

RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY
465th MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SEPTEMBER 30, 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 September 30, 2021, pursuant to notice at the Dunkin’ Donuts Center, One LaSalle Square, Providence, Rhode Island.

Board members attending were via zoom were Bernie Buonanno, Peri Ann Aptaker, Patrick Butler, Peter Mancini, Paul MacDonald, George Nee, Tony Mendez, Edward Feldstein, and Jeff Hirsh.

Board members not in attendance were Dale Venturini and John Hooper

Others participating were Daniel McConaghy and Dana Peltier, Convention Center Authority; Hugh Clements, PPD; Dan Schwartz and Michael Gravision, VETS; Alan Chille, PPAC/PFM; Cheryl Cohen, Veronica VanJura , Dunkin’ Donuts Center; Rebecca Ponder, Joanne Arr, Danielle Wing, Larry Lepore, Beth Johnson and Chris Spolidoro, Convention Center; Kristen Adamo, PWCVB; Bruce Leach, Legal Counsel; Ronald Noosek and Stephen Gross, CLA; Mike Crawley, Citrin Cooperman.

Mr. Buonanno called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM and asked for approval of the July Board meeting. Upon a motion duly made by **Mr. Butler** and seconded by **Mr. Mancini** it was unanimously

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

Mr. Buonanno announced that Providence Police Chief, Hugh Clements would be addressing the group. Chief Clements spoke about the Providence Police and the ways that they are working to improve safety in the City. Chief Clements said that a school will be graduating in November which will add to the number of officers available. Chief Clements reported that there has been a huge rise in violent crime all over the country since the murder of George Floyd. He said that overall the four year data indicates a reduction in crime. Chief Clements said that the mission is to reduce fear and address the perception that the City is unsafe. Increasing the presence of police will help alleviate the fear of violence in the City. He said the public will see uniforms. Discussion regarding homeless and pan handling took place. Chief Clements stated that aggressive pan handling laws are not being enforced because of the potential of lawsuits. Chief Clements stated that Providence is safe. **Mr. Buonanno** said that we are proud to have you here. **Mr. Nee** asked how many candidates are in each class. Chief Clements reported that each class has approximately 50 candidates and in the last four schools there were 164 and 101 were minorities. **Mr. Buonanno** asked how many are still on the force. Chief Clements said that most are still on but we are now seeing lateral transfers. **Mr. Feldstein** commented that if there are events at the venues will you have enough staff. Chief Clements answered that etc.

Mr. Feldstein asked if the staff will be available. Chief Clements noted that these are small details and we will have the staff. **Mr. MacDonald** stated that the information presented by Chief Clements is encouraging. We need to change the public perception by changing the news although the only news that is presented in negative. Chief Clements stated that we will get it done. **Mr. MacDonald** asked if we can do anything to help. Chief Clements said that we will see how these events go and then look at ways that you can assist. Mr. Lepore stated that repeat business, family shows, P Bruins and PC should not have problems but events like Rough & Rowdy that calls for a detail of 20 we cannot do because we wouldn't have enough staff. **Mr. Mendez** asked who is responsible for details. Chief Clements stated that all details are extra and time and one half. **Mr. Mancini** asked if other cities and towns can be called in. Chief Clements said that he is working on that quagmire. He noted that now retired officers could cover construction. Mr. Lepore stated that the Board of Licenses controls the number of details. **Mr. Butler** stated that crime in the city is not random but targeted. He asked if we can get that information out. Chief Clements noted that shooters are known to each other. There is a relationship. **Mr. Butler** thanked Chief Clements and said that it is good to see that businesses are hiring retired Providence Police.

Ms. Adamo reported that meeting planners have serious concerns with the city. Ms. Adamo stated that the Downtown Improvement District has formed a group to see what we can do to address the issues in the downtown area. She said that they are attempting to raise money for Yellow Jackets.

Mr. Crawley addressed the Board and reported that a draft of the Audit has been approved by the State. Mr. Crawley recognized the hard work and dedication of the finance team. He then asked Mr. Noosek to address the Board. Mr. Noosek reported that CLA has issued a clean opinion on internal control and compliance and the audit has been reviewed and approved by the state. Mr. Noosek noted that the financial statements belong to the Authority. Mr. Noosek stated that he and the team had no difficulties with completing everything on time. Mr. Noosek stated that the finance team worked very hard and their efforts were appreciated. **Mr. Buonanno** asked for a motion to accept the FY2021 Audit that was approved by the Finance Committee. Upon a motion duly made by **Mr. Nee** and seconded by **Mr. Butler** it was unanimously

VOTED: to accept the FY 2020 Audit as submitted by CLA and approved by the Finance Committee.

Mr. Crawley commented that this was a merger year for CLA and Blum Shapiro and they did a great job.

Mr. McConaghy reported that the State has asked us to submit a budget by October 1st. He indicated the inclusion of the budget documents in the Board package presented. Mr. McConaghy stated that we are looking at FY 22 and FY 23 to get comfortable with our submission. He said that we will continue to delve into past years and because of more information it will be likely where we will end up. **Mr. Buonanno** asked if the numbers presented are conservative because we are still in a state of uncertainty. **Ms. Aptaker** asked if

ARP is included in this budget. Mr. McConaghy answered no. He said our request for ARP is Project Restart \$58 million and the Opportunity Fund \$28 million.

Mr. Schwartz was asked to update the Board on the finances at the VETS. Schwartz stated that in July and Year to Date Net Income was (\$76,426) to budget and (\$15,993) to the prior year. Mr. Schwartz noted that the Theater was used by the State which has now ceased. Mr. Schwartz stated that indirect expenses continue to be below budget while we navigate through to Pandemic. Full staff remain on work share. Mr. Schwartz noted that they are moving ahead with Capital Projects. Replacement of HVAC and seat replacement will take place in the Summer.

Mr. Lepore reported that the State has paid for cleanup of the site. He said that we are opening up with a few events.

At the Dunk we will follow CDC guidelines although we will look at ways to accommodate the tenant or promoter. We will work on how and who will be responsible for overseeing recommendations. Mr. Lepore said that the P. Bruins have not had direction from the NFL and the State has not mandated masks. **Mr. Butler** noted that the Boston Bruins are mandating masks. Mr. Lepore said it will be up to the tenant. He stated that we have a staff that is fully vaccinated. **Mr. Mendez** asked what positions are you having difficulty hiring. Mr. Lepore said ushers and ticket takers saying that those positions make only a few cents more than minimum.

Ms. Cohen introduced the new marketing team. Mr. McConaghy congratulated the team and wished them great success.

Mr. MacDonald noted that something should be done to honor the memory of Jim McCarvill. He suggested naming the Convention Center Boardroom in his name. The Board agreed that something should be done. **Mr. Nee** stated that it would need Legislative approval and volunteered to bring the issue to the Legislature.

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. Mancini** it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn at 11:42 AM