

THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2024, AT 10:00 AM

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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 November 25, 2024. The meeting was held in the McCarvill Boardroom, Second Floor, Rhode Island Convention Center, pursuant to notice, at the Rhode Island Convention Center, One Sabin Street, Providence, RI 02903 and the AMP, One LaSalle Square, Providence, Rhode Island.

Board members in attendance were Chairman Almonte, George Nee, Paul MacDonald, Jeffrey Hirsh, Diony Garcia, Jennifer Goodrich Coia, Dale Venturini, and Carol Lombardi.

Missing board members: Peter Mancini, Oscar Vargas and Stephen Iannazzi

Also attending were Dan McConaghy, Dana Peltier, Melissa Lasko-O'Connor and Trish Verrecchia, RI Convention Center Authority; Dan Schwartz, Mike Gravison and Doreen Vitale, The Vets; Lawrence Lepore, Chris Spolidoro, Cheryl Cohen, Casey Hoover, Veronica Van Jura, Christina Montanaro, Tim Sullivan; RI Convention Center and/or AMP; Michael Crawley, Citrin Cooperman; and Bruce Leach, Legal Counsel; Hank Abate, OVG.

1. Call to Order – Chairman Almonte called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM
2. Next Board Meeting date – Chairman Almonte stated that the next meeting will take place Thursday, December 19, 2024, at 9:00 AM
3. Consent Calendar Items
  - a. Approval of minutes of the October Board Meeting
  - b. Approval of the Marketing Committee Report
  - c. Approval of the Finance Committee Report

Chairman Almonte requested a motion for the Consent Calendar Items. Upon a motion duly made from Mr. MacDonald which was seconded by Mr. Nee, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to approve the consent calendar items

Before moving onto the Finance Committee report Mr. Almonte introduced Executive Chef, Robert Gemma, to review two items from Comic Con. One was a souvenir cup that Veronica Van Jura designed and created, and the other was a specialty drink called an Ecto Cooler. This drink was made in light of Ghostbusters and made \$10k during Comic Con.

4. Finance Committee Report – Chair Jeffrey Hirsh
  - a. Review and consideration of parking request from Providence College

Mr. Hirsh asked Mr. McConaghy to review the parking request from Providence College. Mr. McConaghy and Mr. Lepore have been meeting on a regular basis with Providence College to help them to navigate through NIL (name, image and likeness) efforts. An idea was finally settled on and that was to raise money during the Big East Games. They would do that by increasing parking prices from \$20 to \$23 during the 10 Big East Games, which is about 1,550-1,750 cars. The total potential

would be \$32k-\$38K. The Authority would send the net proceeds directly to FFC. The FFC (Friar Family Collective) handles marketing, collecting, and distribution of funds raised for the athletes. This will be advertised at the door and online for transparency issues.

Mr. Almonte asked for a motion to approve the parking request from Providence College. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Nee and seconded by Mr. Hirsh it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to approve the parking request from Providence College. Ms. Venturini recused herself.

b. Review and consideration of Parking Proposal at RICC

Mr. McConaghy stated the Authority has responded to an RFP led by CBRE (Broker hired to handle the deal), for a tenant at the former Hasbro building. The minimum requirement is for 200 spaces with part-time possibilities of another 350. The proposal states the tenant will pay \$1 an hour per pass for 160 hours per month with 200 passes guaranteed. Every hour over 32,000 per month the tenant would pay \$1.25 per hour. Rates may increase after July 1, 2027. Ten-year term with two 5-year options. Would commence next spring. This would be billed quarterly. Minimum revenue of \$384,000 annually. If the tenant exceeds the minimum hours by 25%, for example, the Authority earns an additional \$120,000 annually. CBRE to be paid a commission dictated at the time of the RFP.

Mr. Almonte asked for a motion to table item 4b. Review and consideration of Parking Proposal at RICC for the last item of the agenda. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Nee and seconded by Ms. Venturini it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to table item 4b. to the last item on the agenda

5. Marketing Committee Report- Chair Dale Venturini

a. AMP/VETS Annual Plan Highlights – Cheryl Cohen and Mike Gravison

Ms. Venturini introduced Ms. Cohen to review AMP highlights and Mr. Gravison to review highlights from The Vets. Listed below are the highlights presented for each building.

Cheryl Cohen presented an abbreviated version of the AMP FY25 Annual Marketing Plan. She referenced the four primary goals of the facility: 1. Revenue increases, 2. Resource leverage, 3. Relationship building, and 4. Reputation enhancement. She discussed the stiff competition felt from dozens of facilities of varying sizes and geographical locations. She concluded by describing the AMP's marketing strategies in FY25 and beyond, most notably the venue's intent to diversify its offerings to meet changing demographics, cultivating relationships with mid and smaller tier promoters and continuing to leverage the facility's great relationship with Amica. See attached.

Mike Gravison presented a summary of The Vets FY25 Annual Marketing Plan stating FY24 continued the upward trend of sold-out events like Chris Distefano, Wanda Sykes, Croce Play Croce, Zack Williams plus others. The Vets FY25 and beyond marketing objectives include, 1. Growing the promotion of events through varying marketing portals and partnerships, 2. Increasing attendance, 3. Boosting the Vets image within the community and 4. Expanding the marketing support for new and out of town promoters. The Vets will continue to strategically expand and improve programming by growing indie and folk music offerings, expanding very successful comedy acts, introducing more

podcast shows and working with RIPO to market their offerings. The facility will also improve the patron experience by investing in a new sound system, improvement to its lighting system and increasing points of sale for F&B purchases. Finally, within a few years, the Vets anticipates renovating its dressing rooms to improve the artist's experience as well.

#### b. Overview of Comic Con results – Casey Hoover

Ms. Venturini introduced Ms. Hoover to give an overview of Comic Con results. Ms. Hoover began by stating this was the most successful Comic Con event to date. There were over 30,000 people in the building over the weekend. Catering and concessions for this event were just over \$315k. Some concession highlights included the Ecto cooler which made \$10k, Comic Con beer made \$15k, blue milk & cookies bundle made \$4k and the souvenir cup made just over \$5k. There was a total increase of \$109,312.86 in F&B revenue from 2023. Comic Con is contracted through 2026. Mr. Lepore mentioned that this is the only event that can bring in food trucks to an event. This is to help lessen the concourse congestion.

### 6. Employee Highlight

#### a. Doreen Vitale (Office Manager - Vets)

Mr. Schwartz introduced Ms. Vitale to the board. Ms. Vitale began by stating that she has been married to her husband Joe for over 40 years. She has 2 daughters and 4 grandchildren. When she is not working, she can be found on the East Bay bike path with friends. She began working for PFM in 1995 as a Customer Service Representative at the box office. She came to The Vets in 2009 as a temporary job and never left. Ms. Vitale handles day-to-day office duties, estimates, contracts and maintaining the event calendar. Her favorite part of the job is seeing the faces of the kids during school events. Mr. Nee asked Ms. Vitale which show has been her favorite since being there and she stated Les Misérables was her all-time favorite. She defines success in her personal life by being married and making time for family trips once or twice a year. She defines success at work by watching kids' faces light up as they are watching their first show. Just seeing their excitement is a joy.

### 7. Executive Director's Report – Daniel McConaghy

#### a. Draft of Rolling Strategic Plan 2025-2027

Mr. McConaghy began stating that the Rolling Strategic Plan is only a draft. There are some Marketing concepts that are missing. The plan is to bring this to the board in December in its final form. Distribution will also need to be reviewed. Mr. Nee was questioning whether people would understand what 77m+ Direct Spend means and what 330m+ Economic Impact means. Mr. McConaghy gave a brief explanation. Mr. Almonte suggested that a description should be added. It was agreed that this information should be presented in a better way. The next few pages list strategies for 2024 for each building and the results. The last few pages list strategies for 2025-2027 for each building. Ms. Coia suggested that we add a note after Sebastian Maniscalco that he is returning this year. (This is under AMP 2024 results). Mr. MacDonald brought up a question regarding dark nights at RICC. He wasn't sure if people would understand what that meant. It was suggested that it be changed to 83% occupied. A few more suggestions were made but overall, the feedback was great, and the board loved the Strategic Plan.

b. OVG update – Hank Abate

Mr. Abate began by mentioning what a great job F&B and Marketing have done. They are still onboarding part-timers and working with Mr. Lepore on some union agreements. He mentioned that they are still working on a plan to integrate accounting and support bookings for AMP. Making progress with Live nation will take some time. F&B has some new portables that have arrived, and some new displays were also received. Ms. Montanaro and Chef Gemma have been working with Pro Start to incorporate culinary students into a learning environment here at RICC. Mr. Nee asked Mr. Abate what his biggest challenge has been. He stated that getting the promoters to take advantage of the facility has been a challenge.

c. Distribution of Board meeting schedule for 2025

Chairman Almonte requested a motion to place back before the Board the agenda item 4b. Regarding Review and Consideration of Parking Proposal at RICC. Upon a motion from Mr. Garcia and seconded by Mr. Nee, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** To place back item 4b to the agenda

Chairman Almonte requested that Vice Chairman Nee take over presiding at the meeting due to a possible conflict of interest by the Chairman.

Vice Chairman Nee sought a motion to go into Executive Session. Mr. Nee requested a motion to move the discussion into Executive Session under 42-46-5 (5) of the Rhode Island General Laws regarding real property in connection with a proposed parking agreement.

Upon a motion from Mr. Nee and seconded by Mr. Garcia a roll call vote was taken:

Ernie Almonte – Aye

George Nee - Aye

Paul MacDonald - Aye

Diony Garcia - Aye

Jennifer Goodrich Coia - Aye

Jeffrey Hirsh - Aye

Carol Lombardi – Aye

Dale Venturini - Aye

Upon return to Open Session, Vice Chairman Nee indicated no votes were taken in Executive Session. Vice Chairman Nee requested a motion to seal the minutes of the Executive Session. Upon a motion duly made from Mr. MacDonald, which was seconded by Mr. Hirsh, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to seal the minutes of the Executive Session

Mr. Nee made a motion to authorize the Authority's Executive Director to complete negotiations with the party whose proposed parking proposal at the RICC was the subject of Agenda item 4b. Upon a motion from Ms. Venturini and seconded by Mr. Garcia, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** To authorize Mr. McConaghy to complete negotiations for proposed Parking at RICC

8. Adjournment

Vice Chairman Nee turned the meeting back over to Chairman Almonte. With there being no further business to be discussed, Chairman Almonte asked for or a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. MacDonald which was seconded by Mr. Hirsh it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to adjourn the meeting at 11:25 AM