

MINUTES

Irving Convention & Visitors Bureau Board of Directors

Monday, April 22, 2024

Irving Arts Center

3333 N. MacArthur Blvd. – Suite 200

Irving, Texas 75062

Attendance: Richard Stewart, Jr. – Board Chair; Board Vice Chair Herb Gears, Yasir Arafat, Stephanie Booker, Beth Bowman, David Cole, Tommy DeBeaudry, Dallas Burke, Stephanie Fenley-Garcia, Colvin Gibson, Todd Hawkins, City Manager Chris Hillman, Cambria Jones, Julia Kang, Kim Limon, William Mahoney, Greg Malcolm, Kelly O’Briant, Hammond Perot, Sam Reed, Dick Rogers, Brad Watson – Board Members; Councilman Abdul Khabeer, Assistant City Manager Philip Sanders, Chief Financial Officer Bret Starr, AND Senior Assistant City Attorney Christina Weber – City of Irving; Assistant General Manager Jeremy Pierce – ICC Staff; Carol Boyer, Maura Gast, Lori Fojtasek, Marianne Lauda, Brice Petty, Diana Pfaff, Susan Rose, and Monty White – ICVB.

Board Chair Richard Stewart, Jr. called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m. and inquired if there were any citizen comments; there were none. Stewart expressed his appreciation to Executive Director Arts and Culture Todd Hawkins for hosting the meeting at the Arts Center.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approving ICVB Board Meeting Minutes for March 25, 2024
- Accepting ICVB Financial Reports to March 2024
- Reviewing the Hotel Occupancy Tax Collections

Stewart referred to the Hotel Industry Reports in the March 24 minutes and noted a question had been asked regarding the phrasing in the minutes and asked that staff research the item and make any changes needed as a result.

Stewart asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, noting the pending correction to the minutes. With a motion from Board member Julia Kang, and a second from Board member Colvin Gibson, the motion passed unanimously.

INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION

Approving the High Spirited Citizen Recommendations from the Community Engagement Committee.

- Lazaro Alvarez
- Gerald Farris
- Leo Hull
- Lee Mosty
- Robert Reichelt
- Mark Zeske

Committee Chair Colvin Gibson presented the slate of High Spirited Citizen nominees that have been reviewed and recommended for approval. Gibson made a motion to approve, with a second from Board member William Mahoney, the motion unanimously was approved.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT

- Stewart congratulated the ICVB and the City for the successful Total Eclipse events at Levy Plaza and Heritage Park. He noted the events put Irving on the map with highlighted media coverage.
- Next Board meeting is scheduled for May 20 at the Irving Convention Center.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Board and Business Development

Committee Chair Sam Reed reported:

- Next Committee meeting is scheduled for June 14 at 9:00 a.m.

Community Engagement Committee

Committee Chair Colvin Gibson reported:

- The High Spirited Citizen program is on track with 6-8 additional nominees, plus the six nominees that were approved today. Fall dates for the award luncheon are being considered and the Board will be notified when a date is confirmed.
- Elizabeth Phillips from MacArthur High School has been selected to receive the ICVB Irving Schools Foundation scholarship. Phillips and her parents will attend the May 1 Breakfast with the Stars event at the Convention Center.
- The Committee has activated plans to raise the ICVB profile in the community at the May 10 Heritage Society Annual Fish Fry and Cake Auction. The ICVB use the opportunity to promote the High Spirited Citizens program as well as build general awareness.
- Gibson gave his praises for the Eclipse in the Park events which modeled community engagement.
- The next Committee meeting is July 9.

Destination Development Committee

Committee Chair Greg Malcolm reported:

- The next Committee meeting is May 14 at 11:30 a.m. at the Rayleigh Underground in Toyota Music Factory.

CITY REPORT

Councilman Abdul Khabeer reported:

- This is Khabeer's first attendance at an ICVB Board meeting.
- He shared the one thing he hears more frequently as a Councilman at City meetings and functions is how to make sure Irving is going to be a destination point to visitors. He is encouraged by the Destination Development Committee and would like to attend those meetings.
- Also, would like to show how South Irving should benefit from the overall development of Irving.

City Manager Chris Hillman reported:

- Excellent job from the City's entire team on the Eclipse events.
- The Resident Survey is available, and he asked the Board to take the survey and encourage neighbors as well. The survey results will be shared with the City Council to help identify priorities and to better understand what citizens expect from the City. The survey closes at midnight on May 1. A large sample size of data is needed to be the most effective.
- Early voting starts today and there are important decisions on the ballot.

- Play Irving projects are moving forward with new recreation centers – Lee Park specifically, along with Senter and Mustang Parks.
- The City is holding a Job Fair on May 14 at Senter Park with emphasis on applications for the Irving Police Department.
- “Music on Main” concert series every Friday in April has been successful.
- *Fusion 2024* – will be Saturday, May 18 at Heritage Park and is a celebration of many cultures.

BUREAU MANAGEMENT AND STAFF REPORTS

Bureau Management

Executive Director Maura Gast reported:

- Added her thanks to staff, City and Las Colinas Association for the tremendous work and partnership on the Total Eclipse event at Levy Plaza. It was a first-class event.
- The same day as the Total Eclipse event, the ICC team was host to 3,000 students for the Texas Association of Student Councils.
- Data will be available in future meetings to share from the Total Eclipse events in the City and information on people staying in Irving visiting from outside the area.
- The Invited Celebrity Golf Class at Las Colinas Country Club last weekend showcased Irving CVB with great delivery from the ICVB team at the Kid’s Autograph area.
- National Travel and Tourism Week proclamation at City Council will be presented on May 2 at 1:00 p.m. during the Work Session. Gast encouraged Board members to attend.
- Focusing on Texas State Senate Interim Charges on Hotel Occupancy Tax uses. The Texas Hotel and Lodging Association will lead the way to protect those uses in Texas.
- Gast shared a Thank You note from a Colorado family who attended the Total Eclipse in the Park event. Gast noted comments shared through the website gave feedback from visitors who praised the event for safety, activation areas, food trucks and organization.

Assistant Executive Director Sales and Services Lori Fojtasek:

- Fojtasek reported a person from Portland attended the Invited Tournament and told her they had attended the Total Eclipse event as well.
- The Flower Crown tent at the Eclipse was overly crowded, and people were incredibly happy to have things to do that were complementary. She congratulated the Marketing team for their efforts.
- Events:
 - Hosted Tri Delta Conference – 830 rooms
 - Acts29 had 2,000 people. This is a religious organization that helps to fund church builds.
 - Texas Frightmare is coming in May, the same weekend as the Irving Marathon’s Fiesta de Mayo.
 - Also in May, Informa Tech Network with 3,000 attendees
 - And U90C Management Group with 9,000 attendees (soccer tournament) in the Dallas area. Irving received 2,900 rooms.
 - Steubenville /Life Teen event is returning in June with 5,000 attendees.

Assistant Executive Director Marketing and Communications Diana Pfaff reported:

- The ICTN “Total Eclipse in the Park” event video at Levy Plaza was shown.

- The Total Eclipse campaign generated 2,013,224 impressions and 30,00 website visits and there were 10,000 registrants for the event. The Irving Police Department reported 6,000 people right at totality. It was a steady flow of 2,500-3,000 people during the day. Press clippings from the event are included in the Board packet.
- Pfaff expressed her thanks to Fojtasek and the many volunteers.
- In partnership with the City, she thanked the City Communication Director April Reiling for her assistance, ICC General Manager Tom Meehan, and Executive Chef Eduardo Alvarez for the moon pie feature.
- Preliminary numbers for the event show hotel room nights for Sunday, April 7 Occupancy City-wide of 84.1%, a 75% increase over last year's reported 47.8% Occupancy. Monday, April 8 shows 90.8% Occupancy, a 24% increase over last year's reported 73% Occupancy.
- The ICVB team hosted the media center and Kid's Autograph Zone at the Invited Celebrity Classic golf tournament. Celebrities were gracious and it was a worthwhile investment. Pfaff thanked Las Colinas Association and Board member Julius Kang for their assistance.

Administration and Finance

Assistant Executive Director Finance and Administration Susan Rose reported:

- STR Data was received just today, therefore a full report will be included in next month's Board packet and will include a total recap of the Eclipse event.
- We will begin using the Everbridge text notification system to communicate any updates or changes regarding Board meeting location, date or time change with parking and/or construction information as needed.
- Rose encouraged the Board to utilize the Board portal for information, agenda, and packets.
- The Administration/Finance team is testing a new expense software system which will roll out this month.
- The budget process has begun, and staff will be working on budgets for FY2024-25.
- The ICVB team will be in a Fired Up! Training class Tuesday, April 30. It is a team building and culture forum to build on our current successes.

CONVENTION CENTER MANAGEMENT

Assistant General Manager Jeremy Pierce reported:

- The Convention Center has been extremely busy the last few months.
- Pierce congratulated the team for the Total Eclipse event and gave a shout-out to Chef Alvarez for the moon pie. It was quite an adventure to transport the "world's largest edible moon pie" from the Convention Center kitchen to Levy Plaza.
- The main post for the Hwy 114 monument sign has been installed. Weather permitting it should be completed by the Board meeting in May. It has been more than a year in the making.
- The ICC team will be in Fired Up! Training on Monday, April 29.

INDUSTRY PARTNERS

The Pavilion at Toyota Music Factory/Live Nation

General Manager Tommy DeBeaudry reported:

- The first two amphitheater shows of the season both sold out.
- The Sessanta: Primus, Puscifer, A Perfect Circle event on April 12 set records in merchandise sales and food and beverage, averaging \$50 per person in merchandise and 7,300 tickets sold.
- Blue October concert was a success in spite of the weather.

- The Pavilion is one of 16 venues with a goal of 70% or more landfill waste and will soon end single-use plastics. This is a big issue with Live Nation corporate. Events last weekend averaged 73%.
- Budgeted for 91 shows this year and confirmed 77, with seven pending shows.

HOTEL INDUSTRY UPDATES

Board member Greg Malcolm reported:

- STR Reporting for Irving in March 2024:
 - Not the best month because of an early Easter and spring breaks. Occupancy was 74.3%, down 5.7% from previous year.
 - Average Daily Rate was \$127.08.
 - RevPAR was up \$89.48, down from last year.
 - Malcolm's seven hotels in the Metroplex area sold out Sunday and Monday over the Eclipse weekend. Average rate was \$200, which is fantastic for a small hotel.
 - South Irving by Hilton 120-room property has begun construction and should open third or fourth quarter of 2025.

Board member Kim Limon reported:

- Hampton Inn Las Colinas in March showed Occupancy 81.4%.
- Average Daily Rate of \$121.14, down slightly over last year.
- RevPAR at \$98.62, up 3% from last year.
- Eclipse weekend sold out on Monday night with a \$183.33 rate.

RESTAURANT INDUSTRY UPDATE

Board member David Cole reported:

- Attended the National Restaurant Association's Public Affairs Conference in Washington D.C. The Texas delegation is the largest with 50 members.
 - Visited 35 legislative offices on Capitol Hill.
 - Key issues are credit card swipe fees and tip credit.
- iFratelli pizza - Monday, April 8 for the Eclipse event was the busiest day ever. The Las Colinas location is the busiest daytime location for all iFratelli locations.
- Donated pizzas for the Invited Celebrity Class military outpost for currently serving and retired military. It was an honor to see what the retired military are doing today. It was a beautiful day and a great crowd.

INDUSTRY AT LARGE

Board member Stephanie Fenley Garcia reported:

- Thanked the Arts Center for hosting the meeting.
- Encouraged everyone to vote.

PARTNER ORGANIZATION AND STAKEHOLDER REPORTS

DCURD and Irving Flood Control District Dallas Burke reported:

- It was an active weekend for flood control efforts. Pumping began on Saturday as 3.5 inches of rain fell. Pumping operations were shut down on Sunday morning and resumed on Monday.
- Southfork Hackberry Creek dredging continues. Hauling away 60,000 cubic yards of trash and preparing to dredge another 60,000 this summer.

- IFCD I – Levee inspection by U.S. Army Corps Thursday, April 25. Levee repair is underway near Proctor Rd.
- IFCD III – Capital project is out for bid: Tilting Weir Project and Outfall Rehabilitation. Pump station discharge pipe rehabilitation set to begin in June.

Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce

Chamber Chair Brad Watson reported:

- Unemployment rate for Irving in March is 3.7%, Texas reports 4.1% and National rate is 3.9%.
- April is Volunteer Appreciation Month – there will be ice cream floats available at the former ExxonMobil site. It is an incredible campus and volunteers are a big part of the Chamber.
- Celebrating Small Businesses – The Economic Development team is hosting the 6th Annual Small Business Blitz.
- Hosting a Small Business event on May 9 from 4:00 – 6:30 p.m. at the Rayleigh Underground to announce the “Best in Irving” winners. Registration on the Chamber website for the event.
- The Chamber’s semi-annual presentation to City Council will report 28 wins for the first half of the fiscal year, 2,400 job opportunities and \$70 million in capital, as well as 8 retention/expansion wins.
- Edged Energy announced a new state-of-the-art data center in South Irving, equipped with water-less cooling and ultra-efficient energy systems.
- Data centers are the next important thing and will increase the demand for energy.

Irving Arts and Culture Executive Director Todd Hawkins reported:

- Hawkins welcomed the group and noted the Main Gallery is in transition for the Irving ISD High School portfolio show.
- The Arts Center will be closed June, July, and August to the public, but will be open for elections should a runoff be necessary. Scheduled repairs and upgrades include a room renovation, replacement of HVAC rooftop units upgrading/replacing theatrical lighting in both theaters to LED lighting, and new furniture.
- Everyone is invited on October 21 for the Season Premiere, tours, and grand reopening.
- Arts Board is working on new bylaws, much like the ICVB structure, with two new Committees: Destination Development and Community Development Committees.
- This Friday and Saturday working on a 3–5-year Strategic Plan. Will bring 40 community members together for three sessions and will work on the calendar and budget.
- The Total Eclipse was a good example of what happens when resources are pooled together for success.
- Hawkins is speaking at “The Art of Business” event at Moody Performance Hall.

LAS COLINAS ASSOCIATION

Board member Hammond Perot reported:

- LCA was happy to be a part of the Total Eclipse event with the City and ICVB.
- PawsColinas 5K9 event was canceled due to weather. There were 450 registered participants with dogs and 150 showed up that day and waited until cancellation was announced. Perot thanked the Irving Police Department for their partnership and support.
- Manday Canal Light Club event is scheduled for May 15-16. This is an al fresco event; bites and libations will be available for purchase from Venetian Terrace and live music.
- Hosting the Carpenter Cup Golf Tournament at Hackberry Creek Golf Club on May 7.
- Thanked the Chamber for their partnership in economic development.

- Reminded the Board that Wednesday, April 24 is Administrative Professionals Day.

TIF

Chair Dick Rogers reported:

- TIF is holding steady and reviewing financials.

Gast added the 10th Annual North Texas Teen Book Festival will be at the ICC this weekend. There will be teens and traffic in the area.

With no further discussion, Stewart adjourned the meeting at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Maura Allen Gast". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Maura Allen Gast, FCDME

Executive Director