about the timing of the Authority's next impact study. Mr. McConaghy reported that the intent is produce one in FY25 to give ample time in the post-covid world to truly understand the effects. Mr. Almonte suggested we consider a legislative day at the complex over the summer. Mr. McConaghy agreed to work with Mr. Almonte to set that up. Mr. Gibbons again suggested the Authority consider a new facility for AAU sports to be built in the Providence/Warwick area to address an underserved market opportunity. (Report attached)

Ms. Cohen reported on the AMP. There are several upcoming graduations in May and planning for our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala is well underway. Pitbull will be performing as part of the Gala on May 26<sup>th</sup>. Our website reconstruction project is moving along nicely. It is expected to be

complete in the next few months. Ms. Cohen also reported that after many years of not being held at the AMP, the RIIL boys' and girls' basketball semi-finals and finals will be returning to the AMP next year. Ms. Cohen presented two success stories from the previous month regarding F&B at both the AMP and RICC. (Report attached)

Ms. Ponder presented the marketing reports for the Convention Center. (Report attached) Ms. Ponder reported that the RICC has been nominated for a Stella Award as one of the best convention centers in the Northeast. She also reported that sporting events dominated the most recent month's activities in the RICC. She also highlighted the highly successful JLC Live event which is one of the longest running events at the Convention Center since the 1990's. The event set attendance records.

Ms. Venturini recognized Mr. Gravison and asked him to address the Committee. Mr. Gravison reported on the recent activity at the Vets. (Report attached) Nearly all performed better than expected and drove strong returns to F&B. Mr. Gravison also indicated future booking opportunities are up. New banners will be installed along Route 95 to replace the faded ones currently in place. These should be installed over the next two months.

Mr. McConaghy reported on the results of the RICC parking effort. (Report attached) The Authority and ASM Global will immediately research parking apps that allow patrons to book and pay for parking in advance. This will allow season ticket holders for the Friars and PBruins to get their parking online, as well as to sell group parking for events and conventions coming to town. The Authority will be engaging an architect/engineer to study the deficiencies in the garages to improve patron experience and facility performance. Enterprise Rental Car has also been re-engaged to occupy space in the South Garage. The Authority is considering leveling the hourly and event fees to match the Clifford Street Garage. Event rates have not changed in nine years and merit a deeper look to adjust. There are future opportunities that will take additional study or resources to consider as well.

Ms. Venturini then kicked off a discussion on ticketing practices at the AMP, RICC and Vets. Members from each organization presented the various ticketing platforms at each venue. Within each venue, there are different types of events that have different ticketing methodologies. The conversation turned to the scams which currently exist in the market and how we are dealing with that. All venues spend significant resources and time attempting to protect consumers from fraud. The venues encourage all patrons to buy directly from the box office, if possible. When a consumer does present an invalid ticket, the venues encourage the patron to notify their credit card to pursue the fraud and buy a legitimate ticket at the box office. If all else fails, the venue does its best to accommodate the patron as best it can.

Ms. Venturini asked if there was any other business for the Marketing Committee. Hearing none she asked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Mr. Iannazzi it was unanimously:

**VOTED:** to adjourn at 1:40 PM