

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY 336th  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS January 28, 2010**

**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 January 28, 2010 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 Duffy, Commissioners, David Gavitt, Jeff Hirsh, Bernie Buonanno, Letitia Carter, Patrick Butler, George Nee, Jason Fowler, William Daugherty, Paul MacDonald and Dale Venturini.**

**Also present were James P. McCarvill, Executive Director, Betty Sullivan, and Ken Mancuso, Rhode Island Convention Center Authority; Bruce Leach, Legal Counsel; Tim Muldoon, Kathy Masino and Nancy Beauchamp, SMG/RICC; Larry Lepore, Bob Cappalli and Cheryl Cohen, SMG/DDC; Steve Habl, VMA; Hank Abate and Jon Petrunick, SMG Corporation; Tom Crocker, Sportservice; Neil Schriever, PWCVB; Joseph Solomon, House Policy Office; Robert Bromley, Senate Fiscal Office; Julie Gavitt, Guest and Eileen Smith, Recording Secretary.**

**Chairman Duffy called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Mr. Duffy entertained a motion to accept and approve the minutes of**

**the 335th meeting, December, 2009. Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Venturini and seconded by Mr. Butler it was unanimously VOTED: to approve the minutes as distributed**

**Mr. Duffy instructed the Authority office to send the approved minutes to the Secretary of State's Office via electronic mail. Mr. Duffy announced that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, February 25, 2010 at 9:00 AM.**

**Mr. Duffy congratulated Mr. Nee on his appointment by the Governor to the RIEDC Board.**

**Mr. Duffy asked Mr. McCarvill to present the financial information. Mr. McCarvill noted that the VMA net income for the month of December was (\$17,673) to budget. Mr. McCarvill reported the Year to Date net income was (\$72,086) to budget and \$23,430 to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill said that the Defending the Caveman and Celtic Sojourn were disappointing events and contributed to the VMA's unfavorable variance. Mr. McCarvill noted that the need to rent equipment is having a negative affect on revenue. Mr. McCarvill reported that the Convention Center net income for the month of December was \$67,186 to budget and (\$51,104) to the prior year. Year to date net income was \$613,311to budget and \$802,421 to the previous year. Mr. McCarvill stated that Food & Beverage and ancillary income exceeded budget expectations mainly due to the Bay Colony Dog Show. Mr. McCarvill reported that cost saving methods**

continue to produce good results. Mr. McCarvill stated that the Dunkin' Donuts Center net income for December was (\$298,944) to budget and (\$230,106) to the prior year. Year to date net income was \$201,469 to budget and \$411,679 to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill reported that the P Bruins and PC Friars schedule contributed to the loss. Mr. McCarvill noted that this was the first disappointing month in a long series of positive months. Mr. McCarvill reported that strong suite revenue continue to contribute to the favorable variance. Mr. Duffy commented that there were no Big East opponents during the month of December for PC. Mr. McCarvill reported that for the month of December the Authority is \$10,747 to budget and (\$62,160) to the prior year. Year to date Net Income for the Authority is (\$43,157) to budget and \$2,212,911 to last year. Mr. McCarvill reported that consolidated net income for December was (\$221,011) to budget and (\$343,371) to the prior year. Year to date consolidated net income is \$771,624 to budget and \$3,427,072 to the prior year.

## **DUNKIN' DONUTS CENTER**

Mr. Buonanno asked Mr. Lepore to update the Board on the Dunkin' Donuts Center Committee meeting. Mr. Lepore reported that Hank Abate and Jon Petrunick were present to address the Board. Mr. Abate described the types of shows that SMG has been chasing for the Dunk. He said that the Dunk is performing as well as other venues in the area with the exception of Mohegan Sun and even they

are seeing lower numbers. Mr. Petrunick stated that Shine Down and Puddle of Mud are the type of shows that SMG is pursuing for the building. He said that he is being very selective and that large acts are not doing well. Mr. Lepore reported that Jeff Dunham is doing extremely well and that his popularity is growing. Mr. Lepore stated that we are down to single seats for Carrie Underwood and that Daughtry went on sale last week. Mr. Abate noted that Walking with Dinosaurs will be the most exciting show this season. Mr. Duffy asked if it will do as well as Spirit of America. Mr. Petrunick said that it probably would not. Mr. Abate commented that Walking with Dinosaurs is a fascinating show. Mr. Duffy stated that a year ago we asked that SMG step up their efforts to get more events into the Dunk and it appears that you have done just that. Mr. Abate said that the artists have to go on tour in order for us to get them to the building. Mr. Duffy said that SMG's efforts are appreciated. Mr. Abate reported that Live Nation and Ticketmaster have become one entity.

Mr. Duffy asked that we update Mr. Gavitt on preparations for the NCAA Tournament. Mr. Lepore said that he wished that we had more seats to sell. He assured Mr. Gavitt that the building will be ready for the games. Mr. Gavitt stated that this is a very big event for the City. He said that we should be prepared for a great deal of national exposure. Mr. Gavitt thanked Ken Mancuso for putting together an exceptional book on security measures. He noted that the tournament committee was impressed.

**Mr. Buonanno reported that he had spoken with Paul Choquette of Gilbane who assured him that the cracks in the cement stairs would be taken care of as soon as the weather gets better.**

**Mr. McCarvill reported that Ms. Cohen is working with Dunkin' Donuts on the naming rights for the building. He said that Ms. Cohen is looking for a way to value the amount of exposure that Dunkin' Donuts gets from advertising events at the Dunk. Mr. Gavitt noted that there is an agency in Chicago that tracks all that. Mr. Lepore said that we have looked into hiring a firm but that it is very pricey. Mr. McCarvill reported that the Dunkin' Donuts Store is on hold. He said that the surrounding area has changed recently and the prospects for making the store profitable have not materialized. He noted that originally a building was going to be built on the site of the old police station. He also noted that the Blue Cross building is not occupied. Mr. McCarvill said that we are working on an alternate plan for the space. Mr. Butler suggested that the space could be used to sell tournament memorabilia.**

**Mr. Crocker reported that the restaurant has been doing well. He also noted that suite numbers look very good.**

## **CONVENTION CENTER COMMITTEE**

**Mr. Muldoon reported that the Bay Colony Dog Show netted over \$100,000 for the Convention Center. He said that for early December it**

was a great piece of business that he hopes will return. Mr. Muldoon noted that there have been fewer Holiday parties this year but that he sees no reason that they will not come back once the economy improves. Mr. Muldoon noted that Fidelity has returned with smaller but important events. Mr. Gavitt asked what was happening with parking today. Mr. Muldoon reported that the Westin had asked to rent spaces for a Cheer & Dance group and since we had the capacity we obliged.

Mr. Hirsh asked Mr. Muldoon to explain the rent waiver request. Mr. Muldoon said that the CVB is negotiating with the American Contract Bridge League for an event in December 2014. He said that this would be a wonderful piece of business for the Convention Center as well as the City over Thanksgiving weekend. Mr. Hirsh noted that the rent waiver was discussed and recommended for approval by the committee. Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Venturini and seconded by Mr. Nee it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to approve a rent waiver for the American Contract Bridge League.

Mr. Hirsh reported that the Convention Center has an opportunity to complete a lighting project and is looking for an approval to issue an RFP for the project. Mr. Muldoon said that Ms. Tuton has been working with National Grid to replace the lighting fixtures on the fifth level meeting space with more energy efficient devices. Mr. Muldoon

said that the project will cost approximately \$535,000 and qualify for a rebate from National Grid of \$133,000 and annual energy savings of \$131,000. Mr. Muldoon noted that that would be a three year return on investment. Mr. Daugherty stated that a three year payback seems to be too long. Mr. McCarvill informed the Commissioners that renewal and replacement has not been funded by the State and that we have approximately \$2 million remaining. Mr. Daugherty asked if the fund will be replenished with the energy savings. Mr. Duffy reported that the State is not holding to their commitment. Mr. Muldoon said that National Grid is offering a 30% rebate at this time and it may not happen in the future. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Nee and seconded by Ms. Venturini it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to authorize the Convention Center to issue an RFP for replacement of lighting fixtures on level 5.

## **VMA**

Mr. Habl reported that the VMA has shown a 50% improvement in event days over the prior year. Mr. Habl stated that the Rhode Island International Film Festival people had moved in. He was pleased to note that the VMA will be hosting Oscar Night America and there will be live pre and post event coverage. Mr. Habl said that the Philharmonic Rush Hour series has been moved to Friday evenings and that the latest show attendance improved. Mr. Habl reported that he has met several times with the Ballet and they are going back to

using a live orchestra for their performances. Mr. Hahl stated that Oscar Night in America will receive media coverage from ABC 6. Mr. Hahl was pleased to note that Providence Equity Partners have re-booked. Ms. Carter reported that the VMAF board is just about set. She noted that the Foundation has some wonderful branding plans is looking forward to working with Mr. Hahl, the CVB and the Authority. Ms. Carter said that the Foundation plans an outreach program for Rhode Island talent. Mr. Duffy said that it is great news that the VMAF is alive and well again. Mr. Duffy said that we all appreciate Ms. Carter's efforts.

Mr. McCarvill explained that the State Budget Office and the Legislature are investigating the most advantageous opportunities for the possible purchase and repairs and maintenance of the VMA. Mr. McCarvill said that until improvements are made at the theater we cannot approach many promoters. He said that, especially backstage, we do not meet actor's equity standards. Mr. McCarvill said that he will keep the Commissioners informed of decisions as they are made.

## **MARKETING**

Ms. Venturini asked Mr. Schriever to briefly report on CVB activities. Mr. Schriever presented an update of NCAA preparations. Mr. Schriever reported that a pep rally is being planned for Selection Sunday at McFaddens. Mr. Duffy said that a welcoming reception is



being planned for Wednesday, March 17th and that he would like all Board members to attend. Ms. Keough stated that she has been working on welcoming sound bites from the Governor, Mayor and Mr. Driscoll. Mr. Duffy suggested that Mr. Gavitt be included. Mr. Schriever said that we want everyone from visitors to residence to have fun in the City. Ms. Cohen reported that the Dunkin' Donuts Center continues to negotiate sponsorships for the tournament.

Ms. Cohen said that there has been overwhelming response from the media to Walking with Dinosaurs. Ms. Cohen reported that we have achieved synergy with the three buildings on the web site. She stated that we now have an opportunity to cross market events at the venues. Mr. Fowler asked if there is a goal for direct traffic for the site. Ms. Cohen responded that direct traffic should increase with the synergy. Ms. Cohen noted that sales of the party suite are going extremely well. She said that there are still some events that the suites are available but none for Jeff Dunham or Carrie Underwood.

Mr. Muldoon thanked Mr. Nee for bringing the 2010 Saint Patrick's Day Dinner to the Convention Center. Mr. Muldoon reported that the Convention Center sales team is working on securing multiple year contracts with Emery Waterhouse, New England Regional Turfgrass and the machine Quilters Exposition and working on finalizing contracts with IEEE PES ESMO, New England Independent Booksellers, American Choral Directors and the American Society of Plant Biologists. Mr. Muldoon was pleased to note that Citizens Bank

had utilized that Convention Center and is looking to book a future sales meeting. Mr. Muldoon said that there is a higher level of optimism for the City because meeting planners are beginning to book events farther out.

Ms. Venturini noted that Ms. Keough was unable to attend the meeting today but the web site is up and running. Ms. Venturini said that Ms. Keough will prepare a press release announcing the launch.

Ms. Venturini said that she had recently attended the Mayor's Conference and was happy to report that our Mayor is highly respected in that group. Ms. Venturini reported that Josh Miller was given an award by the Culinary Institute of America and that Rhode Island was recognized as a culinary destination. Ms. Venturini said that she would be proud to bring her counterparts to Rhode Island.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. McCarvill reported that our management contract with SMG will expire at the end of October. He said that a draft of the RFP will be available for review next month.

Mr. Fowler suggested that we arrange for a meeting with Mr. Stokes. He said that perhaps we should invite him to a meeting of the Commissioners.

**Mr. Duffy asked if there was any new business. Hearing none he asked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Mr. Gavitt it was unanimously**

**VOTED: to adjourn at 10:20 AM**