

River's Edge Convention Center Advisory Board

Meeting Notes – October 30, 2018

Present Jodi Domeier, Patty Gaetz, Brian Hart, Marty Mahowald, Alvin Yu

Not Present Ibrahim Abdi, Julie Lunning

Staff Present Bill Dunsmoor, Rich Gallus, Tony Goddard

1. The meeting was convened at 5:05 pm at the Convention Center
2. The Board considered the minutes of August 14, 2018. Mahowald moved acceptance of the minutes as submitted; Hart seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
3. Goddard briefly summarized the financial statements (1/1 through 9/30/2018) that were included in the Board packet. Gaetz asked about the pricing of alcoholic beverages through the Holiday Inn contract, which the board has not discussed for some time. Goddard responded that there was a recent price adjustment requested by the vendor, and approved by management. The subject will be added to the December meeting agenda for more thorough discussion. The report was accepted by acclamation.
4. Goddard distributed several pages from the proposed 2019 budget (not yet adopted by the City Council) relating to the Performance Dashboard and requested capital expenditures. The board agreed that the Dashboard is an interesting snapshot and was invited to comment and make any suggestions for additions or improvements. Dunsmoor highlighted several of the more costly capital improvements.
5. Dunsmoor presented the proposed adjustment to basic room rents. Several years ago we instituted the practice of making regular increase to room rates as costs rise. The increases have run approximately 3% per year. Mahowald moved acceptance of the rate sheet; Domeier seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
6. Gallus presented an update on marketing. He noted that the 2019 marketing plan will be brought to the December meeting. He reported that a renewed focus on wedding promotion via social media has resulted in an increase in leads and one new booking. He reported that our Facebook marketing yielded in 136,000 "reaches" in the last month. Gallus also commented that 2019 is the Convention center's 30th anniversary; management recently held a brain-storming session with the CVB staff on promotional ideas. The CVB is developing a draft anniversary marketing plan. More to come.
7. Dunsmoor presented an operational update to the board. We are in to the busy season – October will total 40 events and 21,000 patrons. The schedule stresses our operations staff due to numerous back-to-back events requiring quick turn-around and 7 day per week operations. There are only five operations staff. The proposed budget includes a sixth operations position and, if approved, will reduce the pressure. It will also reduce overtime cost and the use of temporary employees, so the net addition to the budget should be minimal.
8. Dunsmoor described the process used to solicit food caterers for the facility and the fee structure. He recommended that make no changes to the fee structure. The board concurred.
9. Goddard presented an update on the potential Hospitality Tax increase. The intention of the administration is to defer any tax increase proposal and instead make a larger bonding request for a major expansion of the MAC. Following the election, plans will be refined.

10. The board accepted the proposed 2019 meeting schedule: February 12; April 9; June 11; August 13; October 8; and December 10.
11. Next Meeting: Tuesday December 11, 2018, 5:00 pm.
12. Adjournment at 6:00 pm.

Submitted by Tony Goddard