

MINUTES
IRVING CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Irving Convention Center – Junior Ballroom C-D
January 24, 2022

Attendance: David Cole – Board Chair; Bob Bourgeois – Board Vice Chair; Yasir Arafat, Michael Basoco, Beth Bowman, Dallas Burke, Karen Cooperstein, Herb Gears, Colvin Gibson, Todd Hawkins, City Manager Chris Hillman, Nydia Hoskins, Julia Kang, Kim Limon, William Mahoney, Greg Malcolm, John Nicks, Kelly O’Briant, Hammond Perot, Joe Philipp, Michael Randall, Sam Reed, and Richard Stewart, Jr. – Board members; Mayor Rick Stopfer and Councilman Oscar Ward – City of Irving Elected Officials; Assistant City Manager Philip Sanders and Senior Assistant City Attorney Christina Weber – City of Irving; General Manager Tom Meehan and Director of Sales Matt Tungett – ICC Staff; Carol Boyer, Maura Gast, Brice Petty, Diana Pfaff, Susan Rose and Monty White – ICVB.

Board Chair David Cole called the meeting to order at 11:47 a.m. and inquired if there were any citizen comments; there were none.

Cole asked Board members to review the Board of Directors roster that was distributed as a handout for any edits to the information and return to Office Manager Carol Boyer after the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approve the ICVB Board of Directors meeting minutes from December 13, 2021
- Accepting the ICVB Financial Reports for Year-End 2020-21, October, November, and December 2021
- Review of Hotel Occupancy Tax Collections
- Review of ICVB Cash Flow Report
- Accept the Irving Convention Center November and December 2021 Financial Reports

Cole called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. On a motion from Board member William Mahoney and a second from Board member Karen Cooperstein, the motion was unanimously approved.

INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION

Cooperstein made a motion to approve the Community Engagement Committee recommendation for High Spirited Citizen Nominations - Melissa Gentry and Ruby Sevcik. With no further discussion and a second from Board member Julia Kang, the motion unanimously was approved.

BOARD REPORTS

COVID-19 AND AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT UPDATE

Executive Director Maura Gast reported the expenditures paid from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) will now be shown separately on the financial reports. Breaking out the financials will allow for a better understanding of how those funds were distributed. She reported events are continuing to cancel or postpone until later in the year. The ability to move dates from last fiscal year into the current fiscal year is a challenge.

CHAIR REPORT

Cole asked Board members to complete and sign the Conflict –of Interest form that was distributed and return to Boyer. He also announced the February 28 Board of Directors meeting will be held at the Jack D. Huffman Community Building in the auditorium.

BOARD COMMITTEES

Board and Business Development Committee

Committee Chair Richard Stewart, Jr. reported:

- The Committee met for the first time this year on January 7, 2022 and discussed obligations for the Committee under the ICVB Strategic Plan. Goals and suggested tactics were reviewed, and the Committee discussed next steps.
- Discussion was also held on the process that has been developed for Board members to become Board Committee Chair, Board Vice Chair, and Board Chair.
- The next Committee meeting is scheduled for March 11.

Community Engagement Committee

Committee Chair Cooperstein reported:

- The Committee met on January 11 and had good discussion on the High Spirited Citizen Program and options for continuity and/or other changes to the program. There is a backlog of nominations that have been approved. A luncheon to honor the awardees has been tentatively scheduled for March 15. There will be a temporary pause in nominations for the program.
- The Committee also discussed the responsibilities and next steps in the Strategic Plan.
- The next meeting will be held on April 5.

Destination Development Committee

Committee Chair Greg Malcolm reported:

- The next meeting will be held on February 11, with the location pending.

Gast added the meeting is tentatively scheduled for a hard hat tour of the Williams Square Plaza project and lunch at Café at Williams Square. Once the location has been confirmed, notice will be emailed.

CITY REPORTS

Mayor Rick Stopfer reported:

- Staff did an outstanding job on the City's Annual Report Fact Sheet. It is very informative and will be important as the City moves forward. He encouraged everyone to review it on the City's website.
- Council is discussing the R-AB Ordinance and neighborhood concerns.
- He gave a brief overview of the meeting with representatives of the Four Seasons Resort and Club, new management, ICVB and Chamber. The new owner is proposing running the Sports Club and Hotel separately. An announcement on the Sports Club will be coming soon. The Hotel will change flags. The ball is in our court to put the best spin on it and protect the properties and new properties around the location.
- State of the City event is scheduled for tomorrow and will address benefits in Irving over the year and plans for the future.
- DART Update – January 24 the new route program will go live. It will be a tough 6-12 months as new bus and rail service is implemented to improve ridership.

Councilman Oscar Ward reported:

- City Council meeting this week will be discussing the R-AB Ordinance and short-term rental properties.
- Fry's Electronics building developer was notified of historical Irving photographs found during the building demolition. The City was contacted for interest in retaining and storing the photographs. The items are quite large, and the challenge will be a location to store them.

City Manager Chris Hillman reported:

- City opened a free COVID-19 test site at Trinity View Park. The site conducts the PCR test and results are available within 24 to 72 hours. He expressed his appreciation for the City's legal team and Parks and Recreation staff in their assistance to set up the site within 96 hours' notice.
- Irving Police Chief Jeff Spivey is retiring, and the City will recruit for a new police chief through a recruiting firm. Public input opportunities will be scheduled. Hoping to have replacement by late April or early May 2022.
- Williams Square Plaza project will be completed late March or early April. The location along with Levy Event Plaza will anchor Lake Carolyn and show the City is investing dollars to make improvements and focused on maintaining the incredible quality of life in Irving.
- Census numbers report Irving grew 18.6% to 256,000 residents and confirms Irving is becoming a diverse City with 20% Hispanic increase in population. African American residents grew by 24%, Asian doubled to 22% and White non-Hispanic residents declined 20%. The multi-cultural layers across the City are one of the community's greatest features, along with unique shopping, dining, and cultural experiences.
- Irving's annual Frost Fest event moves to Levy Event Plaza on February 19.

BUREAU MANAGEMENT AND STAFF REPORTS

Gast reported:

- Several ICVB and ICC staff members are out of the office and have either been exposed or tested positive for COVID.
- Levy Event Plaza has been selected by USA Triathlon for an event in April.
- ICVB will host a triathletes organization for a site selection group in February. They are touring several sites around the world for professional triathlete events.
- ICTN produced a piece on the Mustang Square Plaza renovation and included an interview with Mustangs sculptor Robert Glen who is participating remotely in the renovations.
- Reporting for Sales and Convention Services Assistant Executive Director Lori Fojtasek, Gast reported the sales team pace is off slightly, but expect to gain momentum and bounce back. A COVID tracker report is included in the packet. The application process to fill the ICVB Corporate Market Sales Manager position will be closed by the end of March.

Marketing and Communications

Assistant Executive Director Diana Pfaff reported:

- December is historically low for leads and inquiries due to the holidays.
- Thanked The Las Colinas Association for the new holiday event at Levy Plaza and the City for amping up the annual holiday events this year.

- Website traffic increased slightly with 61,380 total sessions and 51,756 users to both websites. Most of the traffic was through the Visit Irving website.
- Blog traffic had 9,471 pageviews in December.
- Staycations Campaign generated 5,718 hotel referrals in December and 130,327 hotel referrals year-to-date, with an economic value of \$28 million.
- Meetings Campaign in 2021 generated 21,954 website sessions and 261 meetings-sales inquiries.
- YTD Promoted Content Campaign generated a combined 35,760 blog visits through social media and the ICVB blog.
- Event-Driven Campaigns focusing on larger events, not necessarily inside the City of Irving, generated 702 hotel referrals from the Cowboys campaign and 790 hotel referrals from the Cotton Bowl campaign.
- There were 1,308 new followers added in December for social media and the Visit Irving Facebook page performed the best with 1,089 new Likes.

Administration and Finance

Assistant Executive Director Administration and Finance Susan Rose reported:

- November AirDNA Report shows:
 - There were 463 available listings in Irving, which was a 10.2% decrease over last year.
 - The Average Daily Rate was \$230.42, an increase of 34.07% over last year.
 - Occupancy increased 14.33% compared to last year.
 - The hotel comparable subset Average Daily Rate for November was \$119.49, an increase of 38.21%, Occupancy of 56.4%, an increase of 19.42% from last year.
- Administration/Finance Department:
 - New phone system rolled out for the ICVB and ICC teams. Rose shared her appreciation to IT Manager Brice Petty for his hard work and dedication to the project. The staff can answer phones through the TEAMS application, which is a Cloud-based system.
 - Petty held TEAMS training in December and January for ICVB and ICC staff.
 - Accounting team is continually working on ARPA fund accounting in conjunction with the City.

IRVING CONVENTION CENTER

General Manager Tom Meehan reported:

- The first quarter of the fiscal year achieved and exceeded budget.
- The forecast is continuing at the same pace as predicted and hopefully will be better than budget by the end of the year. The pace is there, and the numbers are well ahead of the past two years.
- Business is picking up and Meehan is pleased with the financial outlook.
- Maintenance and repair projects continue:
 - Working on storm damage repairs and upgrades to the outside building cameras.
 - There is also a large lighting project in the Exhibit Hall with LED light replacements, which will save money on utility and the purchasing of fluorescent bulbs.
 - Grand Ballroom lighting project will add color-changing lighting.
 - New monument signs will be installed; one by the fountain and LED board and one on Highway 114 side of the building. Working with the City on the sign location placements.

Director of Sales Matt Tungett reported:

- ICC is in the midst of cancellation round #3 since the new COVID variant arrived.
- Two relatively large events in November either moved or canceled. The combined minimum revenue would have been \$122,555. One other group in December has canceled as well.
- This month was busy with an Anime convention, Texas Dreams Gymnastics, Corn Hole Tournament, and return of Cheer and Dance Competition.
- The gymnastics event had a record attendance and corn hole tournament was larger this year and extended to the Exhibit Hall and Grand Ballroom areas.
- The North Texas Teen Book Festival will return in March.
- Corporate market is slow, but long-term Association and SMERF markets are turning up.
- ICC Sales Managers have met their goals for Quarter 1 of this fiscal year.

INDUSTRY PARTNERS

Hotel Partners

- Malcolm reported the December STR report for the City shows 55.8% Occupancy and YTD 58.1%.
- Average Daily Rate is \$98.24, better than last year at \$93.78.
- RevPAR is \$54.80 for the month, and \$54.50 for the year.
- South Irving cluster of hotels report 62.5% Occupancy and Average Daily Rate of \$112.73 and RevPAR of \$74.10.
- Hilton Garden Inn DFW South for January 2022 is showing 51% Occupancy, \$124.25 Average Daily Rate, and \$63.29 RevPAR. The calendar year is starting off slow but hoping February will rebound.

Board member Nydia Hoskins reported:

- Omni Las Colinas ended December at 35% Occupancy, Average Daily Rate of \$171.30 and RevPAR of \$70.70.
- There were \$750,000 in cancellation revenue for January 2022, with no force majeure in place.
- Short-term business is moving and staying optimistic.
- February cancellations have slowed down.

Board member Kim Limon reported:

- Hampton Inn Irving/Las Colinas ended December with Occupancy of 49.7%, Average Daily Rate of \$94.74 and RevPAR of 47.04%, growth index 125% for the year.
- Numbers were better than anticipated.
- Currently the Hilton Garden Inn Las Colinas and Hampton Inn Irving/Las Colinas are hiring for a Sales Manager position.

RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

Board Chair David Cole reported:

- The daily supply chain issues are very challenging and never seen before in history.
- Communication between supply chains is slow and hiring/keeping drivers is also a challenge.
- It is a juggling act to keep supplies, menu items and pricing stable or deciding to increase.
- Total effect is restaurants are either closing temporarily or permanently due to all the challenges.

DCURD

Board member Dallas Burke reported:

- DCURD storm water pump station emergency backup generators project is scheduled to open April 2022.
- Two large dredging projects are underway in Cottonwood and Hackberry Creeks.
- Two wall repair projects are out for bid. Included in the scope of work is option to install vinyl sheet pile seawall and should be a long-term solution to replacing the aging lake wall around Lake Carolyn with a lifespan of the seawall at 75 to 100 years.
- Irving Flood Control District (IFCD-I) completed a major pump station renovation. New project will begin in the next 30 days to reconstruct the culverts in the parallel levee of the system.
- IFCD-III is budding a project now to replace the sluice gate structures, and a project to install a tilting weir that will allow operations to release stormwater without having to run pumps. Two more projects scheduled for this summer will to rebuild large stormwater pumps.

Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce

Board member John Nicks reported:

- The first quarter of fiscal year 2021-22 started strong with 3 Wins, 2 Recruitments and 1 Retention/Expansion, representing \$43.1 million in capital investment and 12,457 square feet of commercial space.
- The Chamber team received 36 prospective inquiries, representing \$28 million in capital investment and 28,000 jobs, of which 28% of the projects were corporate headquarters.
- Texas unemployment rate dropped to 4.0%, a healthy improvement from the peak in January 2021 of 6.8%.
- The deadline to file for Texas primary elections was December 13, 2021. Nicks gave a brief overview of candidate ballot.
- State of the City event will be held at the Irving Convention Center on January 25 at 11:30 a.m. The event will focus on overcoming, advancing, achieving and future opportunities for the community in 2022.
- Five Star Chamber Mixer is scheduled for January 25 at 4:30 p.m. with event sponsor Alphagraphics.
- Grand opening and ribbon cutting for Eggholic Restaurant is scheduled for January 26 at 4:00 p.m.
- The Chamber events calendar is available on their website.

Arts and Culture

Executive Director Arts and Culture Todd Hawkins reported:

- Hawkins introduced new Arts Board Chair Kelly O'Briant.
- Arts Center:
 - *I Am A Man: Photographs of the Civil Rights Movement, 1960-70*
 - This weekend the Arts Center will host *Youth America Grand Prix, International Ballet Competition*.
 - *Our Voice: Celebrating the Coretta Scott King Illustrator Awards* in the Dupree Lobby Gallery.
 - *The Blues (& Other Colors): Works by Ernie Benton and Sontonya Necheal* in Carpenter Hall Lobby.
 - *Ancient Hymns: Paintings by Deepa Koshaley* in the Focus Gallery.

- Upcoming Exhibits: *Art Uninterrupted* – Annual Black History Month Visual Arts Exhibition. Opening ceremony on February 5 from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. in the Main Gallery
- Main Stage:
 - *Anna in the Tropics* – January 21 through February 5, 2022.
- Hawkins invited Board members to attend the Arts Board meeting later today. Discussion will center around a deep dive into the Arts and Culture Department.

Hawkins added the historical Irving photographs that Ward referred to are very large and set in steel. They will be a great addition to the Irving archives and is excited to have them, but the challenge is in storage for these very oversized items.

The Las Colinas Association

Board member Hammond Perot reported:

- The Las Colinas Association January/February “Spirit of Las Colinas” newsletter was distributed as a handout and is included in the Board packet.
- The wayfinding signage project in the Urban Center is 85% complete and includes the ICC monument sign on Las Colinas Boulevard.
- The Holiday in the Plaza event had 3,500-4,000 attendees and featured over 40 artisan vendors. There was also an ice-skating rink, Ferris wheel, and photos with Santa. With 100% of proceeds donated to the Irving Police and Fire Blue Christmas organization, \$3,310 was raised to help children and families in need.
- Hackberry Creek Ranch site now has a historical marker. The Irving Heritage Society, Las Colinas Association, City of Irving, and Pioneer Natural Resources partnered together to recognize this significant part of Irving’s history.
- A new park has been developed on the corner of Riverside and Customer Way, with a butterfly garden in the middle of the park and surrounded by walking paths, benches, and a scenic water overlook.

TIF

Michael Randall reported:

- The developer for Hotel Indigo project approached TIF requesting \$1.5 million to enhance the patio and promenade along Mandalay Canal. After several rounds of negotiations, TIF approved a proposal for \$585,000 reimbursement when the project is complete, and obligations are fulfilled. In addition, a \$675,000 O&M Tax refund to them over the life of TIF, out to 2038. Ultimately, a \$1 million payback is anticipated. The TIF held other discussions on another property interested in obtaining the vacant land parcel between Hotel Indigo and the Homewood Suites, which could enhance the area. Randall noted it is good for the City to do some things on the Canal to re-energize that area.

Hillman added the TIF Board-supported canal enhancements are important improvements. The Las Colinas Association with Urban Land Institute did a study on the Canal which resulted in several findings on ways the City could implement strategies and take advantage of that amenity. There is work to be done. Some of the ideas identified areas that would improve access to the Canal. Hillman appreciates the good work of the ICVB Board, Assistant City Manager Philip Sanders, and the developer to create an incredible experience along the Canal.

Cole reminded Board members to complete and return the Conflict –of Interest Form and Board Roster with any corrections. He noted the Irving Marathon Series “Love on the Run” event is scheduled for Saturday, February 12, for any board members interested in participating. Also, January 28 is the New Board Member Orientation at the ICC.

Cole adjourned the meeting at 12:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maura Allen Gast".

Maura Allen Gast, FCDME
Executive Director