

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY 360th  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS March 29, 2012**

**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 March 29, 2012 at 9:00 am at the Rhode Island Convention Center, pursuant to notice, at the Rhode Island Convention Center Boardroom, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.**

**Board members present were Chairman, Jim Bennett, Commissioners, Dale Venturini, Scott Gunn, Bernie Buonanno, Letitia Carter, Patrick Butler, Jeff Hirsh, George Nee and Stan Israel.**

**Also present were James P. McCarvill, Executive Director, Kim Keough and Betty Sullivan, Rhode Island Convention Center Authority; Tim Muldoon, Deb Tuton, Kathy Masino and Nancy Beauchamp, Convention Center; Larry Lepore, Cheryl Cohen, Kate Bizier and Bob Cappalli, Dunkin' Donuts Center; Steve Habl, VMA; Alan Chille, VMA/PFM; Martha Sheridan, Kristin McGrath, PWCVB; Bob Bromley, Senate Fiscal; Bruce Leach, Legal Counsel; and Eileen Smith, Recording Secretary.**

**Recognizing a quorum Mr. Bennett called the meeting to order at 9:10 AM. Mr. Bennett asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the January Board Meeting. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Buonanno and seconded by Ms. Carter it was unanimously**

**VOTED: to approve the minutes of the January meeting.**

**Mr. Bennett asked Mr. McCarvill to present the financial information. Mr. McCarvill said that for the month of February, net income for the VETS was \$4,625 to budget and (\$23,286) to the previous year. Mr. McCarvill stated that year to date net income was (\$3,230) to budget and (\$102,704) to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill stated that costs for operations and cleaning during construction led to a greater loss than anticipated. Mr. McCarvill reported the Convention Center net income for February was (\$101,222) to budget and \$172,816 to the prior year. Year to date net income was (\$351,004) to budget and (\$383,907) to the prior year. Lower performance in November and December than anticipated is taking some time to make up. Mr. McCarvill said that parking revenue is showing continued improvement. Mr. McCarvill reported that the Dunkin' Donuts Center net income variance for the month of February was (\$87,681) to budget and \$92,887 to the prior year. Year to date net income for the Dunk was (\$872,098) to budget and (\$157,882) to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill reported that two concerts had been budgeted for the month of February that did not occur. Mr. McCarvill reported that net income for the Authority income was \$83,117 to budget and \$26,533 to the prior year. Year to date net income is \$317,957 to budget and \$192,736 to the prior year. McCarvill stated that consolidated net income for the month of February was (\$101,161) to budget and \$268,950 to the prior year. Year to date consolidated net income is (\$527,790) to budget and (\$71,174) to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill**

reported that the good news is that parking is improving but the bad news is that we are having difficulty attracting concerts. Mr. McCarvill said that everyone is working hard to find the right fit for our facilities.

Mr. Gunn asked if parking is at its maximum. Mr. McCarvill said that for monthly parkers we are just about at capacity. Mr. Bennett asked Mr. Muldoon to compare the overall parking numbers to last year. Mr. Muldoon said that the numbers are mostly up but event parking is slightly down. Mr. Muldoon said that overall parking numbers are up approximately 11%.

Discussion ensued regarding other parking facilities in the area. Mr. Muldoon said that when Hasbro moves in to 15 LaSalle Square we will not have any space. Mr. Gunn asked Mr. Muldoon to provide a price comparison of the surrounding parking facilities. Ms. Venturini asked if we could double park some vehicles. Mr. McCarvill said that our bonds may not allow for double parking.

## **MARKETING**

Ms. Venturini reported that the Marketing Committee had met on Tuesday. Ms. McGrath distributed that February booking report. Ms. McGrath reported that the Convention Center related bookings increased over the same month last year as well as the room nights associated with those bookings. Ms. McGrath noted that tentative bookings and room nights were also higher than last year. Ms.

**McGrath stated that definite bookings include ICERM/Brown University workshops, Pinnacle Solutions, Mary Kay and New England Mariner Renewable Energy. Ms. McGrath reported that groups looking at Providence are the American Academy of Family Physicians, National Council on Teachers Retirement, Bruhan Maharashtra Mandal of NA, National Environmental Health Association, NeighborWorks America and the American Federation of Government Employees. Ms. McGrath noted that the CVB had attended AMC Institute, Convention Sales Professional International, Experient Presentation, Chicago office, MEC 2012 – GA Chapter of MPI and Destination Showcase.**

**Ms. McGrath reported that the video tour of the Convention Center is coming along very well and will be a great asset in the sales tool box. Ms. McGrath noted that the Ambassadors' Lunch was held yesterday and was a wonderful event. Mr. Bennett noted that the food was great and thanked Kathy and her staff. Mr. Butler asked how the Women's NCAA Basketball Tournament went in Kingston. Ms. McGrath stated that the feedback from the hotels in the southern parts of the state was great. Mr. Lepore asked if there is a way to calculate the economic impact of these sporting events. Ms. Venturini stated that hotel managers are feeling a little more positive about corporate business.**

**Ms. Keough distributed a report indicating the exposure that upcoming events and shows have or will be receiving in the near**

future. Ms. Cohen described the efforts for Globetrotter marketing saying that the advance players appeared on the Rhode Show and traveled throughout the City showing their basketball shooting ability.

Ms. Keough reported that planning for XFactor will be a huge endeavor. Ms. Cohen said that the entire State will be showcased. She also noted that FOX has agreed to wrap the connector between the Convention Center and the Dunk. Lengthy discussion ensued regarding crowd control for the May and again in June events. Mr. Buonanno asked about Death Cab for Cuties. Ms. Keough informed the Commissioners that Death Cab is a popular alternative rock band. Ms. Keough announced that planning for marketing the Willie Nelson show is underway.

Mr. Bennett noted that we are all aware of Providence's financial woes. He asked Ms. Keough to concentrate her efforts and promote the fact that tourism in Rhode Island is alive and moving forward.

## **DUNKIN' DONUTS CENTER**

Mr. Lepore reported that the Globetrotters should sell out both events. He said that the Providence Bruins and their group sales team have done a great job. Mr. Lepore was pleased to announce that American Idol would be returning in August and the inclusion of a Rhode Island talent should make for a well attended event. Mr. Lepore noted that we are holding dates for Journey and Van Halen and possibly Carrie Underwood. Discussion ensued regarding

honoring Frank J. Russo for his contribution to the success of the building. It was noted that Mr. Russo was responsible for 100 sellouts in the building. Discussions ensued regarding the number of performers that played the Civic Center and Mr. Russo's contribution.

Mr. Lepore said that recognizing Mr. Russo would give us the opportunity to acknowledge his contribution to the building and the City. Ms. Venturini agreed that we should honor Mr. Russo but cautioned that by doing this we open the door to other deserving individuals that have had an impact on the arena. She said that we might want to consider an annual award.

Mr. Bennett reported that he has had discussions with people looking at Providence and Boston for a Grand Prix. He explained that cars would race through the streets of the City. Mr. Bennett said that Providence and Rhode Island would receive international exposure. Mr. Bennett noted that UPS is the title sponsor for the 2013 event.

## **CONVENTION CENTER**

Mr. Muldoon reported that Cox Wireless is working in the building doing some infrastructure upgrades. He said that providing wireless access is necessary for us to compete in the future. Mr. Muldoon also reported that Ms. Tuton is looking at a new agreement for our electrical rates for the future. He said that we have been offered a two year contract that will result in a 20% reduction in cost. Discussion ensued regarding reduced rates and it was noted that transmission

costs are the reason that electricity bills continue to be high. Mr. Muldoon said that we have been able to take advantage of several cost saving offers in the past. Mr. McCarvill commented that all of our efforts slow down the growth but there are other fees and charges that we cannot control. Mr. Bennett asked if a schedule could be prepared showing our electrical usage. Mr. Hirsh asked how the new concession stands are doing. Ms. Masino said that they have been very well received and they are much more cost effective. She said that the food is better and looks fresher.

Mr. Habl reported that the VETS had a great February. He noted that Brown University's tribute to Ruth Simmons was a wonderful event. Mr. Habl said that Choral Directors, a scaled down Oscar Night as well as other smaller events made for a good mix for the month. Mr. Habl noted that dance competitions are starting up and are good business for the theater. Mr. McCarvill reported that the LED Lighting project is also nearing completion and the front canopy is almost complete. Ms. Carter asked where the money came from. Mr. McCarvill explained that this project was funded with stimulus funds with very specific regulations. He noted that all materials had to be made in the United States. Mr. McCarvill updated the Commissioners on the progress of renovations at the VETS. He said that the first phase is nearing completion and that an RFP for Phase II has been posted to the State Purchasing Website. Mr. McCarvill noted that a mandatory walkthrough of the theater will take place on Wednesday. Mr. McCarvill reported that he attended a hearing with the City

**Council regarding variances and permits.**

**Ms. Carter and Mr. Butler departed at 10:30 AM.**

**Mr. McCarvill spoke about the VMAF meeting and described what he hopes will be their future roll in the success of the VETS.**

**Mr. Bennett reported on things of interest in the City. He was pleased to note that the Biltmore is coming out of bankruptcy. Mr. Bennett also noted that the Sportsman may be converted to a boutique hotel. Mr. Bennett inquired about the film tax credit that is being discussed at the State House. He said that he is in support of the credit and would like to write a letter to that end. Mr. Bennett asked if the Commissioners had any objections to the Chairman stating his views. No Commissioners objected.**

**Mr. Bennett asked if there was any new business. Hearing none Mr. Bennett asked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Buonanno and seconded by Ms. Venturini it was unanimously**

**VOTED: to adjourn at 10:40 AM**