

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING**

January 16, 2007

A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on January 16, 2007 pursuant to notice at the Rhode Island Convention Center Boardroom, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

Board members present were Chairman Dale Venturini, Commissioners Jeff Hirsh, Jason Fowler, Paul MacDonald and Patrick Butler.

Also in attendance were Jim McCarvill and Betty Sullivan, RICCA; Neil Schriever and Martha Sheridan, PWCVB; Tim Muldoon and John McGinn, RICC; Cheryl Schadone, Larry Lepore and Eleanor SanAntonio, Dunkin' Donuts Center; Evan Smith, Newport CVB; Laurie Sholl, Newport Hospitality and Eileen Smith, recording secretary.

Ms. Venturini called the session to order at 1:05 p.m. and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Noting that the minutes of the December meeting had been distributed Ms. Venturini sought a motion to approve. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Hirsh and seconded by Mr. Fowler it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the December meeting meeting.

Ms. Venturini asked Neil Schriever to begin his presentation. Mr. Schriever reported that sales activity for the month of December 2006 resulted in eighteen definite bookings compared to eleven in December 2005. Mr. Schriever discussed the definite booking highlights as well as tentative and lost bookings. He reported that John Gibbons has been doing a great job and is proving to be an asset to the CVB. Ms. Venturini asked Mr. Schriever if he could create a report by year of booked meetings and events. Mr. Schriever said that he would do so. Ms. Sheridan stated that technology improvements allow attendees to access their organization's web sites that are providing links to the CVB web site and Rhode Island Tourism Division. However, they also visit third party sites and make room reservations outside the room block. She also noted that the Renaissance Hotel most likely would not offer many group rooms. Mr. Hirsh asked why and Ms. Sheridan responded that the Renaissance would try to attract more of the corporate and transient market. Mr. Fowler asked the reasons why things are better. Mr. Venturini responded that there is more continuity among our partners because they now meet bi-monthly to share leads and strategize marketing initiatives. Mr. McCarvill asked Ms. Sheridan when the Dunkin' Donuts Center is complete and we have more hotel rooms on board will we increase our goals. Ms. Sheridan responded that we will need to wait and see what room blocks will be made available to

us. Mr. Fowler asked if the new hotel rooms and condos will create any parking issues. Mr. Muldoon said that he thinks there might be some parking issues. Ms. Sheridan asked if the completion of the Westin construction will have an impact. Mr. Muldoon responded that he has been surprised at the number of construction workers parking in the garage. Mr. Fowler asked if there are other garages being built.

Mr. McCarvill noted that he was aware of three possibilities being discussed. The Procaccianti Group and the Authority have had some discussion regarding the Fogarty Building across the street from the Convention Center. Ms. Venturini asked about the area behind the Dunkin' Donuts Center. Mr. McCarvill said that because of the size of the space a garage would not be economically feasible. Mr. MacDonald suggested more aggressive marketing of our attached garage.

Cheryl Schadone was asked to report on Dunkin' Donuts Center marketing. Ms. Schadone noted that family shows do very well in Providence. She reported that the recent Disney ice show was in competition with another Disney product playing in Boston and held its own. Ms. Schadone said that the Providence Bruins and PC Friars season continues and both have teamed with us to promote a series of games with item giveaways and family night events. Ms. Schadone reported that she would be attending the Concert Industry Consortium Conference in February. She said that participation in the conference is one of the greatest tools to help secure more entertainment acts for our venue. Ms. Schadone announced that a

press conference would take place on Wednesday at 3:00 pm to kick off the luxury suite sales. Ms. Schadone invited the commissioners to the press conference. Mr. Hirsh asked if a gift certificate for use at the Dunk has been considered. Ms. Schadone said that she has been working with Ticketmaster to come up with something that could work. Mr. Hirsh also suggested a gift certificate to be used just for food and beverage. Ms. Schadone's Power Point presentation is attached.

Mr. McGinn presented the Convention Center's marketing activities for the month of December. (attached). Mr. McGinn reported that Celebrate Rhode Island Ball would be held at the Convention Center on February 10th. He continued that the event is chaired by Governor and Mrs. Carcieri and benefits the Good Neighbor Energy Fund. Mr. McGinn presented the final number for the Festival of Trees. He said that revenue was up to the prior year but because of the expense of purchasing tree and wreath decorations expenses were up significantly over last year. Mr. Fowler asked what our objective is in having the festival. Mr. Muldoon responded that it is a community event that benefits the zoo. He noted that we have one year left on the contract and after the 2007 event we will have to take a closer look to determine if it will continue.

Ms. Venturini welcomed Evan Smith and his guest Laurie Sholl. Mr. Smith reported that Smith Travel was reporting a slight increase in hotel occupancy for the region. Mr. Smith said that he is coping with

the high Average Daily Rate in Newport. He noted that some visitors are staying in Warwick and traveling to Newport because of lower rates. Mr. Smith said that Newport is enjoying a residual benefit to the warm weather. Mr. Smith noted some return on the Ambassador Program. He said that the combined efforts of the Providence Warwick CVB and the Newport CVB are producing results.

Ms. Sheridan reported that Providence Tourism and the CVB have been working hand in glove. She said that she now serves on a committee looking at branding the City from a different perspective.

Hearing no further discussion, Ms. Venturini entertained a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Mr. Fowler it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn at 2:25 p.m.