

River's Edge Convention Center Advisory Board

Meeting Notes – January 10, 2017

Present Jodi Domeier, Marty Mahowald, Scott Raden

Not Present Dan Barth, Linda Feuling, Patty Gaetz, Julie Lunning

Staff Present Bill Dunsmoor, Tony Goddard

1. The meeting was convened at 5:05 pm at the Convention Center.
2. Mahowald moved acceptance of the minutes of December 13, 2016 as submitted; Raden seconded the motion. Raden inquired about the parking situation since the opening of the new ramp. Dunsmoor responded that it seems to be working well At Holly Ball, which in the past has stressed parking capacity, all three adjacent ramps were well utilized, but there were spaces in all three. Raden also asked about the proposal to add a canopy to connect the new ramp to the Convention Center. Raden asked if the rental rates policy had been adopted and Goddard responded yes. The rate sheet was discussed briefly. Goddard responded that a Council member was dismayed that there was no covered walkway between the east stair tower and the building; we now have an estimate of \$260,000 to add a canopy. Management does not support the expenditure because a canopy would offer limited shelter and there are already two ramps with interior access to the convention center. Also, the ramp budget has been fully expended. The proposed expansion of the convention center originally contemplated as part of the ramp project would have provided interior access. After discussion, the motion passed unanimously.
3. Goddard explained that we do not have a complete 12/31/16 financial statement; the posting of expenses are correct, but revenues are not. We will have a 12/31 statement available for the February meeting.
4. Dunsmoor provided an update of recent operations at the facility and laid out the next few months, which are a very busy time of the year, particularly for consumer shows. We expect 12,000 patrons in January, participating in 23 events. Dunsmoor discussed the recent Donnell Rawlings comedy event, which went well. Comedy shows constitute a growing niche for the River's Edge. Our raised seating can accommodate 900 people and added chairs can add more. The sound and light needs are simple for comedy. The SCAR Dolls roller derby team performed over the previous weekend and has developed a nice following – over 800 attendees. Mahowald asked if there is a mechanism for block-booking comedy acts for multiple convention centers around the state. Goddard said that the Minnesota Presenters Network does exactly that for theaters; he will look into whether there is potential to collaborate.
5. Goddard reported that the MAC Operational Review will be presented to the City Council in Study Session on February 6th. The Board will have one more opportunity to review.
6. Goddard distributed the Capital Improvement Plan project sheets for the Convention Center and reviewed them with the Board. The Board reiterated its prior view that it is critical that the City find a way to catch up on deferred maintenance and accumulate sufficient capital reserves that we don't fall behind again. The situation seems particularly dire at the MAC, but is a concern at the River's Edge also. Goddard reviewed the projected receipts from the Food and beverage Tax

and the Local Sales Tax together with the existing obligations. The opinion of the Board is that the City should consider borrowing against future tax receipts.

7. Goddard said that the survey of Board members about an alternative meeting time did not identify any better option than the current schedule. Raden noted that the next meeting is Valentine's Day, and suggested an earlier meeting time; the Board agreed and suggested 3:30 pm. Goddard will email the remainder of the Board to assess whether that can work.
8. Dashboard discussion was laid over to February.
9. Goddard noted that there will be at least one Board vacancy as of March 1st, perhaps two, and asked if the group had any suggestions for people to approach. Three names were suggested: Bob Abel, Brian hart, and Bernie Perryman.
10. Next Meeting: Tuesday February 14, 2017
11. Adjournment at 6:10 pm.

Submitted by Tony Goddard