

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

February 21, 2012

A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on February 21, 2012, pursuant to notice at the Rhode Island Convention Center, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

Board members present were Committee Chairman, Dale Venturini, Jeff Hirsh, Jim Bennett and Patrick Butler.

Also in attendance were Jim McCarvill and Betty Sullivan, RICCA; Tim Muldoon, John McGinn, Melissa Avedisian and Amanda Wilmouth, RICC; Martha Sheridan and Kristin McGrath, PWCVB; Steve Habl, VETS; Larry Lepore, Cheryl Cohen, Kayla Beauvais and Kaitlyn Bizier, DDC; Michael Nugent, House Fiscal Office and Eileen Smith, recording secretary.

Ms. Venturini called the meeting to order at 12:30 and asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the January Marketing Committee meeting. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Hirsh and seconded by Mr. Butler it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the January meeting

CVB

Ms. Venturini asked Kristin McGrath to begin the PWCVB report. Ms. McGrath reminded the Committee that Mr. Bennett had asked for Smith Travel Research's report. Ms. McGrath included Providence Hotel performance for the month of January in her report as well as the 2011 year end report that indicated Providence Hotels are doing well within the area market. She said that Boston leads the way in both occupancy and rate but Providence comes out ahead of the National average and Hartford. Ms. McGrath report indicated that sales activity for the Convention Center resulted in only 1 definite booking that will produce approximately 2,856 room nights. Ms. McGrath noted that the CVB is working to secure 11 tentative bookings that include the Association of College and University Housing Officers, the American Massage Therapy Association, TASH, the Land Trust Alliance and the National Association of Biology Teachers. Ms. McGrath reported that the CVB had made sales calls in Baltimore where they contacted 16 associations and obtained the RFP for the National Association of Biology Teachers 2014 Conference. She reported that upcoming site inspections will take place with the Lifeway Christian Resources and Bruhan Maharashtra Mandal of NA. Ms. McGrath noted pre-planning meetings are being held with the Convention Center staff for Netroots Nation.

Ms. Sheridan addressed the committee and said that the CVB had partnered with the RI Airport Corporation advertising Providence on

sports radio in Denver and Baltimore during the NFL playoffs. Ms. Sheridan noted that the CVB staff wrote the script for a commercial highlighting a boxing event at the Convention Center and developed an e-blast promoting catering services for tradeshow. Ms. Sheridan stated that he staff is creating a Twitter account for the RI Sports Commission as well as launching a new website for the Commission. Ms. Sheridan reported that the CVB is filming a video tour of the Convention Center.

Conversations ensued regarding promoting Providence, because of the proximity of Providence College, RI College, a URI satellite campus and Johnson & Wales, as a college campus for concerts and sporting events. Mr. Bennett noted that he had met with Scott Hanley of AEG while in Los Angeles and discussed the difficulties we are facing with our competition. Mr. Butler stated that he was extremely impressed with the effort made by the Dunk staff while at the conference in LA. Mr. Butler asked Ms. Sheridan if she has concerns about the gas prices. Ms. Sheridan said that the high prices never help.

Discussion ensued regarding the available space and what we might do to increase the number of meeting rooms and parking space opportunities. Mr. Bennett suggested that we look into connecting to the Hilton. Mr. McCarvill said that the connection had been investigated during renovation of the Dunk and it was decided that it was not cost effective. Ms. Venturini suggested that we concentrate

our effort on the empty Fogarty building across the street.

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DUNKIN' DONUTS CENTER

Ms. Venturini called upon Cheryl Cohen to present the Dunkin' Donuts Center report. Ms. Cohen stated that she had prepared a step by step sales tutorial to show how an event or concert is contracted. (Power point attached). Ms. Cohen reported that the call can be one that we place or come from a promoter, SMG Corporate Booking, Agents and Agency. She said that we check for available dates and check the booking window for non-compete and radius restrictions. Ms. Cohen stated that the house is then scaled and a proforma is prepared including expenses and gross potential. Ms. Cohen noted that during negotiations it is determined if the show will be a co-promotion, a rental or a buy out and what our share will be of merchandise and food and beverage. Ms. Cohen said that once the show is under contract and announced the work begins on promoting the event. Included in the presentation is a sample booking sheet. Mr. Butler stated that he had accompanied Cheryl, Larry, Jim Bennett and Deb Polselli to the Polstar convention and said that Deb Polselli, keeper of the booking book, is never without it. Mr. Hirsh asked who pays the advertising expense. Ms. Cohen said that it depends on the contract. Mr. Butler asked why we pay ASCAP. Ms. Cohen noted that some artists might not have their own written material therefore we pay ASCAP. Ms. Cohen reported on upcoming events. She said that other than games from our tenants we will have Monster Jam, Indoor

Auto Racing, Wrestlemania, the Globetrotters, New Edition and the Circus coming soon. He said that she would be able negotiations new association with PSE is working well. She noted that the large PSE staff is concentrating on group and suite sales. She said that since a Power Point Presentation was not possible she would make her presentation at a future meeting. Ms. Cohen reported that she, along with Mr. Bennett, Mr. Butler, Mr. Lepore and Deb Polselli would be attending the Pollstar event in LA at the beginning of February. Ms. Cohen stated that Pollstar is the premiere event for getting face time with agents, promoters and industry decision makers. Ms. Cohen reported that information will be available for artists that are scheduling tours and opportunities to promote the arena.

Mr. Lepore distributed an on sale concert comparison with our area competitors. Mr. Lepore noted that our biggest competitor is Mohegan Sun and that we have attempted to book several of the same artist but we can't match their guarantee. He noted that Mohegan Sun is also feeling the effect of the slow economy.

CONVENTION CENTER

Mr. McGinn presented the Convention Center's report. Mr. McGinn reported that the 2012 revenue goals for the Convention Center are \$8.7 million. Mr. McGinn said that in order to reach that goal \$708,804.63 in new business is needed. Mr. McGinn reported that the Convention Center sales staff had contracted several events during

the month. He noted that the Northeast Roller Derby Convention would be held in the building in May, the American Society of Plant Biologists in July 2013, the Rock & Roll Marathon in August 2012 and 2013, the New England Broadcast & Cable Expo in October, the North American Association of State & Provincial Lotteries in September, 2013 and the CVS Charity Classic Dinner Gala in June 2012. Mr. McGinn noted that the sales team had attended an IAEE New England Event in Boston and also traveled to Boston on a sales mission and an MPI New England Event. Mr. McGinn said that the sales team would conduct site tours for several groups in the upcoming months. Mr. McGinn distributed a new sales and marketing initiative promoting the building to Rhode Island High Schools for their proms. Mr. McGinn noted that a tasting was held in February and that attendees from 5 high schools participated.

VETS

Mr. Habl reported that the first phase of construction at the VETS is wrapping up and that there have been some remarkable improvements to the building. Mr. Habl said that we can now look to attracting acts from the Actors Equity because we now meet their standards. Mr. Habl noted that he continues to struggle with attendance although there have been some very good performances. Mr. Habl reported on coming events that include Colin & Brad, Death Cab for Cuties, Human Nature, a Mowtown Show as well as several performances by the RI Philharmonic Orchestra.

Ms. Venturini asked if there was any further business. Hearing none she looked 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 1:50 PM