

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

July 24, 2007

A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on July 24, 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 and Dave Duffy.

Also in attendance were Jim McCarvill, Betty Sullivan, Emily Moschet and Kerrie Bennett, RICCA; Martha Sheridan, Neil Schriever, Kristen Adamo and Brian Hodge, PWCVB; Arlene Oliva, Tim Muldoon, Nancy Beauchamp and John McGinn, RICC; Cheryl Schadone and Kym Chevian, Dunkin' Donuts Center; David DePetrillo, RIEDC Tourism Division; Evan Smith and Tim Walsh, Newport CVB; Robert C. Bromley, Senate Fiscal and Oversight; Benjamin Gedan, Providence Journal and Eileen Smith, recording secretary.

Ms. Venturini called the session to order at 1:03 p.m. Ms. Venturini sought a motion to approve the minutes of the May meeting. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Duffy and seconded by Mr. Hirsh it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the May meeting.

Ms. Venturini asked Ms. Sheridan to address the Committee. Ms. Sheridan reported that the effort to address street signage for the facilities is moving along. She commented that the Convention Center sign cannot be seen because the trees in front have grown and are in full leaf. Mr. Schriever began the CVB's presentation. Mr. Schriever reported that Fiscal Year 2007 was a great year. The 2007 definite room night bookings were 100,737 compared to last year's 92,452. Mr. Schriever reported that for the month of June, 2007 there were twenty two definite bookings compared with seventeen in June, 2006. Mr. Schriever stated that the City is attracting larger groups because of the increase in hotel supply. Mr. Schriever highlighted upcoming Complex bookings, site inspections, travel and trade shows attended as well as services that were provided to meeting planners and visitors. (power point attached) Ms. Adamo discussed convention services that the CVB provides prior to and during a groups visit to Rhode Island. Ms. Adamo noted that the TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) Convention had crowned a King and Queen during their event and coincidentally the King was a Rhode Island resident. Ms. Adamo noted that there are instances when the Authority's logo needs to be enhanced for publications. She indicated that if the image is small, the logo is difficult to read. Mr. Duffy stated that the Authority does not want the logo changed.

Ms. Venturini asked Cheryl Schadone to present the Dunkin' Donuts

Center highlights. Ms. Schadone informed the Committee about marketing to today's ticket buyer. Ms. Schadone stated that internet marketing has become a major means of reaching our audience. Ms. Schadone explained the way that blogs, podcasts and text messaging could be used to reach like minded groups.

John McGinn reported on marketing activities for the month. Mr. McGinn highlighted several new contracted events such as Community Transportation Expo and the Whole Bead Show as well as repeat business, International Wire and Cable Symposium and the Rhode Island Philharmonic Annual Banquet. Mr. McGinn noted site inspections by the Garden Club of America, Avian Veterinarians and the Employee Assistance Professional Association. Mr. McGinn reported that the 2007 RI Festival of Trees Committee has a new lead designer, Chuck Carberry. Mr. Carberry is the chief designer for the flower show as well as the Roger Williams Park Zoo Designer. Mr. McGinn also reported that our partners for this year's festival are the Rotary Club of Providence and the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless.

Ms. Bennett reported that replacement of the escalator at the AMTRAK station is has been fast tracked and is now scheduled for November. Ms. Bennett also reported that ESPN had requested use of the aerial footage from the Contender event.

RHODE ISLAND TOURISM DIVISION UPDATE

RICCA MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING 7.24.07

DAVID C. DEPETRILLO

Rhode Island's geo-tourism initiative, which was announced in May in cooperation with the National Geographic Society, has attracted considerable national and international attention since the release of an Associated Press article on July 17. Nearly 60 publications have carried the story so far, many with photos of Rhode Island attractions.

DOMESTIC GROUP/PACKAGE MARKETING PROGRAM

An estimated 200 bus tours came to the state for the recent Tall Ships. In addition, there were numerous cruises offering Tall Ship packages.

INTERNATIONAL MARKETING

A Discover New England sales mission is planned for the UK in September

DNE has recently hired a new managing director, Sue Norrington-Davies, who has extensive experience in foreign travel trade.

P.R

Articles- We had a great placement in the Boston Globe two Sunday's ago. Rhode Island's national reputation for culinary treasures got

another boost in the latest edition of Saveur, an upscale publication for food.

WELCOME CENTER

Our hotel reservation phone lines have been operable for about a month at the Rhode Island Welcome Center. In addition to this service the Welcome Center also gets reports of availability daily and they are posted on two flat screens.

RESEARCH

The Tourism Division expects a final report from Global Insight in the next several weeks. This is the new study of the entire tourism/hospitality industry. It will include a regional breakdown as well as a breakdown by business source. It was funded by all of the tourism regions and the state.

SPECIAL PROMOTIONS

The Tourism Division is coordinating Rhode Island's presence at the Eastern States Exposition in West Springfield by operating the Rhode Island Building on the Avenue of States. We greet an estimated 800,000 people at the building during a 17 day run in September

Mr. DePetrillo noted that at this time the United States is a bargain for the European traveler and we are seeing a large number of guests from the United Kingdom and Germany.

Ms. Venturini thanked Mr. DePetrillo.

Evan Smith and Tim Walsh of the Newport CVB addressed the Committee. Mr. Smith noted that the Procaccianti Group had pulled out of their plans for the purchase of Newport Grand and related developments. Mr. Smith said that discussions are on-going concerning the future of the area surrounding the facility. Mr. Duffy reported that TPG Group had received their certificate of occupancy for the new Westin tower. Mr. Smith reported that the CVB had hired a new marketing coordinator. Mr. Walsh noted that tourism in Newport has been a record breaker and there has been a great mix of tourists. Mr. Walsh said that the accessibility of Rhode Island has been a major factor.

Ms. Venturini reminded the Committee that next months meetings would be held on August 28th at 1:00 pm at which time Marketing Plans will be submitted. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Hirsh and seconded by Mr. Duffy it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn at 2:10 p.m.