

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

January 25, 2011

A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on January 25, 2011, 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, Jeff Hirsh, Jason Fowler, Paul MacDonald and Letitia Carter.

Also in attendance were Jim McCarvill, Betty Sullivan and Kim Keough, RICCA; Tim Muldoon, John McGinn, Arleen Oliva, Amanda Marzullo and Melissa Masunic, RICC; Martha Sheridan, Neil Schriever and Kristen Adamo, PWCVB; Cheryl Cohen, and Jodi Duclos, DDC; Steve Habl, VMA; Mark Brodner, RIEDC; Tim Walsh, Even Smith and Laurie Stroll, Newport CVB; Michael Nugent, House of Representatives; Bruce Leach, Legal Counsel 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 December Marketing Committee meeting.

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

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the December meeting.

Public Relations/Marketing

Ms. Keough addressed the Committee. She reported that plans for launching the new VETS logo are underway. Ms. Keough said that she has met with Mr. Duffy and will be meeting with PPAC to review the plans. Pricing for collateral material has been received. Ms. Keough said that the rollout will take place and the end of February. Ms. Keough reported that training in the use of the photo gallery will take place next week. Ms. Keough noted that she has assisted the promoters of the Motorcycle Show, the Boat Show and Athletic Cheer with media coverage. She stated that she worked closely with a New York promoter on the Bethany Frankel event at the VMA.

Conversations ensued regarding the status of PC ticket sales. It was noted that opportunities must be presented and acted upon to rebuild the fan base and improve the image projected to the public, especially with televised games and the front end of the season. Ms. Keough stated that she had met with PC and Ms. Cohen to form a marketing strategy for next year.

Mr. Duffy reported that there have been some complaints regarding

lines at the concession stands. He suggested a cash only “express” line especially for the beer stand. Ms. Venturini mentioned had held scanners, pre-orders or “express” for speed and convenience. Ms. Venturini asked Ms. Cohen to follow up with Sport Service on new technology to expedite transactions at the stands.

PWCVB

Ms. Venturini asked Mr. Schriever to present the CVB’s report. Mr. Schriever discussed room occupancy and said that room night production is down from last year. Mr. Schriever noted that Convention Center related bookings are also down to last year. Mr. Schriever reported on travel and trade shows that the CVB attended in December and January and noted that several proposals were obtained for future events. Mr. Schriever reported that representatives of Major League Gaming, USA Gymnastics and the National Tax Association made site visits. Ms. Adamo stated that new advertising was created for the RI Sports Commission and that VMA events were promoted as part of Providence for the Holidays radio contest. Discussion ensued regarding public relations. Ms. Adamo stated that they leveraged Patriots playoffs into promoting the Kennedy Hockey Tournament, promoted Athletic Championships at the Convention Center and hosted a FAM trip for meetings media. Ms. Adamo noted that Providence Restaurant Week will have about 65 restaurants participating. She reported that this has become a very successful event.

Ms. Sheridan reported that the PWCVB has been advertising Providence for the Holidays and has promoted the City with ticket giveaways to VMA events on the radio and television. Ms. Sheridan noted that her staff is developing new ads for the Sports Commission. She stated that they are looking at ways to augment the sports advertising budget.

Ms. Sheridan said that the new web site is nearing completion and a new CRM is being tied to the site.

Ms. Sheridan was pleased to report that Providence scored big in Travel & Leisure's "America's Favorite Cities". Planning for upcoming dates include Valentine's Day, January Restaurant Week and the football playoffs. She stated that we host teams and press in Providence because of the ease of getting to and from Foxborough. Ms. Sheridan said that My Providence video contest will run from February 1st through April 1st. She also noted that Providence Restaurant Week, "Take a Bite Out of Winter," will be held January 23rd through the 29th with about 60 restaurants participating.

Dunkin' Donuts Center

Ms. Cohen reported that Boston Beer, Ketel One, Cuervo Tequila, Harpoon, Miller Lite and Budweiser had contracted this month for sponsorships or signage. She noted that AXE, Pandora, Bernie &

Phyl's, Roger Williams Medical, Blue Moon, Coors and Heineken are still in negotiations but it appears that those contracts will be signed shortly. Ms. Cohen reported that Ms. Duclos is doing a great job of filling the Party Suites and Restaurant during events. She noted that select games for Providence College Basketball, WWE – RAW and Indoor Auto Racing have been sold. Ms. Cohen said that other PC games are available as well as select shows of Disney on Ice. Also available at this time are Inside the Game, Monster Jam, Santamaria, Stars on Ice and the Harlem Globetrotters. Mr. McCarvill asked if the restaurant would be open during Disney on Ice. Ms. Cohen said that it would not. Ms. Cohen explained the Media objectives. Ms. Cohen reported on the number of e-mails deployed and the number of tickets sold as a result of those e-mails. She said that the staff wants to maximize our social media tools. Ms. Cohen reported that the goal for 2011 was to increase the database by 10,000 new subscribers, deploy over 60 e-blasts and obtain 3,000 “likes” on Facebook. She said that they are well on their way to meeting their goals. Mr. Hirsh asked how often e-blasts are sent out. Ms. Cohen said that lately quite a few. Mr. Duffy asked if they land as SPAM and Ms. Cohen answered that they do not because the recipient has opted in to receive them.

Convention Center

John McGinn reported a positive trend in the meetings market. Mr. McGinn noted that the fiscal year 2011 revenue goal is \$8.5 million

and that he is confident that they will reach their goal. Mr. McGinn stated that the sales team is working to secure several meetings and events. Mr. McGinn said that there have been numerous site tours during the months of October and November.

Mr. Muldoon stated that Ms. Oliva has had some very good conversations with Fidelity.

VMA

Ms. Carter reported that Sweet Honey was a very good performance. Mr. Habl stated that the audience was very receptive. Ms. Carter noted that the VMAF is planning a diversity Festival in May. She said that the VMA will host a variety of local talent that will represent the culture of different groups. Mr. Habl stated that he had some discussions on the upcoming inaugural. He said that the VMA has been chosen to hold the inaugural if we have inclement weather.

Mr. Habl noted that the VMA had very good financial statements in November. Mr. Duffy stated that the theater seems to be coming to life and that we have a lot of hope for the future.

Mr. Habl said that there are still many problems within the building but he is working through them. Mr. Habl thanked Ms. Tuton and the Convention Center for the power washer.

Mr. Duffy noted that Mr. Habl is doing a great job and is working very hard.

Mr. McCarvill updated the Committee on the renovations to the theater. He said that the lighting and sound specifications were posted to the State Purchasing Web Site and that bids are do this week. Mr. McCarvill reported that Dimeo Construction has been hired to perform pre-construction management services. Mr. McCarvill noted that Michael Abbott would address the Convention Center Committee and display a model of the new VMA.

Public Relations/Marketing

Ms. Keough distributed her monthly report. She noted that the Annual Report had been delivered and would be mailed within the next few days. Ms. Keough also reported that she has been working with Artlab on a photo gallery for our Web-site.

Ms. Keough spoke about the launch of the new VMA logo. She said that if everything is on schedule the rollout will take place in late February. Ms. Keough noted that she is preparing and prioritizing a list of the necessary collateral for the theater and is looking at prices for signs and banners.

Ms. Keough described the marketing and earned media that occurred for recent events. She noted that the Dog Show received great media

attention. Mr. Duffy asked the status of the Dog Show. Mr. McGinn said that the jury is out on whether they will return. He said that some of the show's committee would like to see it return to Boston. Mr. McGinn stated that although the show received a great deal of press during the event there was very little advertising done by the promoters.

Discussions ensued regarding the cross promoting of events on the VMA, RICCA and PPAC Web-sites.

Mr. Duffy thanked the Committee. He asked if there was any other business. Hearing none he asked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Carter and seconded by Mr. Hirsh it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn at 1:55 PM