

RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY
MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2026 AT 12:00 PM

A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority (hereinafter referred to as "Authority" "the CCA" or the "Board") was held on July 30, 2026. 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 and the Amica Mutual Pavilion, One LaSalle Square, Providence, RI.

Board members in attendance were Jeffrey Hirsh, Paul MacDonald, Peter Mancini, and Oscar Vargas

Board members unable to attend included Ernest Almonte, George Nee, Jennifer Goodrich Coia, Esq., Carol Lombardi, Diony Garcia, Esq., Farouk Rajab, and Sarah Bratko.

Others participating were Daniel McConaghy, Convention Center Authority; Dan Schwartz and Mike Gravison, The VETS; Lawrence Lepore, Cheryl Cohen, Hannah Capece, Casey Hoover, and Tim Sullivan, RI Convention Center and AMP; Tom Riel and Alyssa Bateman, PWCVB; and Debra Polselli, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order

Mr. Hirsh called the meeting to order at 12:16 p.m.

2. Announcement of Next Meeting Date

Mr. Hirsh stated that the next meeting will take place on Tuesday, September 29, 2026 at 12:00 p.m.

3. Approval of May 2026 Marketing Committee Meeting Minutes

Mr. Hirsh requested a motion to approve the May 2026 Marketing Committee Meeting Minutes. Upon a motion from **Mr. MacDonald**, which was seconded by **Mr. Mancini**, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the May Marketing Committee meeting.

4. Marketing Updates

a. PWCVB – Tom Riel/Alyssa Bateman

Mr. Riel reviewed the CVB's Monthly Marketing Report for the month of July (see attached). He stated that there were 272 bookings for FY26, which was about 40 more than last year. He stated he was shocked by all the headwinds against them and yet they still came back with an increase in bookings. He noted that 34% of the additional bookings were late bookings they were able to secure with the help of incentives put forth by TID, which made the destination more attractive to meeting planners. He then reviewed June bookings and new prospects for the Convention Center. He commented that whatever happens in the market, they should not give up convention business. He stated that they gave up business because of FIFA and were lucky to secure short term bookings to fill the space and hotel rooms. Mr. Hirsh commented that the CVB did a great job maneuvering with FIFA and he knows how challenging it was and you had to have a lot of patience. Mr. Riel stated that it all came together, maybe not as great as hoped, but they still pulled it off and gave all the credit to Kristen and Mary Kay. He noted that you cannot put a number on the exposure the City received from abroad. Mr. Hirsh noted that the CVB was entrusted with transportation and they pulled that off too. Ms. Bateman stated that she was not sure of the final number, but Mr. Riel thought it was close to 5k tickets sold. Mr. Riel then reviewed the CVBs FY25 and FY26 analysis year end report which details all the metrics that the CVB measures each year. He further reported that the CVB is investing in a new CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system, which will take place between now and December, and he noted that their reporting will take on a different look. He stated that he will keep the Committee informed and stated that it is a good investment with a lot of AI in the background. Mr. Lepore commented that he was glad to see the new Hilton will be called Hilton Garden Inn Convention Center, and Mr. Riel stated that it will be. Ms. Bateman then reviewed the marketing and communications portion of the CVB report. She reported that we earned 145 articles from the media relative to the World Cup with a lot of international coverage and 1.7 billion impressions.

She then reported on Providence Restaurant Week that ends next Saturday and had over 80 restaurants participating in this 20th season. She then reported on ASAE demo day, which took on the format of a morning talk show with 50 meeting planners online participating in the webinar. She stated they received great feedback from it. Ms. Bateman then reviewed web stats and social engagement stats. Mr. Riel noted that they will be launching a new website in October that will be able to “talk” to their new CRM.

b. Rhode Island Convention Center – Casey Hoover

Ms. Hoover reviewed the RICC’s Monthly Marketing Report for the month of July (see attached). She reported that 21 contracts turned definite since the last meeting and there were 10 contracts awaiting a deposit noting that three (3) of them included contracts with Athletic Championships in 2029, 2030, and 2031. She further reported that there were 19 contracts out pending signature. She then reviewed highlights from the month of June, as well as the next three (3) months. Ms. Hoover then reviewed the Convention Center’s sales and marketing initiatives and updates.

c. Amica Mutual Pavilion – Cheryl Cohen

Ms. Cohen reviewed the AMP’s Monthly Marketing Report for the month of July (see attached). She reported that the upcoming Los Tigres Del Norte concert typically has last minute ticket sales and the number of tickets sold doubled in the last month. She stated that it will still be a somewhat small crowd, but they expected food and beverage per caps to be significant. She reported that the upcoming Hot Wheels event kicked in once Monster Jam played out at Gillette Stadium. Mr. MacDonald questioned why they were in Foxboro, and Ms. Cohen replied that they are still coming to the AMP in February and are looking at adding another show to their engagement. She reported that Journey is tracking well. She then reviewed “in process” events noting that a lot of business keeps shifting moving from Q1 to Q2. She stated that it is very expensive to put a show on the road and because touring is so expensive, ticket prices increase. She stated that the big shows will still sell out but the normal touring shows struggle. Mr. MacDonald commented that it is a tough business and noted that having Disney on Ice between Christmas and New Year’s could not be a better time for families. Ms. Cohen stated that even with attendance being down for family shows, the per caps are up because they are spending when they are here. Ms. Cohen then reviewed PlacerAI results from the recent WWE event, which is very helpful and allows us to be more strategic when trying to reach these fans.

d. The VETS – Mike Gravison/Dan Schwartz

Mr. Gravison reviewed The VETS’ Monthly Marketing Report for the month of July (see attached). He reviewed the newly announced shows and the shows currently on sale for the upcoming season. He noted that Bluey’s Big Play will be coming back in January of 2027 ahead of their new movie release. He then reviewed the digital marketing recap noting that The VETS spent \$18k across eleven (11) different events that returned \$116k in revenue. He reported that their website has seen a lot of growth with active users with the highest traffic date being the day Matt Rife’s holiday show was announced for December. He then reported that Paciolan, which is The VETS ticketing system, is running a lot of programs that they are manually doing so they are going to incorporate a program into Paciolan that will automate a lot of functions.

5. Other or New Business

There was no Other or New Business to be discussed by the Committee.

6. Adjournment

Because a quorum was no longer present, a vote to adjourn did not take place. The meeting ended at 1:13 p.m.