

**MINUTES – BOARD AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
IRVING CONVENTION CENTER  
Friday, June 10, 2023**

Those in attendance: Committee Chair Herb Gears, Board Chair Robert Bourgeois, Board Vice Chair Richard Stewart, Jr, David Cole, and Colvin Gibson – Committee; Carol Boyer, Maura Gast, Brice Petty, and Susan Rose – ICVB Staff; Tom Meehan – ICC staff.

Committee Chair Herb Gears called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. Gears asked for any citizen comments and there were none.

A correction was noted in the March 10 Committee meeting minutes on page 2 to eliminate the words “Congress floor” and replace with “Legislature.” Gears asked for a motion to approve the revised Board and Business Development Committee minutes from March 10, 2023. With a motion from Board Chair Bob Bourgeois, and a second from Board Vice Chair Richard Stewart, Jr., the motion unanimously was approved.

**2023 LEGISLATIVE AGENDAS - UPDATES**

The final Legislative Report for the 88<sup>th</sup> Session of the Texas Legislature is included in the packet. Executive Director Maura Gast gave an update that included:

- Local Impact
  - HB2127 advances to the Governor. The “Death Star Bill” preempts self-government powers of cities and counties and would block local government from regulating in several different areas, including labor, finance, local government, natural resources, and agriculture. Board member David Cole noted this will also affect restaurants.
- Texas Hotel and Lodging Association Report:
  - Successfully passed all Bills it offered.
  - Every Bill that would have negatively affected the industry was killed or amended.
  - Established record funding for tourism promotion - \$127 million for the next biennium.
  - Passed local HOT transparency and clean-up Bill.
  - All Bills that would have created negative precedents for use of local Hotel Occupancy Tax were killed or amended.
  - Secured passage of legislation for new qualified hotel projects and project financing zones.
  - Added newly named events to the Major Events Reimbursement Program.
  - Supported efforts to provide state funding for moving image industry incentives.
  - Still to come: Property Tax Relief and how it might play out for hotel owners.
- History of THLA State Advocacy Program
- Legislative Issues Impacting Destinations:
  - Destination boycotts – the “weaponization of travel.” Many groups are implementing language in contracts to allow them to cancel without penalty if state/local laws change in a way that would deter their members from traveling to that place. Many states have legislation that does not allow their employees or members to travel to states with discriminatory legislation on the books. Some organizations are open to looking at ways to activate their causes while at the destination (if cancellation is not an option).
- There were 8,522 bills filed, 1,354 passed and sent to the Governor.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW AND COMMITTEE NEXT STEPS

The Committee discussed the main priority to stay focused on is outreach to new City Council members. Gast noted she would like to invite the new Mayor Pro Tem Phil Riddle to an Executive Committee or full Board meeting. Bourgeois added, if elected, Heather Stroup and Mark Cronenwett should also be contacted, as well as Councilman Abdul Khabeer.

ACTION ITEM: Gears to invite Cronenwett, if elected.

#### CHAIR REPORT

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for September 8. The Committee agreed to have a focused conversation regarding new candidates for the Board. Two current Board members will term out this fiscal year. The Committee can encourage people to apply but Council has the final decision. It is important to recommend members that leave the Board structured appropriately to have the conversation about the sunset provision that was established to allow the Irving Arts Center sufficient time to grow both its revenues and its reserves to the point that they could sustain their level of operations within the 15% by the time this legislation sunsets in 2026. The Committee may hold a Special Committee meeting before September 8 for further discussion and recommendations, and an item can be added to the Executive Committee meeting agenda if needed.

ACTION ITEM: Gast to send out link for Board application and Board job descriptions to the Committee.

ACTION ITEM: Add as an agenda item on an upcoming Executive Committee meeting regarding any candidate recommendations if needed.

Gears added it is good to see people spilling out of the Convention Center from events. The area was developed to be an urban center and it is a vision come true. The Convention Center adds great opportunities for the community. Gast added without it, the new Wells Fargo and Christus Health company buildings would not be happening. Gears added congratulations to General Manager Tom Meehan for managing and maintaining the building and having fantastic people on staff. Board member Colvin Gibson added the building is maintained in an immaculate way and looks like a brand-new building.

Gibson added his encouragement to Committee members for High Spirited Citizen nominations. There are ten nominees in various stages to date, and he noted nomination paperwork for new nominees needs to be completed by June 15. The Committee is building the pool of nominees for recognition at the High Spirited Citizen luncheon in the fall. Gast added the luncheon date is set for September 5 at the Convention Center. Gibson noted there are great people in the community that have not been recognized yet.

Bourgeois added there is a surprise recognition party for Councilman Oscar Ward at Tia Carlos in Irving on June 17 at 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

With no further discussion, Gears adjourned the meeting adjourned at 9:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Allen Gast, FCDME  
Executive Director