

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

March 17, 2010

A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on March 17, 2010 pursuant to notice at the Rhode Island Convention Center Boardroom, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

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

Also in attendance were Jim McCarvill, Betty Sullivan and Kim Keough, RICCA; Tim Muldoon, John McGinn and Amanda Marzullo, RICC; Martha Sheridan, Neil Schriever and Kristen Adamo, PWCVB; Larry Lepore, Cheryl Cohen and Jodi Duclos, DDC; Steve Hahl, VMA and Eileen Smith, recording secretary.

Ms. Venturini called the meeting to order at 12:35 PM. Ms. Venturini asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the February meeting. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Hirsh and seconded by Mr. MacDonald it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the February meeting.

Ms. Venturini noted that presentations would be shorter today

because everyone had other tasks to perform for this week's tournament.

Ms. Venturini asked Ms. Keough to update the Committee on the welcome and thank you reception for visiting NCAA Basketball dignitaries and the committee that worked so hard to make the event a success. Ms. Keough reported that the reception would be held in the Rotunda of the Convention Center. She said that representatives from the Big East, Providence College, the NCAA and the schools selected to play in Providence have been invited. Ms. Keough reminded the Committee that all Board members are encouraged to attend. Mr. Hirsh asked if any of the hotel general managers will be in attendance. Ms. Keough said that she was not aware that anyone from the hotels would be here.

CVB

Ms. Venturini recognized Neil Schriever. Mr. Schriever began his Power Point Presentation. Mr. Schriever stated that Convention Center year to date sales activity is higher than the same time period last year. He noted that definite bookings include several meetings and events for the current year and a very large meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations for June 2014. Mr. Schriever reported that the CVB staff is working to sign contracts with the Travel Learning Connections, Electric Power Research Institute, International Association of Culinary Professionals,

Disability Management Employer Coalition and Energetics Incorporated for 2011. Mr. Schriever noted that the CVB staff participated in trade shows, attended events and made sales calls. He said that they attended the Society for Government Meeting Planners, DC Chapter meeting and made sales calls in Chicago, Boston and Cape Cod. Mr. Schriever said that a presentation was made to Helms Briscoe in Greater Boston and clients were treated to a PC Friars basketball game and an event in Boston. Mr. Schriever reported that teams from the Westin, Biltmore, Convention Center and the Crowne Plaza made calls in the DC area. He said they called on the US Department of State, the American Society of Nuclear Cardiology, AASHTO and the Nationals Progressive Baptist Church as well as several other groups. Ms. Adamo reported that total web site visits are up 46% over last year. Ms. Adamo noted that Peter Greenburg will broadcast his radio show live from Providence later this week. She also noted that Destination Providence is now complete and is at the printer. Ms. Adamo reported that a new VIP promotion has been launched aimed at increasing bookings for 2010 and 2011. She presented a picture of the web page and a sample of the offers that our hotels have put together. Mr. Schriever said that they will be added to the CVB's data base for follow up.

Ms. Adamo reported that things are going very well with the NCAA tournament. Ms. Adamo gave a brief description of the preparations being made to assist our tournament guests and the needs of the media. She noted that a CVB member was at every hotel welcoming

the teams. Ms. Venturini asked if other host cities do as much for their guests. Mr. Schriever answered that they do not but that we are looking at this as an opportunity to introduce Rhode Island as a place to visit again in the future. Mr. Hirsh asked if we have any way of keeping in touch with these visitors. Mr. Duffy noted that we are only 1 of 4 sites to sell out the tournament. Mr. Duffy also thanked everyone saying that the buildings look great. Mr. Cappalli stated that everyone worked very hard to get the building back in shape from an extremely busy weekend. Mr. Hirsh asked if the restaurant and the concessions would do well. Ms. Cohen said that the restaurant will not be open and that alcohol will not be sold in the building due to NCAA rules. She said that the area restaurants will benefit greatly from the tournament. Mr. Fowler asked if the concessions are ready for the crowd. Ms. Cohen said that Sportservice is prepared. Mr. Fowler asked if there would be seat service. Mr. McCarvill answered that there would not be seat service. Mr. Hirsh asked if Mr. Crocker had scheduled extra concession staff. Ms. Cohen answered that he had hired staff and also set up extra points of sale. Ms. Venturini commented that we take our food very seriously. Ms. Cohen reported that the suites have ordered a lot of food and alcohol. She said that the suites are the only place where alcoholic beverages are allowed and that they need to be ordered today or on Friday because there is none sold on game days.

DUNKIN' DONUTS CENTER

Ms. Cohen updated the Committee on the Dunkin' Donuts Center's sales and marketing objectives. She noted that the budgeted sales of sponsorships and signage for Fiscal Year 2010 are \$870,923 and we continue to be optimistic that we will reach our goal. Contracts were finalized with VIP Limo and Monster Entertainment. Ms. Cohen said that the staff is negotiating with RI National Guard, Blue Moon and additional advertising with Heineken. Ms. Cohen noted that many advertisers are cutting back until the economy improves. Ms. Cohen reported that sales of the party suites continue to outpace budget projections. She said that suites are currently available for Stars on Ice, Tony Carreira, Ringling Bros. Circus, Alice in Chains and Walking with Dinosaurs. Ms. Cohen reported that efforts continue to expand marketing utilizing new media marketing tools. She said that the goal of the Dunkin' Donuts Center is to increase e-blast subscribers. Ms. Cohen stated that to date e-blast subscriber list has increased by 57,000.

CONVENTION CENTER

John McGinn presented the Convention Center update. He was pleased to report that the Convention Center had reached their revenue goal for the year. Mr. McGinn reported that new tradeshow/convention prospects include IEEE Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition Conference in June 2012 and the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine for April 2012. New meeting prospects are Major League Gaming in August 2010, Re-Focus, Inc.

for May 2010 and RI Technical Assistance Project for May 2010. Mr. Muldoon stated that the sales staff has done a super job with Citizens Bank. He said that Amanda Marzulo has made our available space work in order to accommodate Citizens. Mr. Muldoon wanted that Committee to be aware that the Convention Center is also full this week. He said that the building is being used as the security command center for the tournament; the Mary Kay Conference is here as well as the Saltwater Fishing Show and the 2010 Partnership Conference. Mr. McGinn stated that the Convention Center will be home to Providence Roller Derby this season. Mr. McGinn noted that other tentative events are Jamfest Nationals and the US Finals Cheerleading Event. Mr. MacDonald reported that the IDEW had held an event in the Rotunda that was attended by the International Vice President who was very impressed with the food and the setting. He said that Kathy Masino always does an exceptional job. Ms. Venturini said that the investment in presentations goes a long way.

VMA

Mr. Habl presented photos of Oscar Night America. He stated that people came all dressed up to walk the red carpet. Mr. Habl reported that ABC 6 aired the event and that the photos can be viewed on their web site. Mr. Habl reported that Handel & Hyden has been canceled and that he did not know why the show was not well received. He said that there was enough advertising and that it should have been better received. Mr. Habl reported that word is spreading that the

VMA is a good place for dance competitions. Mr. Habl was pleased to report that there are now 108 contracted events for the VMA for next year and that there are an additional 179 dates on hold. Ms. Venturini thanked Mr. Habl for his efforts. She said that Mr. Habl does a great job.

Mr. Fowler asked if RI Hospitality & Tourism and the Convention Center Authority have taken a position on the movie tax credit. Ms. Venturini said that no position has been taken. Mr. Fowler noted that the tax credits mean a lot of business for the rental car agencies. Mr. MacDonald said that he understood that the credit will not be eliminated.

Mr. McCarvill reported that he had been asked to assist Rhode Island Council for the Arts in their quest to keep their provision for 1% of the construction costs for public buildings for the arts. Mr. Duffy said that he understands that the provision is unchanged in the Governor's budget.

Ms. Venturini asked if there was any other business. Hearing none she asked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Mr. MacDonald it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn at 1:40 pm