

MINUTES
Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau
Board of Directors
Irving Convention Center – Junior Ballroom C-D
March 27, 2023

Attendance: Bob Bourgeois – Board Chair; Richard Stewart, Jr. – Board Vice Chair, Yasir Arafat, Michael Basoco, Beth Bowman, David Cole, Karen Cooperstein, Tommy DeBeaudry, Stephanie Fenley-Garcia, Herb Gears, Colvin Gibson, Todd Hawkins, City Manager Chris Hillman, Nydia Hoskins, Julia Kang, Kim Limon, William Mahoney, Greg Malcolm, Kelly O’Briant, Janie Perelman, Hammond Perot, Joe Philipp, Sam Reed – Board members; Assistant City Manager Philip Sanders, Chief Financial Officer Bret Starr, City Attorney Kuruvilla Oommen, Councilman Oscar Ward, and Councilman Mark Zeske – City of Irving; Assistant General Manager Jeremy Pierce – ICC Staff; Carol Boyer, Lori Fojtasek, Maura Gast, Marianne Lauda, Brice Petty, Diana Pfaff, Susan Rose, and Monty White – ICVB.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approve the ICVB Board meeting minutes from February 27, 2023
- Approve the ICVB Financial Reports from February 2023
- Review the Hotel Occupancy Tax Collections
- Accept the ICC Financial Reports from February 2023

Bourgeois called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. On a motion from Board member Julia Kang, and a second from Board member Herb Gears, the motion was unanimously approved.

IRVING HOTEL OUTLOOK PRESENTATION – TOURISM ECONOMICS QUARTERLY UPDATE

Assistant Executive Director Finance/Administration Susan Rose gave an overview of the US and Irving Lodging Outlook. She noted that the full presentation was presented at the March 24th Executive Committee meeting.

- U.S. Context:
 - The unemployment rate is at one of the lowest levels in 50 years, however, job growth remains solid.
 - Consumers are feeling uneasy as prices are 6% higher than a year ago and inflation is eroding household income.
 - The recent turmoil in the banking industry reinforces the view there will be a mild recession and slow lending.
 - The Hotel Average Daily Rate has peaked, and room demand is slightly ahead of 2019.
 - “People are prioritizing travel over just about everything” – a quote from a February 2023 Expedia earnings call.
 - Spending continues to rise for services. Consumer spending on services is currently 66% of total consumption. It is normally closer to 70%.

- Business travel continues to normalize, and room demand is still below the economic trend.
- Irving Lodging Forecast:
 - Room revenue is expected to be 5.8% above 2019 levels in 2023, and Occupancy rates in 2023 at 69.7% are not to 2019 levels.
 - ADR in 2019 was \$110 and is \$118 in 2023. RevPAR in 2019 was \$79 and is \$82 in 2023.
 - DFW Airport passenger volumes helped recover lodging demands.
 - It may take until beyond 2024 for RevPAR to recover to its historical average.
 - Hotel performance in Irving continues to recover.
 - The uncertain economic outlook will play a role in recovery.

CHAIR REPORT

- Bourgeois thanked Irving Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce President Beth Bowman and her team for hosting the Irving Advocacy Day in Austin, Texas. The Chamber's focus for this legislative session includes economic development, education & workforce, healthcare, and infrastructure.
- He thanked everyone who participated in the Irving Marathon Series St. Patrick's Day 5k on March 18. The CVB team will be walking in next week's 5k, and it is also a qualifier for the Boston Marathon.
- Bourgeois thanked Assistant Executive Director Marketing/Communications Diana Pfaff for the invitation to attend SXSW in Austin, Texas. It was the first time to attend the event and Irving's presence was amazing. Irving was in excellent company with some of the biggest brands and companies in the world, and the team made Irving shine in the middle of it all.
- Attended the Italian Food and Heritage Festival on the Mandalay Canal last week. It was the kickoff of a two-day event. It is planned to be an annual event hosted in Irving.
- Bourgeois thanked the City staff and Council for Wi-Fi availability in the City. Irving parks will soon have free Wi-Fi, as well as Levy Event Plaza and the West Irving Aquatic Center. Williams Square Plaza already has Wi-Fi availability. It is fantastic to have this available for our residents and visitors.
- Bourgeois congratulated Executive Director Maura Gast for her interview in "*Meetings Today*" magazine. A copy of the article is included in the meeting packet. The article recognizes Gast as an impassioned leader. Gast references Irving's unbeatable location, and Bourgeois added that Gast and the CVB/ICC staff are unbeatable.
- He also congratulated Board Vice Chair Richard Stewart, Jr. who was awarded the AALS Outstanding Achievement Award. The award recognizes individuals who have upheld the ideas of the legal profession, promoted the interests of justice, and served as an exemplar to African American Lawyers in Texas.
- The next Board meeting is scheduled for May 1 at the Hilton Garden Inn DFW South.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Board and Business Development

Committee Vice Chair Sam Reed reported:

- The Committee met on March 10 and heard a legislative session update, reviewed the Committee's strategic plan items, and confirmed next steps.
- The next Committee meeting is scheduled for June 9.

Community Engagement Committee

Committee Chair Colvin Gibson reported:

- The next Committee meeting is scheduled for April 11.
- Gibson asked that Board members seriously consider joining this Committee for the Board to proceed with the ICVB Board Strategic Plan body of work for this year.

Destination Development Committee

Committee Chair Greg Malcolm reported:

- The next Committee meeting is scheduled for May 9.

CITY REPORTS

Councilman Oscar Ward:

- Thanked Bowman for arranging the Irving Advocacy Day in Austin, Texas. It was a very productive trip.
- There is a Council Work Session and Council meeting this week. An agenda item to be discussed is recognition for Marvin Randle for his years of service to the City. The item will go through the Work Session and comments from Council and then a future vote.
- Ward also attended the Italian Food Festival kickoff and noted Anthony Nussmeier, a professor from University of Dallas, gave a history of the early settlers in Texas. There are Community Holy Week services at Heritage Park with pastors from several churches speaking Monday through Friday this week from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Councilman Mark Zeske reported:

- There is a meeting tomorrow at City Hall with input from citizens as DART moves forward with reorganizing routes, etc. He urged attendance to capture input.
- Thanked the Board for their support and service to the City. The CVB Board and staff are amazing.
- Election is on May 6 and there are Charter changes on the ballot for voting.

City Manager Chris Hillman reported:

- Thanked Bourgeois for mentioning the free Wi-Fi in Irving parks and all the upcoming locations. It is an improvement the City has been working on for several years and using ARPA funds has assisted in completion.
- Continuing to hold public hearings on the future of aquatics. Attendees were presented with information from a 2022 assessment of the facilities that determined it would cost between \$5-\$6 million to repair the pools – two of which are 50-60 years old. Final direction will come from City Council.
- The project to renovate Lively Pointe Youth Center has begun with an investment of \$745,000. There will be an expansion of the kitchen and café areas into a full teaching kitchen with cameras

to demonstrate cooking techniques. Hoping to help teens be engaged and proactive in pursuing careers. The project should be completed in September 2023.

- Music on Main series kicks off April 7 with concerts every week in April.
- Thanked ICC/ICVB staff, Library staff, and the other hundreds of volunteers who worked the North Texas Teen Book Festival. Nearly 9,000 people attended the two-day event.

A discussion was held on City Hall relocation. Hillman stated City Hall is 50 years old and still serves a great purpose but built for a City half the size that we are now. The building is deteriorating at an accelerated pace and the cost of maintenance is becoming an issue that needs to be addressed. City Council will focus on all the options. No decisions have been made. The next step is to evaluate how to pay for it, and that hasn't been addressed yet. Stewart thanked Hillman for his comments on the issues and noted the value of hearing a report from the City Manager.

BUREAU MANAGEMENT AND STAFF REPORTS

Bureau Management

Gast reported:

- Thanks to all the Board members who attended the Southern Travelers Explore reception at the Texican Hotel. It was a highly successful event with social media influencers and will yield economic value in promoting Irving.
- The CVB has three items on the next City Council agenda: Live Nation ticket contract renewal, USA Triathlon Multi-Sport Festival, and Invited Celebrity Classic event trust fund agreements.

Sales and Services

Assistant Executive Director Sales and Services Lori Fojtasek reported:

- Travel season is ramping up for the sales team. As of today, the team is currently at 121% of their year-to-date goal, with six months left in the year.
- Last month Lifestyles Unlimited program yielded 2,000 room nights.
- This month the National Guard of Texas group has 850 rooms.
- In April, National Catholic Education Association has 2,800 rooms, Invited Celebrity Classic has 1,400 rooms and USA Triathlon Multi-Sport event has 1,000 room nights.
- Volunteers are needed for the USA Triathlon event.

Marketing and Communications

Assistant Executive Director Marketing/Communications Diana Pfaff reported:

- The complete Marketing and Communications report is included in the packet.
- Sales leads increased significantly with 248 prospects in February.
- The advertising campaigns are performing successfully.
- The Marketing/Communications team worked at the Southern Travelers Explore event and exhibited in SXSW in Austin, soft-launched an app all while being short one staff position.
- The STE kick off event at the Texican Hotel hosted 30 social media influencers and had 50 total attendees. To date, there have been 255 social media posts, four articles and \$160,000 media value gained from that group.
- A video of the STE event was shown.
- A video of the SXSW event was shown.
- To date, collected over 1,200 emails, and 1,100 downloads for Irving on the Rocks app, and increased social media follower from the SXSW event.

- The Irving on the Rocks app was soft launched at STE and SXSW. Still working the kinks out of the app and will have a more formal launch at the end of April.

Board member Michael Basoco asked for Pfaff's thoughts on participating in TikTok. Pfaff stated the app is extremely popular and we do have a presence but do not measure it, as this is the first year. Right now, it is too popular an app in our space to ignore and will add measurement reporting going forward.

Administration and Finance

Assistant Executive Director Finance and Administration Susan Rose reported:

- The AirDNA reports for February shows:
 - There were 590 available listings, a 49.4% increase over last year's figure of 395.
 - The Average Daily Rate was \$207.01, a decrease of 8.9% over last year.
 - Occupancy percentage was about 47.7%, with a decrease of 13.13% compared to last year.
 - For the hotel comparable subset, Average Daily Rate for January was \$105.25, a decrease of 3.93% from last year, with Occupancy at 50.7% slight decrease 14.93%.
- The Administration and Finance team has been busy with the branding survey, which went out in early March with a deadline of April 7. The goal is to identify how Irving is perceived and use the information captured to identify brand development for the future. Rose thanked Hillman and the City Communications team for their help. Hard copies of the survey are available at City Hall for residents who may not have internet access. In order to be valid, the survey needs a minimum number of respondents. The goal is to have data collected by early summer and results will be shared with the Board as the process evolves.
- The team is busy with the FY2023-24 budget process.

CONVENTION CENTER MANAGEMENT

Assistant General Manager Jeremy Pierce reported:

- Total event attendance surpassed 12,000 visitors in February.
- Booked 1,760 future guestrooms this month and 14,391 for the year.
- Upcoming events include Express Cheer, Breakfast with the Stars, and the Texas Association of Student Councils.
 - Building project: new monument sign on Highway 114.

INDUSTRY PARTNERS

LIVE NATION UPDATES

Live Nation General Manager Tommy DeBeaudry:

- Hosted Toyota Music Factory General Manager meeting. It is the fourth time to host this event. The focus was on F&B concepts and sustainability. Working with Coca-Cola as a sponsor for non-plastic bottled water.
- Working with Brookfield Management on initiatives throughout the complex to fill empty spaces and working on potential venues in spaces to increase draw.
- Installing innovative technology with open gate magnetometers. This processes guests fast and increases time inside the venue. Also installing pedestal scanners for tickets.
- Working on the Guest Services area and artist merchandise areas.
- Improved VIP suites with three new VIP areas and have seen an increase in ROI.

- Bookings are confirmed down from 2022 but still seeing that trend industry-wide, down 10% from 2022.
- Latin talent bookings have proven to be strong from a revenue standpoint at The Pavilion and will continue.

HOTEL INDUSTRY UPDATES

Board member Greg Malcolm:

- STR Report for February:
 - Occupancy in Irving for hotels was 70.7%, up 9.7 %.
 - The average daily rate was \$123.06.
 - Revenue per available room was \$96.87.
 - South Irving area Occupancy is 78.8%, Average Daily Rate of \$131.32 and RevPAR is at \$111.35.
- Hilton Garden Inn DFW South reports Occupancy of 82.8%, Average Daily Rate of \$138.78 and RevPAR at \$114.90.

Board member Nydia Hoskins:

- Omni Las Colinas ended February with Occupancy of 65.4%, Average Daily Rate of \$211.63 and RevPAR at \$133.93.
- Strong start for Quarter 1 but comparing against Omicron cancellations. Quarter 2 will give a better look at comparisons.
- Business travel continues to return, and Group ADR is strong.
- The pool is open and had a great showing for opening weekend.
- The Las Colinas Ballroom carpet installation is complete, and renovations will be completed in October.

Board member Kim Limon:

- The Hampton Inn Las Colinas occupancy for February was 83%, the highest ever, up 17.4%.
- The ADR ended at \$113.97, down 4.7%.
- Weekends will take Occupancy over rate. RevPAR is \$94.62.
- Picked up 158 room nights over the weekend for the rest of the month.

PARTNER ORGANIZATION AND STAKEHOLDER REPORTS

Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce:

Chamber Chair Janie Perelman reported:

- Congratulations to the ICVB team on the success of STE and SXSW events.
- Irving Advocacy Day in Austin was very productive with meetings with legislators and an open exchange of information.
- Hosted Chamber's Business Connections, featuring Ron Duncan, Assistant VP of Contract Administration for DFW International Airport.
- Thanked the City for the free Wi-Fi project that includes Williams Square and Levy Event Plaza.
- Small Business Blitz is scheduled for May 8-12. Volunteers are needed to visit our small businesses and if interested, contact economicdevelopment@irvingchamber.com
- The Irving International Affairs and Sister Cities team welcomed Consul General of Peru in Dallas. Hon. Liliana Trelles was in attendance and discussed areas for cultural and economic opportunities.

- Best in Irving 2023 voting is open. Voting extended to April 7.

Irving Arts and Culture

Irving Arts Board Chair Kelly O'Briant reported:

- Continuing with the Celebration Series:
 - *Soul of America – A Tribute to Aretha Franklin* on Friday, April 14.
- Broadway star Michael Cavanaugh will debut the new 9' Steinway Concert Grand Piano. He and his band will perform the songs of Billy Joel and Elton John on Thursday, May 18 at 7:30 p.m.
- *TGIF Comedy* series on Friday, June 23, July 28, and September 22.
 - Friday, June 23, headliner Kristen Key.
 - Friday, July 28, featuring Arvin Mitchell.
 - Friday, August 22, headliner Eliot Chang.
- Currently on display at the Irving Archives & Museum, *Fighting the Right Fight, African American Experiences in World War II*. The show runs until April 14.

Las Colinas Association

Board member Hammond Perot reported:

- The LCA Annual Meeting of Members on March 28 and will hold election of three Board members.
- With a quorum at the meeting will also vote on Fire Station #8 site at Riverside and NW Highway.
- Working on the 50th anniversary celebration items. The mobile history exhibit is completed and will start going out into the community. Perot asked to let him know if anyone would like to schedule the exhibit.

Bourgeois adjourned the meeting at 1:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Allen Gast, FCDME
Executive Director