

RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY
468th MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
December 21, 2021

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 December 21, 2021, pursuant to notice at the Dunkin' Donuts Center, One LaSalle Square, Providence, Rhode Island.

Board members attending were Bernie Buonanno, George Nee, Peter Mancini, Patrick Butler, Paul MacDonald, Dale Venturini, Tony Mendez and Jeff Hirsh.

Board members not in attendance were Edward Feldstein, Peri Ann Aptaker and John Hooper

Others participating were Daniel McConaghy and Dana Peltier, Convention Center Authority; Dan Schwartz and Michael Gravison, VETS; Alan Chille and Lyn Singleton, PPAC/PFM; Veronica VanJura, Dunkin' Donuts Center; Joanna Arrighie, Larry Lepore, Beth Johnson and Chris Spolidoro, Convention Center; Kristen Adamo, PWCVB; Bruce Leach, Legal Counsel; Mark Brodner, Commerce Corp; Mike Crawley, Citrin Cooperman and Eileen Smith, Recording Secretary.

Mr. Buonanno called the meeting to order at 10:30 and asked for approval of the November Board meeting. Upon a motion duly made by **Mr. Butler** and seconded by **Mr. MacDonald** it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the November meeting as presented.

Mr. Buonanno recognized Ms. Adamo and asked that she report on PWCVB's outlook for the facilities. Ms. Adamo reported that we are struggling right now. She stated that she is in negotiations with the DOH to agree to a mask exemption for two large sporting events that are being held in January. Ms. Adamo noted that the participants are requesting approval for them to be mask less while competing. Ms. Adamo stated that the CVB has hired three new employees.

Mr. Butler referenced the Covid funds that were received by the cities and asked if any of the member cities are willing to contribute to the bureau. Ms. Adamo said that there have been conversations and the dialog has been good so far. **Ms. Venturini** commented that the CVB should get their fair share and that this building is important to those cities. **Mr. Nee** asked Ms. Adamo if she could get us a list of where the money stands at this time. **Mr. Mancini** commented that the city looks at distributing the funds to neighborhood. He continued that they do not consider these facilities as a neighborhood. Ms. Adamo noted that the CVB works closely with the city with neighborhood guides, walking tours, etc. **Mr. MacDonald** took the opportunity to thank Kristen for the great job that she and her team are doing.

Ms. Arrighie reported that the Van Gogh exhibit tickets will go on sale in March. She said that they continue to pursue a Michael Angelo exhibit. This will coincide with the RISD graduation exhibit. **Mr. Mendez** asked how long the art exhibit would be here. Ms. VanJura answered about six weeks. Ms. VanJura noted that they will be walk around exhibits. Ms. VanZura noted that the Dunkin' Donuts Center held a Holiday event where children from the Boys & Girls club were invited to decorate cookies. The employees generously provided gift cards to the Boys and Girls Club. Ms. Arrighie reported that 2023 continues to be a concern. **Mr. Butler** asked if for 2023 would it be worth lowering our rate. Ms. Arrighie said that they are having conversations on ways to attract business. **Mr. MacDonald** asked what happens if someone wants to cancel. Discussion ensued regarding when we keep the deposit.

Mr. Schwartz reported that school performances at the VETS are very well attended. He stated that the crew are being tested daily to keep everyone safe. Mr. Schwartz reported that DOH has given them the testing kits. Mr. Schwartz stated that December has been a phenomenal month. **Mr. Nee** asked who pays for the schools. Mr. Schwartz said that corporate sponsors pay for the busses. **Mr. MacDonald** asked how the schools are chosen. Mr. Schwartz explained that not every child in a school attends and they coordinate with the school and the Festival Ballet. Mr. Schwartz reported that the Providence Police have gone above and beyond with their assistance for the Nutcracker. They have even used the mounted police. **Mr. Hirsh** suggested that we send a thankyou note to Hugh Clemence.

Mr. Lepore noted that attendance drives everything. He said that we should see a steady slow climb out of this. Mr. Lepore noted that parking was up slightly. **Mr. Nee** asked how Comic Con did in comparison with the last event. Mr. Lepore said that Comic Con was down although it did better than we expected. Mr. Lepore regretfully reported that the PC Georgetown game scheduled for tomorrow has been cancelled because of Covid. Mr. Nee asked what happens to the rent for the forfeited game. Mr. Lepore said that we will get the rent but not food and beverage. We will wait for a decision from the Big East on if the game will be postponed or forfeited. Mr. Lepore stated that we are going back to being a vaccination site. He said that we seem to be back in crisis mode. **Mr. MacDonald** said that thanks to Mr. Lepore we are the most prepared for this crisis. He continued that he hopes someone does an interview to get the word out what we have been able to do.

Mr. McConaghy presented the Authority and Consolidated Financial Statements. Discussion ensued regarding the amount that is owed to us by SMG and what we owe SMG. Mr. McConaghy said that he will be reconciling the amounts in the coming weeks.

Mr. Crawley presented that Balance Sheet, Statement of Net Position, Advanced Deposit Funding, Accounts Payable and Aged Accounts Receivable. Mr. Crawley reported that accounts payable number is improving. All reports were included with the board package. **Mr. MacDonald** questioned the PPP loan. Mr. Crawley stated that it is a forgivable loan that has not yet been forgiven. Mr. McConaghy noted that we are working with everyone on the Federal level to get this resolved.

Discussion ensued on upcoming negotiations including naming rights for the venue. Mr. McConaghy stated that Dunkin' Brands has presented a proposal. Mr. McConaghy reported that he and Ms. Cohen will go through it carefully. Mr. McConaghy also reported that the tenant space at Clifford St. is in discussion.

Mr. Buonanno asked for a motion to convene in executive session pursuant to Section 42-46-5(a)(7) of the Rhode Island General laws as to a matter related to the question of the investment of public funds where premature disclosure would adversely affect the public interest.

Upon a motion duly made by **Mr. Nee** and seconded by **Mr. Mancini** and by a roll call vote it was unanimously

VOTED: to Convene in Executive Closed Session pursuant to RI General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(7) to discuss a matter related to the question of the investment of public funds where premature disclosure would adversely affect the public interest.

Vote:

Bernie Buonanno – yes

Jeff Hirsh - yes

Paul MacDonald, yes

Patrick Butler - yes

George Nee - yes

Tony Mendez - yes

Dale Venturini – yes

Peter Mancini - yes

Open session resumed at 12:08 PM. **Mr. Buonanno** announced that no votes were taken in Executive Session. Upon a motion duly made by **Mr. Butler** and seconded by **Mr. Mancini** it was unanimously

VOTED: to seal the minutes of Executive Session

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. Butler** and seconded by **Mr. Hirsh** it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn at 12:13 PM