

RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2026

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 6, 2026, pursuant to notice which was posted at the Amica Mutual Pavilion, One LaSalle Square, Providence, RI and the RI Convention Center, One Sabin Street, Providence, RI.

Board members in attendance were George Nee, Paul MacDonald, Jeffrey Hirsh, Dale Venturini, Peter Mancini, Carol Lombardi, Jennifer Goodrich Coia, Esq., Oscar Vargas, and Sarah Bratko

Board members unable to attend were Ernest Almonte and Diony Garcia, Esq.

Others participating were Daniel McConaghy, Linda Maroun, and Melissa O'Connor, Convention Center Authority; Alan Chile, Dan Schwartz, and Mike Gravison, PFM/The VETS; Lawrence Lepore, Al Fera, Cheryl Cohen, Robert Lauro, Chris Spolidoro, Becca Ponder, Tim Sullivan, Robert Gemma, Jennifer Goldberger, Dennis Corbeil, Kenric Burk, Sr., and Kenric Burk, Jr., Convention Center and AMP; Kristen Adamo PWCVB; Bruce Leach, Legal Counsel; Michael Crawley, Citrin Cooperman; Becky Bolton, Oak View Group; Debra Polselli, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order

In the absence of Chairman Almonte and with a quorum present, **Vice Chairman Nee** called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

2. Announcement of Next Board Meeting Date

Vice Chairman Nee stated that the next meeting will take place on Tuesday, February 3, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.

3. Consent Calendar Items

- a. Approval of the December Board Meeting Minutes
- b. Approval of the Marketing Committee Report
- c. Approval of the Finance Committee Report

Vice Chairman Nee requested a motion for the Consent Calendar Items. Upon a motion from **Mr. MacDonald**, which was seconded by **Mr. Mancini**, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the December Board Meeting, the Marketing Committee Report, and the Finance Committee Report.

4. Marketing Committee Report – Chair Dale Venturini

- a. Update on Strategic Plan Summary

Ms. Venturini stated she does not have a marketing committee report because they have not met this month yet, but that Mr. McConaghy will update the Board on the Strategic Plan Summary. Mr. McConaghy, before providing an update, introduced Becky Bolton, who is a Regional VP for OVG. He stated that she has been here many times before and helps us out on the convention center side of things, so he welcomed her and opened up any questions. Ms. Bolton stated that it was a pleasure coming to Providence and she really enjoys working with the awesome team here and is always available if anyone needs anything. With there being no questions for Ms. Bolton, Mr. McConaghy provided a quick update on the Strategic Plan. He stated that he and Ms. Cohen have been working hard on the summary of the results from 2025. He stated that he expects it to be sent out shortly and will be reviewed at the Marketing Committee meeting on January 27th and hopefully presented and approved at the February Board meeting. Once approved, it will be sent out to legislators, town leaders, etc.

5. Finance Committee Report – Chair Jeff Hirsh

a. Review and Consideration of Architectural Feasibility Services

Mr. McConaghay reviewed the RICC Architectural Feasibility Study handout (see attached). He stated that there was a healthy discussion at the Finance Committee meeting on engaging an architectural firm to evaluate all the various options for expanding and growing our current footprint. He reported that an RFP was issued on October 15th and there were five (5) responses. He stated that based on the scoring matrix, the internal team shortlisted two (2) firms – Populous and TVS. After the interviews, which were also attended by Mr. MacDonald, as a representative of the Facilities Committee, the team felt that TVS brought the requisite experience needed for this expansion. Mr. McConaghay then asked for the Board's approval in moving forward with TVS. **Mr. Vargas** questioned what would happen if this were not completed within six (6) months, and Mr. McConaghay replied that it was left open to continue with the firm if needed.

Vice Chairman Nee requested a motion to engage TVS for an architectural feasibility study. Upon a motion from **Mr. Hirsh**, which was seconded by **Mr. Mancini**, it was unanimously

VOTED: to hire TVS to conduct a feasibility study to identify options for expansion.

6. Employee Highlight – Kenric W. Burk (Security Officer - RICC)

Mr. Lauro introduced Kenric Burk, Security Officer at the Convention Center. He stated that he has worked at the Convention Center for the past five (5) years and is the first face you see when you walk into the Convention Center. Mr. Burk stated that he enjoys working hard and meeting people. He stated that he did security in the past and did not think he would be doing it this late in life. He stated that he is a "people person" and respects all people and enjoys helping them if he can. He stated that his family is the most important thing in his life. **Mr. MacDonald** commented that greeting people and helping people is very important and he has a very important job in the tough world we live in. Mr. Lepore commented that a VP from OVG came to town and told him how impressed she was with Mr. Burk upon her arrival at the building. **Vice Chairman Nee** asked Mr. Burk how he defines success both personally and professionally. Mr. Burk replied that personally his family is the most important thing to him and without family life would be tough. He stated professionally, there are good people and bad people, and he tries to get along with everyone and try to help them if he can. He stated treating everyone the same because people are just going to be people and everyone is different. Mr. McConaghay commented that Mr. Burk was a real gentleman, and **Vice Chairman Nee** thanked him for his commitment.

7. Executive Director's Report – Daniel McConaghay

a. Review and Consideration of RICCA's Lease Extension for The VETS

Mr. McConaghay reported that the lease for The VETS is set to expire on June 30, 2026 and the Authority is required to provide written notice to the State of its intention to renew by January 31, 2026. He stated that all terms and conditions would remain the same and that he needs a vote to renew this lease for another five (5) years.

Vice Chairman Nee requested a motion to renew the lease at The VETS. Upon a motion from **Mr. Hirsh**, which was seconded by **Ms. Venturini**, it was unanimously

VOTED: to renew the lease for The VETS from the State of Rhode Island.

b. Review and Consideration of the Deferred Compensation Plan Amendment

Mr. McConaghay reviewed the Deferred Compensation Plan Amendment. He stated that the IRS made changes to the rules as it relates to it being post tax and they need to add the option for employees making catch up contributions. **Mr. MacDonald** asked if employees have been made aware of the changes and Mr. McConaghay replied that they will be notifying all Authority employees and letting them know what the changes mean. Mr. McConaghay then stated that the motion is very specific and technical, and Attorney Leach recommended that they could point to the motion in the package rather than read it in its entirety.

Vice Chairman Nee requested a motion, as presented, as it relates to the Authority's Deferred Compensation Plan. Upon a motion from **Mr. Hirsh**, which was seconded by **Mr. Vargas**, it was unanimously

VOTED: to accept the Amendment as presented (see attached).

c. Update on Security Measures at the Complex – Larry Lepore

Mr. Lepore addressed the Authority regarding the incident that occurred last month at Brown University while the AMP was hosting a sold out concert and the RICC was hosting a cheerleading event. He stated that when he started working here 22 years ago the first thing he did was hire Mr. Lauro who also used to be a Providence police officer. He noted how over the years he has maintained the relationship between the building and Providence Police with hosting collations, safety training, and graduations without charging a rental. He stated that maintaining this relationship over the years paid dividends when it came to a head on Saturday, December 13th. He stated that they knew by 4:30 p.m. that Providence Police would be pulling the police detail at the AMP and both buildings had not been secured yet. He stated that they needed to act quickly and they reached out to retired police officers so as to have an armed security force in the building. He stated that he also reached out to two (2) local Mayors – North Providence and Johnston to ask if they could send officers to help secure the building. He stated that he met with the operator of the cheerleading competition and the convention center was locked down and discussions took place to cancel the competition the following day. He stated that there was open communication with the band and the band continued to play even though they felt challenged by that decision. He stated that at 8:15 p.m. the FBI and ATF arrived, and they wanted to shut down the concert. He stated that he explained to Providence Police that the concert was not your average concert in that 70% of the attendees came from out of state and if they stopped the concert 12,000 people would be flooding the streets looking for a place to go. He explained that people were safer in the building and they had time to put a plan in place for when the show was over at 11:30 p.m. Mr. Lepore stated that both North Providence and Johnston officers, along with the Cranston Swat Team came down to help both inside and outside in front of the building. He stated that the band made an announcement at the end of the show notifying patrons that they were going to see a large police presence when exiting the building and told them if they had a ride share arrangement to stay inside the building in the lobby. He stated that a lot of people did not know what had occurred in the City and they all followed direction and a vast majority of people when seeing the swat team thanked them for being there. Mr. Lepore stated that the following day they realized that a lot has changed over the last 25 years and he spoke with Mr. McConaghay that we needed to do a better job, and they discussed meeting with Hugh Clemens for a security briefing and threat assessment. He stated that we were one of the first buildings to have a bomb dog, which is more common now but there is a lack of cameras in both buildings, and some are old and need to be updated. He stated that he spoke with Mr. Clemens, explained our challenges, and asked if he could do a threat assessment. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Clemens received a call from Brown University to oversee their security. Mr. Lepore stated that they will put an RFP together for a threat assessment. In the meantime, he stated that they will look to scan patrons at the main lobby doors of the AMP, as opposed to in the lobby, and in the pre-function area at the RICC rather than at the exhibition hall entrance. He noted that technology has advanced so much more in identifying people that can really prove helpful in real time, noting that a description of an individual can be inputted into the system, and the camera system will scan the footage on all cameras and look for that person. He stated that this could help in other areas as well like slip and fall claims. **Vice Chairman Nee** asked if there were any questions. **Ms. Bratko** asked Mr. Lepore if the staff participated in active shooter training, and Mr. Lepore replied yes and it is very realistic with live ammo shots and blood packets. He stated that we might look into doing a full scale one on the arena floor allowing for the ability to have thousands in attendance. Ms. Bratko then asked from a contract perspective who has the final say in this situation, and Mr. Lepore replied that AMP security and band management discussed the situation and the band was fine with following our lead and give refunds to anyone who could not make it to the show or if they wanted to leave. Mr. Lepore stated that some band members did not want to perform but we spoke with management and they felt more comfortable. He stated that the cheerleading promoter was in agreement on Saturday but not so much the next day with giving refunds on Sunday. He stated that it will always be a challenge and you need to decide what the risk factor is and make the most educated decision. He stated that they set their sights on the following weekend because a suspect was not in custody and the RICC had a volleyball tournament and the AMP had a PC game scheduled. He stated that he knew the police details would not be filled so they made an agreement with the RI Sheriff's department to be at the RICC and the Warwick Swat Team to be at the AMP, but it ended up not being necessary. **Vice Chairman Nee** asked if the FBI and ATF could have shut the concert down, and Mr. Lepore replied yes they could have done so but based on the information we provided to them they decided against it even though they were going to large locations and closing them down. Mr. McConaghay stated that they were worried about having 12k people running for the doors. Mr. Lepore stated that they closed Providence Place Mall and people who parked at the mall and attended the concert could not get to their vehicles. **Ms. Venturini** stated that she was having dinner at the mall and it was a very scary situation because they came into the restaurant and made an announcement to "get out now." She stated that no one paid and left immediately. **Mr. Mancini** agreed that had they shut the concert down it would have created even more chaos. **Ms. Venturini** stated that she was very proud of how everything was handled that evening at the RICC and AMP. **Vice Chairman Nee**, on behalf of the Board, thanked everyone involved that evening.

Mr. MacDonald commented that after hearing Mr. Lepore's report that the Board is very fortunate to have both Mr. Lepore and Mr. Lauro on staff and with their experience everyone can feel a little bit safer.

Vice Chairman Nee then acknowledged Alan Chile as the new President of PPAC. Mr. Chili stated that after 41 years Mr. Singleton has retired as President of PPAC, but he is still the President and CEO of Professional Facilities Management, and he will continue as Vice President of PFM. He stated that he now needed to find a General Manager at PPAC.

8. Adjournment

With there being no further business to be discussed by the Board of Commissioners, **Vice Chairman Nee** asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Upon a motion duly made by **Mr. Mancini**, which was seconded by **Mr. Vargas**, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn the January 6, 2026 meeting at 9:47 a.m.