

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY 397th  
MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS July 30, 2015**

**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 July 30, 2015, pursuant to notice, at the Rhode Island Convention Center, One LaSalle Square, Providence, Rhode Island.**

**Board members present were Chairman Bernie Buonanno, Patrick Butler, Tony Mendez, Dale Venturini, George Nee and Jeff Hirsh.**

**Letitia Carter, Paul MacDonald, Joe DeLorenzo, Stan Israel and John Hooper were unable to attend.**

**Also present were James P. McCarvill, Executive Director, Kim Keough and Betty Sullivan, Rhode Island Convention Center Authority; Larry Lepore, John McGinn, Kathy Masino, Amanda Wilmouth, Pamela Bacon, Rachel Martelly, and Cheryl Cohen from the complex; Dan Schwartz, and Michael Gravison, the VETS; Martha Sheridan, PWCVB; Chantale Sarasin, House Fiscal Office; Robert Bromley, Senate Fiscal Office; Bruce Leach, Legal Counsel and Eileen Smith, Recording Secretary**

**Mr. Buonanno called the meeting to order at the meeting at 9:05 AM.  
Mr. Buonanno asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the June**

**Board Meeting. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Mr. Mendez it was unanimously**

**VOTED: to approve the minutes of the June Board meeting.**

**Mr. Buonanno asked Mr. McCarvill to present the financial information for the month of June. Mr. McCarvill reported that the Convention Center's net income for the month of June was (\$74,449) to budget and \$406,101 to the prior year. Year to date net income for the Convention Center was (\$1,821,621) to budget and (\$1,994,272) to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill stated that during the month of June, food & beverage as well as parking were down to last year. Year to date unfavorable variance is directly attributed to event, food and beverage and ancillary revenues. Mr. McCarvill again stated that we had a terrible first quarter and were never able to recover. Mr. McCarvill reported that for the month of June the Dunkin' Donuts Center's net income variance was \$39,911 to budget and (\$39,284) to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill noted that year to date net income for the Dunkin' Donuts Center was (\$272,476) to budget and \$423,320 to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill said that concert business continues to be disappointing but the staff continues to seek events will bring patrons to the arena. Mr. McCarvill reported that for the month of June the VETS net income variance was \$52,631 to budget and \$43,472 to the prior year. Year to date net income for the VETS was (\$178,104) to budget and (\$102,825) to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill stated that June was one of the most successful months this year.**

**Mr. McCarvill reported that the Convention Center Authority's net income variance for the month of June was \$35,533 to budget and \$1,556,697 to the prior year. Year to date net income for the Authority was \$377,586 to budget and \$2,204,048 to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill stated that consolidated net income variance for the month of June was \$53,626 to budget and \$1,966,986 to the prior year. Year to date consolidated net income was (\$1,895,431) to budget and \$529,461 to the prior year. Mr. McCarvill stated that the refunding was responsible for closing the gap this year but will not be available in the future. Ms. Venturini asked what the impact will be when we no longer receive the hotel tax. Mr. McCarvill responded that it will only affect the second half of the year and be a loss of approximately \$150,000. He stated that he has had conversations about how to replace that revenue.**

**Discussion ensued regarding the facilities capital improvement plans.**

**Ms. Venturini asked where we stand regarding the funds necessary to complete capital projects. Mr. McCarvill stated that we are about \$50 million shy of where our capital improvement fund should be. Mr. McCarvill stated that Ms. Sullivan had a meeting with Mr. Stack and they put together a plan that has been included in the handout. Ms. Venturini asked if this request was for the budget office. Mr. McCarvill said that we went through the projects that should be addressed. Mr. McCarvill stated that we no longer have the funds and now we rely on RICAP funds to see to the upkeep of the buildings. Mr. Lepore noted that the roofs have been inspected and the**

**conclusion is that the Convention Center is in greater need but we should consider doing both at the same time. Mr. Lepore said that we are looking at projects that will extend the life of the facilities.**

**Mr. McCarvill stated that at the June meeting Mr. Buonanno asked for a comparison of August Revenue for the past four years. Mr. McCarvill reported that Ms. Sullivan had prepared the comparison by venue and they can be found in the package that was distributed this morning. Mr. McCarvill noted that the Dunkin' Donuts Center is always slow in the summer. Mr. McGinn said that Fiscal Year 2013 was the best August ever. He noted that two conventions were in the building. Mr. Hirsh asked how this August and September are shaping up. Mr. McCarvill said that the Convention Center is busy.**

**Mr. Buonanno asked for a motion to accept the financial report as presented. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Mr. Hirsh it was unanimously**

**VOTED: to accept the financial report as presented.**

**Mr. Buonanno asked Mr. Butler to report on the Garrahy Courthouse Parking Garage Committee meeting. Mr. Butler reported that the Committee would like to build a garage that will make money. Mr. Butler said that we would like an updated market analysis as well as a traffic study to determine if it is feasible for the garage to make**

money the way it has been proposed with a bus hub and retail space. Discussion ensued regarding the garage. Ms. Venturini asked who is expected to park there. Mr. McCarvill stated that court personnel and judges as well as the general public that has business with the court. It was noted that other surface lots as well as on street parking is utilized by the general public. Mr. Buonanno reiterated that we don't want to build a garage that loses money for seven years. Mr. McCarvill said that we should use the \$500,000 that is available in RICAP funds to move forward with the market analysis and traffic study.

Mr. Buonanno stated that the Committee chose Beta Engineering and Adlinger to perform Environmental and Geotechnical testing for the project. Mr. Leach asked how we came to the decision to engage Beta and Adlinger. Mr. McCarvill noted that all bidders were qualified but after satisfactorily working with Adlinger in the past we concluded that they would be the right firm for the job. Mr. Butler asked for a motion to approve the Garrahy Courthouse Garage Committee's recommendation of Beta Engineering and Adlinger for Geotechnical and Environmental testing. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Nee and seconded by Mr. Buonanno it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to approve the Garrahy Courthouse Garage Committee's recommendation.

Ms. Keough distributed a report highlighting the month's activities.

**Ms. Keough reported that she is creating the Annual Report and the marketing team is working on the Fiscal year 2016 Marketing Plans for the presentation in August. Ms. Venturini stated that she would like more people to attend the Marketing Committee meeting on August 25th at 12:30 because Marketing Plans will be presented. Ms. Venturini said that with the changes in the distribution of tourism dollars it is important for our board to be aware of the new configuration.**

**Ms. Venturini invited everyone to join her at the Songwriters Festival on August 21st. She explained the event and said that the festival features country music. Ms. Venturini said that Billy Gilman would be here and guaranteed that all would have a good time**

**Ms. Sheridan was asked to address the Board. Ms. Sheridan distributed the CVB's report and stated that although more people are attending meetings and conferences fewer are using official room blocks. She said that occupancy is up 3.50%. Mr. Nee asked what is the revpar that triggers the need for new hotels. Ms. Sheridan stated that we are nearing that figure but we need more growth in the business market. She said that we do not have enough midweek business travelers in the mix. Mr. Buonanno asked how AirBnB's effect the market. Ms. Sheridan stated that we don't have many and the guests that use them are most likely not staying at our hotels. Ms. Sheridan said that the CVB is learning how to work with them. Mr. Nee asked how they have reacted to the latest regulations. Ms.**

**Sheridan said that she thinks they have embraced the regulations. Ms. Sheridan said that technically the platform is like UBER. Mr. Butler asked if people liked UBER. Ms. Sheridan said that they like UBER better than taxis. She stated that UBER is generally more convenient and less expensive than a taxi. Ms. Sheridan said that a taxi from Green with a PUC Taxi Company is \$45.00 where UBER will cost \$16.00. Mr. Mendez noted that taxis companies are highly regulated and that adds to the cost of operation. Ms. Venturini commented on the issues that we have had in the past with cleanliness and the driver's lack of respect for the customer.**

**Mr. Schwartz addressed the Board and presented a Fall preview of events. Two time GRAMMY nominee Tommy Emmanuel will be appearing in September. Mr. Schwartz stated that Memories of Elvis would return in October and Zoltan Maga will perform at the theater in October. Mr. Schwartz said that also in October Last Comic Standing will be here following the Summer TV show. Mr. Schwartz reported that that the theater had a very good June with Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood. He stated that the building will be closing for approximately three weeks in order to install a new floor. Mr. Buonanno asked why the floor was not done at the time of renovations. Mr. Schwartz answered that we ran out of money. Ms. Venturini asked about parking. Mr. McCarvill said that it does not belong to us although people do park and sometimes cause problems for blocking other cars.**

**Mr. Lepore addressed the Board and stated that he is very pleased that Fiscal Year 2015 is over and that improvements are going to happen in Fiscal Year 2016. Mr. Lepore said that he is learning what is needed and with SMG's support over the last few months everyone has been stepping up. Mr. Lepore said that the food and beverage is looking at ways to keep people in the building for meals with well-placed concession stands and seating areas. Mr. Lepore noted that human resources is also being looked at for ways to improve moral and work more efficiently. Mr. Lepore was pleased to announce that SMG's regional meeting will take place at the Convention Center and the Dunk. Mr. Lepore stated that GM's from all over the world will be coming to Providence and it will give us the opportunity to present and overview of all the assets that we have with this complex, a Convention Center, Theater and an Arena.**

**Mr. Lepore reported that the Boston Bruins will be playing an exhibition game on September 17th at the Dunk. Mr. Lepore was pleased to report that Providence College will be playing two non Big East games with nationally ranked teams. Mr. Lepore said that WWE will be here in August. Mr. Lepore noted that going along with our good neighbor policy the Dunkin' Donuts Center lent staging and some security for the BRU Concerts. Mr. Lepore assured the Commissioners that there will be payback in the form of good publicity. Mr. Nee thanked Mr. Lepore for lending chairs for the tribute to Sister Ann. Mr. Lepore said that there was a great deal of community support.**



**Mr. Lepore said that we are still considering Ice Kingdom although another company is in the mix. Mr. Lepore said that we will see where it goes.**

**Ms. Venturini asked about Ms. Carter. Mr. McCarvill said that he had spoken with her recently but that she did not have the ability to get into Providence often. She is living in Little Compton.**

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

**VOTED: to adjourn at 10:35 AM**