

RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY  
MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING  
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2025 AT 12:00 PM

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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 November 25, 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 and the Amica Mutual Pavilion, One LaSalle Square, Providence, RI.

Board members in attendance were Ernest Almonte, Paul MacDonald, Jeffrey Hirsh, Dale Venturini, Peter Mancini, and Carol Lombardi.

Board members unable to attend included George Nee, Oscar Vargas, Diony Garcia, Esq., Jennifer Goodrich Coia, Esq., and Sarah Bratko.

Others participating were Daniel McConaghy Convention Center Authority; Mike Gravison, The VETS; Lawrence Lepore, Cheryl Cohen, Becca Ponder, Casey Hoover, Hannah Capece, and Samantha Bottoni, RI Convention Center and AMP; Kristen Adamo and Alyssa Bateman, PWCVB; and Debra Polselli, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order

**Ms. Venturini** called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m.

2. Announcement of Next Meeting Date

**Ms. Venturini** stated that the next meeting will take place on Tuesday, December 23, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.

3. Approval of October 2025 Marketing Committee Meeting Minutes

**Ms. Venturini** requested a motion to approve the October 2025 Marketing Committee Meeting Minutes. Upon a motion from **Mr. Hirsh**, which was seconded by **Mr. Mancini**, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to approve the minutes of the October Marketing Committee meeting.

4. Marketing Updates (PWCVB/RICC – New Format)

a. PWCVB –Kristen Adamo/Alyssa Bateman

Ms. Adamo reviewed the CVB's Monthly Marketing Report for November (see attached). She stated that bookings were slightly up in 2025 and prospective business is slightly down. She stated that the downturn in prospective business is industry wide and uncertain times when people are making decisions. She stated that they are seeing a lot of bookings in small time windows and oddly a weird increase in corporate bookings last minute as well. She stated that the market is in flux. She then reported that Convention Center bookings are up and some of those bookings are old friends like JVC Volleyball, who have signed for the next three (3) years. In addition, the Association of State Dam Safety Officials and the Music Teachers Association are both coming back. She stated that October bookings with the contracting room nights puts them well on pace for the first part of the year. She then highlighted new prospects which including higher education conferences, food services, as well as the Association of Zoos and Aquariums noting that the CVB is working with the Executive Director of Roger Williams Park Zoo. Ms. Adamo then reported that they were slightly up in hotel occupancy, as well as the average daily rate. She then stated that Mr. Riel is working on doing a customer advisory board and they are scheduling that for Spring 2026. She stated that the Convention Center will be all shiny and new and it is one of those things that the TID allows them to do. She stated that the CVB relaunched its partnership with Strategic Database Research to support their business development initiative surrounding their incentives. Ms. Bateman then reported to the Committee with a marketing and communications update. Ms. Bateman stated that the team created/updated 17 blogs in the month of October.

She further stated that GoProvidence was named the best CVB by industry leaders. She then reviewed the CVB's e-newsletter open, click, and click to open rates, as well as the CVBs social media platform numbers. Ms. Bateman then reported on collateral pieces and advertising, which are both doing great. She then explained that they are using a new company, Sojern, which is a multichannel marketing platform that targets specific travelers and they can follow them. She stated that from September 22 through October 31 the campaigns generated an economic impact of \$800k with approximately 24% of reached travelers being business travelers. She then stated that Alanna is working closely with the RICC and AMP to promote the new bar, which is very exciting. **Mr. Hirsh** asked what type of conference Zeta Phi Beta was, and Ms. Adamo replied that it is a historically Black sorority. **Mr. Hirsh** stated that he had conversations with people attending the conference and they all love Providence and it might be a good idea to get interviews and/or testimonials from some of those attendees. Ms. Adamo then mentioned that the CVB was hosting a familiarization event for event planners from Brown University on December 10. She stated that there will probably be about 100 attendees, which is a huge deal. She stated that the Authority will be invited to the closing reception. She stated that the reception will take place at The Exchange on December 10.

b. RICC – Becca Ponder

Ms. Ponder reviewed RICC's Monthly Marketing Report for the month of November (see attached). She reviewed contracted business highlighting the Music Teachers National Association. She stated that they will be using pianos in every space and it is something that we were able to work with them on and give them confidence that we can do it. She also highlighted IEEE noting that Jonathan from the CVB worked hard to infiltrate this group. Ms. Adamo stated that it took five (5) years and they have a large food and beverage component to their event. Ms. Ponder then highlighted the Providence Tattoo Show noting that they are trying to help them grow into their potential. She stated that legislation needs to change to allow out of state tattoo artists to participate because people around here want to see them. **Mr. Hirsh** asked how many more people would attend, and Ms. Ponder replied that she felt that attendance would at least double. Ms. Ponder then reviewed the November calendar noting that this week was a dark week allowing them to clean the building. She stated that RI Comic Con had a slightly lower attendance than last year, but revenue did better. She feels that this is attributable to the food and beverage team being creative with food and beverage opportunities. She reported that they received positive feedback from attendees with most commenting that they were more comfortable because less people were in attendance. Mr. Lepore then commented that the team is working with OVG on immersive shows. He stated they are looking for places to host the King Tut show, and he hoped that we would be able to find something to fit in that time. Ms. Ponder stated that six (6) weeks is typically the minimum for an immersive show. Ms. Ponder then reported on the Irish Dance. She stated that the last time they were in Providence was 2016 and they left because they needed more space. She stated that they went to Hartford, CT and they have worked with them to bring them back. She stated that Jonathan at the CVB got them to commit with a three (3) year contract. Ms. Adamo stated that they intend to stay until 2030. She stated that this is a good example of clients coming back because they love the City and State. Ms. Ponder reported that their concession spend was \$86k with about half of it coming from the new bar. **Ms. Venturini** asked if they were the first ones to use the bar, and Mr. Lepore replied that the bar had a soft opening during RI Comic Con. **Mr. Hirsh** commented that there is a lot more for them to do here than in Hartford. Ms. Adamo stated that the kids love the mall. Ms. Ponder then reviewed events that had a short term booking window. She highlighted Pfizer, which was a short term piece of business that was won over Orlando and Miami. She then reported on the Association of State Democratic Committees. She stated that the Omni was initially approached for this event but was unable to accommodate the space they needed and the Convention Center is working to fit them into an already tight May calendar. Mr. Lepore commented that it puts pressure on the laborers to have an event during the day and flip it to a Gala event at night. Ms. Ponder stated that the convention is comprised of three (3) representatives from each state that are required to attend. **Mr. Hirsh** stated that the restaurants will be happy and attendees will be happy about Providence being a walkable city. He questioned if there was anything that could take place at the AMP to coincide with their time here, and Ms. Ponder replied they could try. Ms. Adamo stated that Citizens Bank would be small group but bring in short term large piece of business. Ms. Ponder stated that they are still in the prospect column even though the calendar is booked, they are trying to figure out how to fit them in. Mr. McConaghy stated that these companies do not want to go into Boston if they can help it. Ms. Ponder then reviewed sales and marketing initiatives and updates highlighting the Momentus software system and how they are working on getting the system to do more. **Ms. Venturini** asked where we are on FIFA, and Ms. Adamo replied that the teams will be announced on December 5. She stated that the CVB is ready to go. She stated that there has not been a ton of hotel pickup, but it will pick up after December 5. She stated that the biggest challenge will be funding. She stated that the City is interested in doing an official fan zone that would be sanctioned by FIFA. She stated that the CVB is meeting internally on wayfinding and visitor experience. She stated that everything is a moving target and a crapshoot on the number of people who will be attending. She stated she is unsure if the estimate of 1 million people is accurate. **Mr. Hirsh** commented that time will tell, and Ms. Adamo commented that they will continue to manage expectations. She stated that she will include the Authority members on updates when she sends updates to the CVB board members.

## 5. Other or New Business

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

## 6. Executive Director's Report

Mr. McConaghy reminded the Committee members that the grand opening of The Exchange bar will take place on December 3 at 4:30 pm. He stated that the Governor will be there along with a representative for the Senate President, PC Athletic Director, and the Interim Athletic Director at URI. Mr. McConaghy then discussed the brainstorming project. **Ms. Venturini** commented that no matter what board or activity everyone is involved with, the number one thing is to expand their reach. She stated the importance of getting more young people involved and she also stated that she feels people do not understand what the Authority is. She recommended starting with the obvious companies to let them know if they need anything they are aware we can help them. Mr. McConaghy stated that a list should be generated of who these entities might be and to also think outside Providence. **Ms. Venturini** agreed and stated obviously Providence business but there are also a lot outside of Providence. Mr. McConaghy talked about the RI Foundation, Providence Foundation and had conversations with Bradley Hospital and Lifespan on how we can help them out. **Mr. Hirsh** stated that he spoke with John Fernandes who is the President of Brown University Health and he is very interested in elevating Brown University Health's stature and notoriety. He stated that he met with the CVB because he wants to put together a series of speakers' conferences with different topics, leading off with children's mental health and have Bradley Hospital as the focus. He stated that they met to try and figure out how to put this all together and there are a lot of moving parts but the hospital has to come up with the speakers, the focus, and who their audience is, and then the CVB will work with their resources. **Mr. Hirsh** stressed the importance of not ignoring Southeastern Massachusetts – specifically Fall River and New Bedford. He stated there are a lot of companies there that do not have any place to go unless they go to Boston and they do not want to go into Boston if they can help it. **Mr. MacDonald** commented that he was surprised to see so many cars from Massachusetts parked in the garage when he was here for the Jonas Brothers concert and Comic Con. Mr. Lepore commented that he spoke with a successful businessman who is living at the Omni residences while his house is being built and he mentioned that he could not believe the impact of the Convention Center and the AMP on the City of Providence. He stated that he had not realized just how big an impact they had until witnessing it firsthand. Discussion then ensued about attending various board meetings throughout the State to get the message out of exactly what the Authority does. **Mr. Hirsh** recommended that the Authority could host one event per year and invite businesses to see what we can do for them and what they can do for us. Ms. Adamo stated that she attends the Warwick Rotary meeting once a year and it is well attended. She feels that it would be a good meeting to attend, as well as any of the other Chamber meetings. **Ms. Venturini** stated that they will need to figure out a presentation that can be tweaked depending on what and who is going to deliver it. Mr. Lepore suggested putting a list together with all the quasi agencies in the State and ask to be put on their agenda and present to their Board. **Ms. Venturini** loved that idea, and Ms. Adamo suggested that they make sure they do something down in South County. Discussion then ensued on who will be working on this and it was Ms. Venturini, Mr. McConaghy, Mr. Lepore, Mr. Hirsh, Ms. Lombardi, Ms. Adamo, and Ms. Cohen.

## 7. Adjournment

With there being no other business to be discussed by the Marketing Committee, **Ms. Venturini** asked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by **Mr. Mancini**, which was seconded by **Mr. MacDonald**, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to adjourn at 1:02 p.m.