

THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TUESDAY, JULY 1, 2025, AT 9:00 AM

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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 July 1, 2025. The meeting was held in the McCarvill Boardroom, Second Floor, Rhode Island Convention Center, pursuant to notice, at the Rhode Island Convention Center, One Sabin Street, Providence, RI 02903 and the AMP, One LaSalle Square, Providence, Rhode Island.

Board members in attendance were Chairman Almonte, Vice Chair George Nee, Paul MacDonald, Peter Mancini, Jeffrey Hirsh, Dale Venturini, Carol Lombardi and new board member Sarah Bratko, Esq. Board members unable to attend were Oscar Vargas, Jennifer Goodrich Coia, Esq., and Diony Garcia, Esq.

Others attending were Daniel McConaghy, Melissa Lasko-O'Connor, Linda Maroun, and Trish Verrecchia, RI Convention Center Authority; Mike Gravison, The Vets; Kristen Adamo, PWCVB; Alan Chile, PPAC/PFM; Larry Lepore, Chris Spolidoro, Tom Autiello, Celeste Fagundes, Cheryl Cohen, Becca Ponder, Casey Hoover and Tim Sullivan, RI Convention Center and/or AMP; Michael Crawley, Citrin Cooperman; Bruce Leach, Legal Counsel; and Charles Lawrence, OVG.

1. Call to Order – Chairman Almonte called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM
2. Next Board Meeting date – Chairman Almonte stated that the next meeting will take place Tuesday, August 5, at 9:00 AM
3. Consent Calendar Items
  - a. Approval of the minutes from the May Board Meeting
  - b. Approval of the Marketing Committee Report
  - c. Approval of the Finance Committee Report

Chairman Almonte requested a motion for the Consent Calendar Items. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. MacDonald, which was seconded by Mr. Mancini, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to approve the consent calendar items

4. Marketing Committee Report – Chair Dale Venturini
  - a. Discussion of Strategic Planning Process

Ms. Venturini mentioned there were in-depth discussions regarding the composting program during the marketing meeting and highlighted how successful the program has been. The CVB stated things were going well and they closed out the year with some great numbers. Ms. Venturini mentioned that an internal Strategic planning meeting will be held on September 16, 2025, at The Rhode Island Foundation followed by a reception at Track 15.

5. Finance Committee Report – Chair Jeff Hirsh
  - a. Review and Consideration of the Revised FY26 Budget

Mr. Hirsh asked Mr. McConaghy to review the Budget with the board. Mr. McConaghy reviewed the process for the budget, explaining that the middle column on the handout is the revised budget that is being compared to the rolling forecast FYE 2025. Mr. McConaghy reviewed each venue starting with The Vets. The Vets are projecting a \$21,000 loss which is much better than the previous year. The RI Convention Center had a difficult

year from a cost standpoint due to many adjustments that needed to be made, especially on handling labor. These adjustments should show major improvements for the upcoming year. The AMP is showing a steady performance, and we are also working on improving operational efficiencies. The net for Food & Beverage is down next year because NCAA took place this year, which was an historical event that will not be taking place next year. The IDG is also very steady but there was a write off for the Solar Project that brought the numbers down. The Authority had some added costs this year. The Authority is hiring a procurement person who will be handling some of Howard Allen's duties due to his upcoming retirement. The last page of the budget is the full roll up, which is not as conservative as the past year. Mr. McConaghy asked for the Board's endorsement of the revised budget.

Chairman Almonte requested a motion to approve the revised budget. Upon a motion from Mr. Nee, which was seconded by Mr. Hirsh, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to approve the revised budget.

6. Employee Highlight

a. Celeste Fagundes (Engineer – RICC)

Mr. Autiello, facilities plant supervisor, introduced Celeste Fagundes. Celeste is his chief engineer and keeps track of all the mechanicals. Celeste mentioned that she is a mechanical engineer and works with the HVAC department. As a mechanical engineer, we are responsible for the performance of the machinery as well as keeping a log. She also handles keeping the boiler room clean. According to Mr. Autiello, it's the cleanest boiler room he has ever seen. Celeste mentioned that she helps Mr. Autiello prepare the engineering schedule. On a weekly basis she will do water testing on the chill cooling to make sure the levels are up to standard. Mr. Autiello emphasized the importance of her role, noting that by monitoring the chemical levels in the water, she helps to extend the lifespan of our new equipment. Mr. Nee asked Celeste how long she has been with RICC and how she got here. Celeste stated that she has been here since 2013. Someone she knew asked her if she would be interested in a position with the facility. She attended a trade school and got her license as a boiler operator and then went back to get a license as an engineer. Mr. McConaghy asked her what she does for fun. Celeste mentioned that she has a very active 9-year-old girl that keeps her busy with multiple sports, as well as being her chauffeur. Her favorite thing to do with her daughter is to go ice skating and take lessons together. Mr. Almonte asked how she defines success personally and professionally. Professionally she defines success by reaching all her goals no matter how big or small the task is. If you complete them, you are successful. Personally, it will be when she sees her daughter graduate, which will be a long time because she wants to be a brain surgeon.

7. Executive Director's Report – Daniel McConaghy

- a. Executive Session pursuant to RI General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(1) in connection with the performance of OVG Food & Beverage
- b. Executive Session pursuant to RI General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(6) in connection with the Potential reallocation of a new tenant to the AMP

Chairman Almonte requested a motion to move to Executive Session pursuant to RI General Laws Section 42-46-5(a)(1) in connection with the performance of OVG Food & Beverage. Upon a motion from Mr. Nee, which was seconded by Ms. Venturini, a roll call vote was taken:

Chairman Almonte    Aye  
Vice Chairman Nee    Aye

Ms. Venturini  
Mr. Mancini

Aye  
Aye

Mr. MacDonald	Aye	Ms. Lombardi	Aye
Mr. Hirsh	Aye	Ms. Sarah Bratko, Esq.	Aye

Chairman Almonte requested a motion to return to Open Session. Upon a motion from Ms. Venturini, which was seconded by Mr. Mancini, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to return to Open Session at 10:38 AM

Chairman Almonte requested a motion to close and seal the minutes of the Executive Session. Upon a motion from Mr. Nee, which was seconded by Mr. Hirsh, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to close and seal the minutes of the Executive Session

There was a vote in executive session to move the financial function of Food & Beverage to Authority.

#### 8. Adjournment

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

**VOTED:** to adjourn the July 1<sup>st</sup> meeting at 10:40 AM