

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY 313th  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS February 28, 2008**

**A meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority (hereinafter referred to as "Authority", the "CCA" or the "Board") was held on February 28, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. pursuant to notice, at the Rhode Island Convention Center Boardroom, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.**

**Board members present were Chairman, David A. Duffy, Commissioners, Jeff Hirsh, Bernie Buonanno, Patrick Butler, Paul MacDonald, Dale Venturini and Marianne Corr.**

**Mr. Nee and Mr. Fowler were unable to attend.**

**Also present were James P. McCarvill, Executive Director, Betty Sullivan, Ken Mancuso and Kerrie Bennett, Rhode Island Convention Center Authority; Bruce Leach, Legal Counsel; Deb Tuton and Nancy Beauchamp and John McGinn, SMG/RICC; Larry Lepore, Eleanor SanAntonio, Cheryl Schadone and Kym Chevian, SMG/DDC; Neil Schriever and Martha Sheridan, PWCVB; Steve Duvel, Gilbane; Eric Ahlborg, ABM; Kevin Madigan, Senate Fiscal Office; Ben Gedan, Projo, and Eileen Smith, Recording Secretary. CALL TO ORDER**

**Recognizing a quorum, Chairman Duffy called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.**

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Chairman Duffy noting that there was no meeting held in January entertained a motion to accept the minutes of the 312th meeting, December, 2007. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Ms. Venturini it was unanimously VOTED: to approve the minutes as distributed**

**Chairman Duffy instructed the Authority office to send the approved minutes to the Secretary of State's Office via electronic mail.**

**Mr. Duffy asked Mr. McCarvill to present the consolidated financial review. Mr. McCarvill stated that consolidated Year to Date Net Income/Loss was positive \$123,570 to budget and negative (\$412,551) to the previous year due to not receiving \$1,500,000 from the State. Mr. McCarvill reported that consolidated Net Income/Loss for the period was negative (\$235,729) to budget. Mr. McCarvill noted that Net Income/Loss for the Dunkin' Donuts Center for the month of January was negative (\$159,632) to budget and positive \$2,493 to the prior year. He noted that the loss was attributable to lower than expected event revenue and increased labor and utility expenses. Mr. McCarvill reported that Year to Date Net Income/Loss at the Dunkin' Donuts Center was negative (\$446,265) to budget and positive \$178,811 to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill stated that utilities costs have had a negative impact however, we have recognized better than expected revenue for suite rental and catering. Mr. McCarvill stated that Net Income for the Convention Center for the month of January**

was positive \$4,556 to budget and \$100,548 to the prior year primarily due to higher event and Food and Beverage revenue. Year to Date Net Income was positive \$470,793 to budget and positive \$518,185 to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill stated that the better than budget expectations is due to maintaining indirect costs and an adjustment to unemployment taxes as well as an improvement in event revenue.

## **DUNKIN' DONUTS CENTER**

Mr. Buonanno reported that the Dunkin' Donuts Center Committee had met on Tuesday. He reported a spirited discussion of Sportservice. Mr. Buonanno asked Mr. Lepore to address the Board. Mr. Lepore reported that dissatisfaction with food quality and customer service has dramatically increased this month. He noted that we provided a well equipped kitchen, restaurant and concessions that have been opened for two months and Sportservice has yet to hire a chef or catering manager. Mr. Lepore stated that the chefs that have worked in the building, although top notch, have been sent from other venues and do not have the same commitment as a permanent chef. Mr. Lepore noted that Sportservice General Manager has not responded to complaints from patrons. Mr. McCarvill reported that he had spoken with Jerry Freed who has a good grasp of the situation. He noted that Sportservice has had to deal with some construction issues but those issues were resolved immediately after opening and enough time has elapsed to correct the service problems. Mr. Lepore reported that most of the complaints are from suite and restaurant

patrons. Mr. MacDonald asked what can be done if the issues can't be resolved. Mr. Leach answered that we can take a look at the contract although the original contract was negotiated by the City. Mr. Lepore stated that since the suite opening things have deteriorated. Mr. Duffy stated that the Authority considers this situation to be of the highest priority. Mr. McCarvill stated that Sportservice will be invited to meet with Commissioners in the next few weeks to address our concerns.

Mr. Lepore reported that the benefit concert for the Station Nightclub fire victims was a humbling experience. He stated that he was very proud of the complex's staff, both union and non-union for donating their time to make the evening a success. Mr. Lepore reported that the concert will be televised on VH1 on Easter Sunday. Mr. Lepore noted that the media occupied 400 hotel rooms in the area and had good economic impact on local hotels and restaurants. Mr. Lepore reported that promoters of ultimate fighting have been in contact with him. Mr. Lepore said that there is interest in changing the law in Rhode Island to allow these events. Mr. Lepore noted that the grand re-opening will happen on September 5th with a ribbon cutting ceremony followed by an open house on September 6th. Mr. Lepore stated that he is working with Live Nation and Frank J. Russo to book two concerts for the opening weekend. Mr. Duffy reminded Mr. Lepore of the importance of detailed plans for the re-opening.

Mr. Duvel noted that a copy of the project status report had been

included in the Board package. He reported that the last of the concession stands had been turned over to Sportservice. Mr. Duvel stated that recycling efforts had resulted in significant savings. Mr. Duvel also stated that the bid packages for exterior painting had gone out and the bid opening would take place on March 27th.

Ms. Bennett reported that she has been working on the schedule for seat replacement. She also reported that she has met with Tom Deller regarding placement of the War Memorial and spoken with the State Council for the Arts concerning our arts project.

Mr. Ahlborg reported a positive month. He said that the budget looks good and the bridge is functioning well. Mr. Ahlborg noted that the punch list is being addressed and that no hazardous materials had been detected during the month.

## **CONVENTION CENTER COMMITTEE**

Ms. Corr reported that although she was unable to attend the Convention Center Committee had also met on Tuesday. Ms. Corr asked Ms. Tuton to address the Board. Ms. Tuton reported that since electrical service has been expanded at the Dunkin' Donuts Center she had contacted her utilities consultant to investigate getting better utility rates because of the increased volume. Ms. Tuton reported that the phone system for the complex will be merged and new equipment has been ordered. Mr. Duffy asked Ms. Tuton if she would

bring to the April meeting a schedule of savings due to the synergy between the buildings. Ms. Tuton noted that she has been working with Gilbane to obtain the warranty information on the new equipment at the Dunk. Mr. MacDonald asked if anyone had looked in renewable energy. Ms. Tuton responded that it was looked at in the past and that we do have the infrastructure. She said that she would take another look. Ms. Tuton stated that a survey is being done of area parking rates and that a report would be presented in March.

## **MARKETING COMMITTEE**

Ms. Venturini reported that the Marketing Committee had met on Tuesday. She asked Mr. McGinn to address the Board. Mr. McGinn stated that the sales staff has been concentrating on filling the building during the historically slow months. Mr. McGinn noted that there are several tentative bookings that are interested in the facilities for the months that are normally down. Mr. McGinn reported that the Convention Center is participating in a peanut butter drive for the Rhode Island Community Food Bank.

Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Buonanno left at 10:00 am.

Ms. Venturini asked Ms. Sheridan and Mr. Schriever to address the Board. Ms. Sheridan reported that taxi cab driver training had taken place at Airport Taxi. She was pleased to report that the training went very well and that the drivers were receptive. Ms. Sheridan also

noted that brochures and tourism information will be placed in the cabs for our visitors. Ms. Sheridan reported on a successful job shadow day. Ms. Venturini stated that the job shadow day was a great opportunity to showcase the tourism industry. Ms. Venturini reported that Green Hospitality training for hotels has begun and hotel management is enthusiastically on board. She thanked Mr. Gedan for his article in the Providence Journal. Mr. Schriever reported on a new marketing partnership with Baton Rouge, LA Raleigh, NC, St. Paul, MN and Providence. He said that although the cities are culturally distinct and geographically diverse their facilities are similar in size and amenities. Mr. Schriever said that we target the same key markets and together we will have the ability to co-op our destinations. Mr. Schriever thanked Mr. Lepore for all his efforts with Synchronized Skating. Mr. Duffy recognized the great job that is being done by John Gibbons with the sports market.

Ms. Schadone echoed Mr. Lepore's comments regarding the Station Nightclub Fire Concert. She said that there was amazing press coverage both national and regional. Ms. Schadone noted that PBS will also broadcast the concert. Ms. Schadone said that Monster Jam should sell out all shows.

Mr. Duffy reported that an RFP for management of the Veterans Memorial Auditorium had been issued. He said that we had been asked to look into the feasibility of absorbing the facility. Mr. Duffy noted that three or four groups had participated in the pre-bid

walkthrough. Mr. Duffy stated that the theater is in good shape but the office space is not good. Mr. McCarvill said that more information will be available next month. Mr. Duffy noted that anything that is done will take coordination with the Legislature and the VMA Foundation. He continued that the asset fits with our mission and the asset needs to be saved.

Hearing no other business Chairman Duffy sought a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Ms. Corr it was unanimously

**VOTED: to adjourn at 10:10 a.m.**