

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

**January 20, 2015**

**A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on August 28, 2014, pursuant to notice at the Rhode Island Convention Center, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.**

**Board members present were Dale Venturini, Jeff Hirsh, Paul MacDonald and Jim Bennett.**

**Also in attendance were Jim McCarvill, Kim Keough and Betty Sullivan, RICCA; John McGinn, Amanda Wilmouth, Arlene Oliva, Dianne Richards and Kathleen Masino, RICC; Martha Sheridan, Kristen Adamo, Christopher Breslin, and Kristin McGrath, PWCVB; Daniel Schwartz and Michael Gravison, VETS; Cheryl Cohen, John Ciofli and Larry Lepore, RICC/DDC and Eileen Smith, recording secretary.**

**Ms. Venturini called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM**

**RICCA**

**Ms. Keough distributed her report and stated that a draft of the Economic Impact Study is in the review process and should be**

available soon. Ms. Keough reported on the Feed 1000 event and discussion followed.

## **PWCVB**

Ms. Venturini recognized Kristin McGrath who began the CVB's presentation. Ms. McGrath reported on Providence Hotel Performance for the month of December and noted that occupancy was down slightly to the previous year but the average daily rate is holding steady. Ms. McGrath said that for the year both occupancy and average daily rate are higher. Ms. McGrath reported that Convention Center related room night bookings are down for the month but last year we had an exceptional piece of business that was a one time opportunity. Ms. McGrath stated that the CVB staff has contracted with several groups that include Society of Wetland Scientists, Northeast Retail Lumber Association and the National Association of College & University Food Services. Tentative groups include the American Psychiatric Nurses Association, the American Society of Animal Science and the Conference of Grand Masters of Masons.

Kristen Adamo then addressed the Committee and presented the marketing activity highlights for the month. Ms. Adamo reported that the CVB is partnering with the RI Airport Corporation and the Providence Economic Development on an insert for the May issue of Southwest Airlines' in-flight magazine. Ms. Adamo stated that the

**CVB is also working with Zagat on a guide to Providence. Ms. Adamo noted that a new sales brochure for the Vets was created and an electronic bid book for group tours is nearing completion. Mr. Hirsh asked if Southwest also works with Lou Hammond. Ms. Adamo said that they do not.**

**Discussion ensued regarding plans for a New Year's Eve event. Mr. McCarvill said that if there is going to be an event we need to get planning right away. Ms. Keough asked that she and Ms. Cohen be included in any discussions.**

#### **DUNKIN' DOUNTS CENTER**

**Ms. Cohen updated the Committee on the Dunkin' Donuts Center events. Ms. Cohen reported that the final media push for Nuclear Cowboyz is taking place and was pleased to report that over 90 VIP packages have been sold. Ms. Cohen also reported that the media schedule for Monster Jam which will be here in February is running, social media campaign is underway and press events are being scheduled. Ms. Cohen reported that we are looking to bring X Factor back but it has not been decided if the show will continue. Ms. Cohen said that the WWE pre-sale is going well. Mr. Hirsh asked if there was a way to track ticket sales for our events in Massachusetts. Ms. Cohen said yes, through Ticketmaster. Ms. Cohen stated that other upcoming events that the marketing staff is working on include the Harlem Globetrotters, Ringling Bros. & Barnum and Bailey Circus,**

**WWE Live and Cirque Du Soleil. Discussion ensued regarding in-kind contributions. Ms. Cohen informed the Committee that the Dunkin' Donuts Center is committed to community service. She noted that over 1,000 tickets have been donated worth an estimated value in excess of \$50,000. Ms. Cohen also reported that Dunkin' Donuts employees donated 500 plus hours to the Tiger Balletto Fundraiser and 75 plus hours for Feed 1,000.**

**Discussion ensued regarding the difficulty we are having in attracting concerts. Mr. Lepore said that Feld goes directly to the market and that we have made several offers that looked good and Mohegan Sun will match our offer plus. Mr. Lepore said that PSE is still selling mostly family shows. He said that we have built a great family show market.**

**Mr. Bennett noted that Johnson & Wales will be playing a hockey game in the arena and asked if anyone is promoting the game. Mr. Lepore said that PSE is working with the college but attendance is not looking promising. He said that if we get 2,000 fans it will be considered a success.**

## **CONVENTION CENTER**

**Mr. McGinn was asked to present the report for the Convention Center. Mr. McGinn stated that the revenue goal for the year is \$9 million and that currently we are at \$9,356,433 million. Mr. McGinn**

said that tentative events through January include PWCVB Ambassador Luncheon scheduled for March, the 2014 Pro-Start Competition and a Press Conference. Mr. McGinn reported that contracted events for that time period are Verizon Wireless Sales Kick-Off, Kids Fun Fair and National Grid Leadership Meeting. Mr. McGinn informed the committee that the sales staff had attended IAEE Expo! Expo! in Houston, Texas. Mr. McGinn noted that several site tours took place since the last meeting. Mr. McGinn reported that representatives of UUA, New Harvest Coffee Roasters, Acoustical Society of America, National Voluntary Organization Active in Disaster and the Warehousing Education and Research Council visited the Complex. Mr. McGinn said that the recent cheerleading event was awesome and had great economic impact on the Mall. Mr. Bennett asked how many days the Convention Center is occupied. Mr. McGinn stated that the building is occupied most days during this season. He said that it is becoming increasingly difficult to accommodate public shows. He said that everyone wants the same days.

## **VETS**

Mr. Schwartz reported on events at the VETS. Mr. Schwartz presented December highlights. He said that attendance for events has steadily increased. Mr. Schwartz presented an event update indicating a variety of entertainment that has been booked for the remainder of the year. Mr. Schwartz also presented upcoming shows

that are being performed by our tenants or promoted by our tenants. Mr. Schwartz noted that the renovations are going smoothly and he is looking forward to entertaining the Commissioners when the building is ready.

Mr. McCarvill noted that the entertainment dollar is being stretched during the Christmas Season. He noted that the Vets had the Messiah, Trinity has A Christmas Carol, the Boston Pops at PPAC and this year we had Donny and Marie. Mr. McCarvill said that they are all good stuff but cautioned against placing more options in the market for a limited entertainment budget.

Mr. Bennett asked Mr. McCarvill to explain the Wayfinding project that we have been asked to participate in. Mr. McCarvill stated that the Downtown Improvement District has asked the Authority to support the signage project with a pledge of \$50,000. Discussion ensued regarding what the project entails and other venues and organizations that have been asked to participate. Mr. Hirsh asked if the project has gone out for bid. Mr. McCarvill stated that the project has not gone out for bid because DID wants to make sure that they can raise the funds. Mr. MacDonald stated that he would like more information. Mr. McCarvill stated that he would like to see the current obsolete signs updated. Mr. McCarvill also stated that we do not have the cash right now and he has some concerns regarding directing more funds to DID. Mr. Bennett recommended that Mr. Bauduoin speak to the Board on the necessity of new signage. Mr.

**MacDonald agreed with Mr. Bennett. Mr. McCarvill said that we could be \$36,000 participants paying over 3 years and including a line item in our budget that is presented to the Budget Office.**

**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. Hirsh and seconded by Mr. Bennett it was unanimously**

**VOTED: to adjourn at 1:30 PM**