

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

April 27, 2010

A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on April 27, 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, Dave Duffy, Paul MacDonald, Letitia Carter, Patrick Butler, Jason Fowler and Jeffrey Hirsh.

Also in attendance were Jim McCarvill, Betty Sullivan and Kim Keough, RICCA; Tim Muldoon, John McGinn, Arlene Oliva and Amanda Marzullo, RICC; Martha Sheridan, Neil Schriever and Kristen Adamo, PWCVB; Larry Lepore, Cheryl Cohen and Jodi Duclos, DDC; J. Malcolm Grear and Joel Grear, Malcolm Grear Designers; Patti Neves, VMA; TeJay McGrath, Megan Tromburg and Mark Brodner, Rhode Island Tourism Division; Alex Campbell, Local 217; Susan Calise, Bank of New York Mellon; Evan Smith, Anne Roberts and Patricia Smurro, Newport CVB 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 March meeting.

Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Fowler and seconded by Mr. Duffy it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the March meeting.

Ms. Venturini noting the many guests at the meeting asked that introductions be made.

Ms. Venturini recognized Letitia Carter. Ms. Carter explained that the VMAF was willing to take on the task of branding for the VMA. She stated that a proposal was submitted by Malcolm Gear Designers to create a new identity for the theater. Mr. Gear presented the firms expertise in the field and provided a brochure of the many facilities that Malcolm Gear Designers have assisted. Mr. Duffy said that he can attest to the fine work done by the design firm. Ms. Carter reported that Malcolm has been inducted into the RI Hall of Fame. Ms. Venturini cautioned that we do not yet know the status of ownership of the VMA. She also stated that the Authority cannot commit to funding the project. Ms. Carter assured that Committee that funding would be provided by the VMAF and their fundraising efforts. Mr. Duffy asked if PFM was part of the branding discussions. Ms. Carter said that they were. Ms. Venturini reiterated that the Authority does not have the funds to invest in branding of the theater. Mr. Duffy asked to be provided with a list of VMAF Board members. Ms. Carter said that she would provide the list and noted that John McGinn, Paul Brooks and Bob Flanders are a few of the members.

Ms. Venturini asked if anyone had any comments or questions. Ms. Keough stated that she would like to be involved because anything that is done with the VMA logo will have an impact on our new web site. She said that the Authority had invested a great deal of time and money into the site and she voiced her concern regarding any changes. Ms. Venturini repeated that we do not know if the building will belong to the Authority. Mr. McCarvill said that we do not know what is in the minds of the Department of Administration. Ms. Carter asked for approval to move forward with the branding. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Duffy and seconded by Mr. Fowler it was unanimously

VOTED: to support the VMAF branding initiative.

Mr. Duffy thanked Mr. Grear for his time.

CVB

Ms. Venturini recognized Neil Schriever. Mr. Schriever began his Power Point Presentation. Mr. Schriever reported that year to date room night production related to the Convention Center has surpassed last year. He noted that definite bookings include several meetings and events for the current year. Mr. Schriever also reported that the Bay Colony Cluster Dog Show would be returning to the Convention Center in December. Mr. Schriever reported that tentative and prospective booking highlights include a hobby association

event, the Bay Colony Cluster Dog Show for December 2011 and 2012 and a fencing event for June 2012. Mr. Schriever said that the sales team had attended the MIC Annual Trade Show in Colorado. He said that the CVB had met with Coach Tass from Brown University on a bid for the US Fencing Association. Mr. Schriever also stated that sales calls were made in the Boston area as well as Washington DC. Kristen Adamo reported that March web site visits were up 49% over last year. She also reported an e-blast with the Hartford Courant to 50,000 people promoting attraction ticket giveaways on Providence's Twitter page. Ms. Adamo noted that the Destination Planning Guide is out to bid. She noted that the CVB is beginning to develop new tradeshow screens and creating a direct mail piece for meeting planners. Ms. Adamo presented a wrap up of the NCAA Tournament. Mr. Schriever stated that the CVB had hosted a March 20th broadcast of Peter Greenberg's radio show live from Providence. He said that they are coordinating invitations to the RI Media Luncheon at the James Beard House in New York City. Mr. Fowler asked if the CVB has plans to use the intermodal in their advertising campaign. Ms. Adamo said that their public relations firm, Lou Hammond & Associates had visited the station and will include it wherever it is appropriate.

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 \$724,098 and we continue to be optimistic that we will reach our goal of \$870,875. Contracts were finalized with RI National Guard and Blue Moon and Heineken and RIPTA added investments to the Dunk. Ms. Cohen said that the staff is negotiating with Newport Storm, New England Copy Specialist, Dave & Busters and CW-28. Ms. Cohen reported that sales of the party suites continue to outpace budget projections. She said that suites are sold for Tony Carreira, Ringling Bros. Circus, Hot Night – Drake and Justin Bieber. Ms. Cohen said that suites are available for Walking with Dinosaurs. Ms. Cohen noted that the public relations objective is to maximize public awareness of events at the Dunkin' Donuts Center. Ms. Cohen stated that to that end representatives from the Circus made appearances on WWLI Morning Show, NBC's Tuesday's Child segment teaching clown makeup to Adoption RI and two segments of the Rhode Show. Ms. Cohen said that in addition to studio appearances the Circus held a luncheon for the media at the Pie Car and visited the Providence Children's Museum and the Warwick Public Library where clowns read to children. CircusFit was at the Holden Elementary School the Thatcher Elementary School, the YMCA in Cranston and through out the first pitch at a Pawsox game. Mr. McCarvill commented that the Big Apple Circus is playing in Boston during our dates for the Ringling Bros. Circus. Ms. Cohen said that she did not think that the Boston Circus would have much of an impact on Providence.

CONVENTION CENTER

John McGinn presented the Convention Center update. He reminded the Committee that the Convention Center had reached their revenue goal for the year and that revenue continues to increase over projections. Mr. McGinn reported that new tradeshow/convention prospects include the Society of Naval Architects & Marine Engineers for October 2012, Machine Quilters Exposition that is expected to repeat annually, the National Association of Oil Heating Service Managers and the American Specialty Toy Retailing Association. New meeting prospects are US Fencing Association, a lead from Brown University Fencing Head Coach. Blue Cross/Blue Shield, York Dental Laboratories, Verizon Wireless and Housing Works RI. Mr. McGinn stated that there are several proms and banquets booked for the coming months. Mr. McGinn reported that the sales team is working to secure the Hearing Loss Association of America Annual Convention and the Educational Travel Conference. Mr. McGinn reported that contracted events include the New England Independent Booksellers Annual Meeting, I-Comercio – Amway, NerComp 2011 and a Monster Mini Dash 5K. Mr. McGinn said that the Convention Center had hosted site ours for the Custom Car Show, New England Genealogical Society, GovEnergy and several other groups. Mr. Hirsh asked if during GovEnergy the rest of the state would be promoted. Mr. McGinn responded that the CVB will put together a package that will include things to do and see covering the entire State.

VMA

Patti Neves presented the VMA's report. Included in her presentation was an excerpt from AMTRAK's publication, Arrive Magazine. She indicated that the VMA is featured in the publication that is distributed on all AMTRAK trains in the Northeast. Ms. Neves noted that the theater will be the site of six high school graduations a dance competition and the RISD Annual Apparel Collection. Ms. Neves also noted that Bryan Adams will be appearing on June 11th. Ms. Neves reported that occupancy has increased and that the building will be occupied 20 out of the 31 days in May. Ms. Neves stated that she would be participating with the Convention Center and the Dunkin' Donuts Center team at the Business Expo. She reported that the VMA is developing a data base using Ms. Carter's invitee lists and the dance, music and performing arts departments of local schools and prior patron lists. Ms. Neves noted that the Commonwealth Opera visited the theater and that they are looking to add Providence events to their calendar. Mr. Butler asked if the Convention Center and the Dunkin' Donuts Center shares their data base. Ms. Cohen noted that it would be difficult because the VMA uses a different ticketing system. Ms. Venturini stated that the target audiences are very different. Ms. Neves stated that PPAC shares their data base and that the VMA is included in PPAC's mailings. Mr. McCarvill asked who owns our data base. Mr. Lepore said that we paid for the list and we have a license agreement but there are certain things that can't be done. Ms. Keough noted that we don't want people to think that our

mailings are spam.

RIEDC

Mark Brodner reported that some members of the International Travel Writers were unable to participate in the recent visit to the Northeast. He noted that there were visitors from China that were receptive to the area. He noted that Rhode Island will be featured in three publications. Mr. Brodner reported that tour Rhode Island is being well received again this year. Mr. Brodner reminded the Committee of the Tourism Luncheon that is being held on May 12th at the Crowne Plaza in Warwick. Mr. Brodner invited interested parties to a roundtable discussion on strategic planning to be held either Wednesday, May 19 from 2:00 to 5:00 or Thursday, May 20th from 9:00 to 12:00 at the Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts Museum. Mr. Brodner said that Rhode Island Tourism is looking at what drives visitors to our state and where do we go to increase tourism. Mr. Brodner stated that working with Keith Stokes has been a pleasure and that he understands that tourism is a very important source of revenue for the state.

NEWPORT CVB

Mr. Smith introduced members of the Newport CVB sales team. Ms. Venturini welcomed Mr. Smith's guests. Mr. Smith reported that there appears to be a renewed interest in the meeting market. He stated

that he is seeing positive signs that the meeting business is moving in the right direction. Mr. Smith reported that Newport is waiting for word from the America's Cup people.

WEB SITE AND PR

Ms. Keough reported that there will be web site training for those responsible for upkeep in May. Ms. Keough reported that she has contacted representatives of the Roller Derby, Cinderella and the GI Joe Convention and offered her assistance in promoting the events. Ms. Keough noted that the photo project is going well and that the photographer has been able to get some very good shots of events. Ms. Keough stated that she is looking at various media tracking or monitoring services. Ms. Carter asked Ms. Keough how contact is made with the artists or groups that have events in the Complex. Ms. Keough responded that she initiates the conversations and offers her help.

Ms. Venturini reported that there is a rally at the State House on Thursday at 4:00 PM to draw attention to the proposal to take away money from job training. She asked that everyone contact their representatives to express their displeasure in the idea that, especially at this time of high unemployment, they could be thinking of reducing or doing away with training for jobs.

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. Hirsh it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn at 2:05 pm