

**MINUTES**  
**Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
**Board of Directors**  
**Irving Convention Center – Junior Ballroom C-D**  
**May 22, 2023**

Attendance: Bob Bourgeois – Board Chair; Richard Stewart, Jr. – Board Vice Chair; Yasir Arafat, Michael Basoco, Beth Bowman, David Cole, Stephanie Fenley-Garcia, Herb Gears, Colvin Gibson, City Manager Chris Hillman, Nydia Hoskins, Julia Kang, Kim Limon, William Mahoney, Greg Malcolm, Janie Perelman, Hammond Perot, Joe Philipp, Sam Reed – Board members; Finance Director Brad Duff, Assistant City Manager Philip Sanders, Senior Assistant City Attorney Christina Weber, Board Liaison Councilman Kyle Taylor, and Councilman Oscar Ward – City of Irving; General Manager Tom Meehan – ICC Staff; Carol Boyer, Lori Fojtasek, Maura Gast, Marianne Lauda, Brice Petty, Diana Pfaff, Susan Rose, and Monty White – ICVB. Kaye Ward – Guest.

Board Chair Bob Bourgeois called the meeting to order at 11:51 a.m. and inquired if there were any citizen comments; there were none.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- Approve the ICVB Board meeting minutes from May 1, 2023
- Approve the ICVB Financial Reports from April 2023
- Review the Hotel Occupancy Tax Collections
- Accept the ICC Financial Reports from April 2023

Board Vice Chair Richard Stewart, Jr. asked for the Hotel Occupancy Tax Collection report to be pulled from the Consent Agenda and reviewed separately for individual consideration. Bourgeois called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, minus the Hotel Occupancy Tax Collections report. On a motion from Board member Stewart, and a second from Board member Herb Gears, the motion unanimously was approved.

**Hotel Occupancy Tax Collections**

Bourgeois noted that at the Executive Committee Meeting, discussion was held once again on the status of the delinquent hotel tax collections. After further review, it was noted in the April Executive Committee meeting minutes, Senior Assistant City Attorney Christina Weber stated that the City Attorney's Office would be asking the City Council for approval at its June 8 meeting to file litigation regarding these delinquencies. Stewart noted the HOT collections report is in the packet and most properties are complying. Weber gave an update status and reported that Finance has brought forward three property delinquencies for review and next steps by Legal. All informal methods have been exhausted and the Council will be briefed in a closed Executive Session on June 8. City Manager Chris Hillman added staff will aggressively and responsibly ensure delinquent taxes will be paid. Stewart added one final note that the hotels have collected the funds but have not paid the City and they are not authorized to hold onto funds.

With no further discussion, Stewart made a motion to accept the Hotel Occupancy Tax Collections report as presented in the packet. On a second from Gears, the motion unanimously was approved.

#### CHAIR REPORT

- Bourgeois welcomed Councilman Oscar Ward and Kaye Ward. On behalf of the ICVB Board and staff, a presentation of thanks for his many years of service to the City was presented. Bourgeois noted Ward's love of the City, how seriously he took his Council role and always did what he believed was right, protecting the City and making it better for residents and visitors. Executive Director Maura Gast added gratitude for the willingness and support of the hospitality industry, visitor and ICVB economy and always being the champion of the "three-legged stool" in Irving (Convention Center, Toyota Music Factory and Water Street). Board and staff members were invited to share their thoughts of gratitude on note cards given to Ward at the conclusion of the meeting. Bourgeois noted a debt of gratitude to Kaye Ward for sharing Ward over the years.
- Bourgeois reminded the Board the Las Colinas Association 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary mobile experience is parked in the front of the Convention Center until 3:00 p.m. for self-guided tours and encouraged everyone to participate. He also commented on the remarkable success of the Las Colinas Tour of Homes event, with proceeds benefiting five charities. Well done and first-class event.
- The Volunteer Visitor Information kiosk is returning, and Board members are encouraged to sign-up to volunteer. Anyone interested can contact Office Manager Carol Boyer.
- High Spirited Citizen luncheon is slotted to take place in September or October this year and there are some nominees to recognize.
- Bourgeois commented on the social media posts in the packet and the phenomenal posts gathered from the Southern Travelers Explore event that ICVB hosted.
- The next Board meeting is scheduled for June 26 at the Irving Convention Center.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Board and Business Development  
Committee Chair Herb Gears:

- The next Committee meeting is scheduled for June 9 at 9:00 a.m.

Community Engagement Committee  
Committee Chair Colvin Gibson reported:

- The next Committee meeting is scheduled for July 11.
- Gibson asked that Board members continue to engage with High Spirited Citizen nominee suggestions. The nomination deadline for submissions is June 15 for the Committee and Board to take action in time to recognize them at the luncheon in the fall. The Committee may be looking to some of these potential new honorees to join the Committee's work later this year.

Destination Development Committee  
Committee Vice Chair Nydia Hoskins reported:

- Recap of the May 9 meeting – Parks and Recreation Director Joe Moses gave the Committee a presentation on updates from the Parks & Recreation Department, including golf courses, pools, and the status of the use of the City's athletic fields for events the ICVB could recruit to Irving.
- The next Committee meeting is scheduled for August 8.

## CITY REPORTS

### Councilman Oscar Ward:

- The Fish Fry was held on May 12 and was a remarkable success with over \$10,000 raised and 500 tickets sold.
- City run-off elections on June 10 include the School Board, and run-off elections for the City's District 5 and District 3. Early voting starts May 30.
- The City's Budget Retreat was last week, and discussion was focused on pools, solid waste, no tax increase and main emphasis on wages and salaries. The City is aggressively recruiting to become fully staffed with the right people.
- The Fusion Event last Saturday at Heritage Park was well attended. The City's census indicates Irving is the second most culturally diverse city in the United States.
- Irving Blvd. construction project is on schedule and is anticipated to be completed later this year.

### Councilman Kyle Taylor:

- A big focus for the City's Strategic Plan includes compensation and retiree health insurance. It is important to be able to recruit and retain employees and be competitive.
- A draft of the BYOB Ordinance was provided as a handout. The Ordinance is completely separate from the R-AB Ordinance that was recently revised. The proposed new Ordinance deals with venues that do not sell alcohol for on-site consumption, but instead allow customers to bring their own in.

### City Manager Chris Hillman reported:

- Thanked the Omni Las Colinas for hosting the City's Budget Retreat. It is a beautiful facility with great food and customer service.
- Reminder that small business owners can apply for the City's Grant Program. There are two opportunities; one offers up to \$15,000 in direct financial assistance, the other offers training and technical assistance. Anyone interested can visit [www.CityofIrving.org/SmallBizGrant](http://www.CityofIrving.org/SmallBizGrant) for more information.
- The 88<sup>th</sup> session of the Texas Legislature ends May 29. The City's Legislative Insider program focuses on keeping residents informed of potential impacts state legislation might have on local communities.

A discussion was held on small business grants. Assistant City Manager Philip Sanders explained there are two grants for businesses to recover from the impact of COVID. In response to a question, impacts from the construction on Irving Blvd. and the impact on the City's small businesses would need to prove a direct link to COVID recovery to receive the grant. Hillman noted the construction has impacted businesses big and small and the City focused on helping those businesses with employee appreciation sponsored lunches throughout November and December 2022, and other opportunities as well. In total, more than \$40,000 was provided by the City to recognize employees and in support of the Irving Blvd. businesses. Bourgeois asked for a definition of a "small business" for this program. Sanders stated there is criteria of 100 employees or less; he will forward a copy of the Small Business Recovery & Resiliency Program to Gast for distribution to the Board.

## BUREAU MANAGEMENT AND STAFF REPORTS

### Bureau Management

#### Gast reported:

- The BYOB Ordinance and the R-AB Ordinance are two separate items and not related; the handout was provided in response to questions raised by the City's posting of news relative to a BYOB ordinance.
- Earlier this month, Gast provided the semi-annual update to City Council during National Travel and Tourism Week. A Proclamation for the week was presented from the Mayor's office that coincided with Small Business Week and National Economic Development Week.

### Sales and Services

#### Assistant Executive Director Sales and Services Lori Fojtasek reported:

- The Sales and Services team is having an exceptional year. As of today, the team is currently at 134% of their year-to-date goal.
- Business leads are coming in strong and corporate business is headed in the right direction.
- In May, groups included Texas Cornhole, Neighborly and USA Arm Wrestling.
- Future events include Texas Nightmare, Redken with 2,500 attendees at Toyota Music Factory, and the Catholic youth Steubenville conference with 5,000 youth attending at the Convention Center.

### Marketing and Communications

#### Assistant Executive Director Marketing/Communications Diana Pfaff reported:

- April and May Marketing and Communications full reports are included in the packet.
- Several events happened in the Spring: Invited Celebrity Classic Golf Tournament, USA Multi-Sport Championship, SXSW in Austin, and the Southern Travelers Explore (STE) influencers conference. Pfaff congratulated Marketing Director Monty White and Communications Manager Lori Sirmen for the production of the STE event and noted a job well done.
- Blog traffic increased with 6,316 pageviews in March.
- Website traffic increased in April with 65,610 sessions to irvingtexas.com.
- Congratulations to the Las Colinas Association for the fabulous production of the Home Tour.
- Thanked Ward for representing the City and his years of service will make an impact to last a long time.

### Administration and Finance

#### Assistant Executive Director Finance and Administration Susan Rose reported:

- The AirDNA reports for April shows:
  - There were 636 available listings, a 30.6% increase over last year's figure of 487.
  - The Average Daily Rate was \$219.02, an increase over last year of 5.79%.
  - Occupancy percentage was about 59.8%, with a decrease of 4.0% compared to last year.
  - For the hotel comparable subset, Average Daily Rate for April was \$114.53, a decrease of 2.29% from last year, with Occupancy at 62.9% a slight decrease 0.32%.
- The Administration and Finance team has been busy. The Volunteer Visitor Information kiosk is relaunching, and volunteers are needed. Shifts will be available in 2–4-hour increments. There have been some improvements to the program and with more volunteers, shifts can be more

flexible. If anyone has a friend or friend who may be interested in volunteering with you, please encourage them to contact Boyer for more information.

- A meeting with the ARPA Compliance Readiness Review team is scheduled for tomorrow. Information and records will be provided to them to be sure all requirements are met. The compliance readiness review is a citywide process.
- IT Manager Brice Petty held a training class for ICVB and ICC staff on the Surface HUB 2S electronic whiteboard.
- City Human Resources held an Employee Development Day on May 12 at the Convention Center. Rose commented and thanked Hillman for the event that was well done with classes on customer service, diversity in the workplace and retirement planning, to name a few. Some of the team volunteered at the event.
- Save the Date for July 25 at the Convention Center for The Salvation Army of Irving luncheon, combining Super Lunch and the Soup, Soap, and Hope Luncheons. Boyer is this year's Chair of the event, and more information will be provided at next month's Board meeting.

Gast noted the ICVB Budget Presentation is scheduled to be presented at the June Board meeting.

#### CONVENTION CENTER MANAGEMENT

General Manager Tom Meehan reported:

- Total event attendance surpassed 40,000 visitors in April.
- Booked 3,339 future guestrooms this month and 15,048 for the year.
- Total Event Income is at an all-time high, as well as expenses. Through the first seven months of the year lost \$28,0000 compared to last year at the same time down \$700,000.
- The Convention Center is strong in events and congratulated the ICVB and ICC sales teams.
- For the next 13 months, only two weekends are available for events.
- The ASM Global management team will be here June 6-8 and Meehan will share with them how to successfully put a CVB and CC team together for success.
- May is recording 18 events, with 131,000 attendees, compared to 93,000 last year.
- Customer Service rating is 92.4% for the year.
- Coming events include Texas Nightmare, Akon, Steubenville, Texas Funeral Directors Annual Convention, Elevate IT Expo and DFW Minority Suppliers.
- Building Projects:
  - Converting outside lights to LED, will start on Level 1 and then go to Level 4.
  - Experimenting with different paint colors to replace the orange walls in some areas to refresh some of the spaces.
- Fully staffed at this point and filling additional staffing positions now.
- Continuing to plan for next year and the future.

#### HOTEL INDUSTRY UPDATES

Board member Greg Malcolm:

- STR Report for April:
  - Occupancy in Irving for hotels was 73.5%, a decrease of .4%.
  - The average daily rate was \$127.59, up 7.5%.
  - Revenue per available room was up 7.1%
  - South Irving area Occupancy is 79.5%, Average Daily Rate of \$146.37 and RevPAR is at \$116.34.

Board member Nydia Hoskins:

- Omni Las Colinas ended April with Occupancy of 69%, Average Daily Rate of \$227.58 and RevPAR at \$157.02.
- Up in all categories and group business is strong with above average amount of leads.
- Cvent, a lead capturing software that converts into bookings, reported out of 30,000 hotels, the Omni Las Colinas came in #114. Proud of the sales team and their efforts. Thanked the ICVB team and Gast for their support.
- Renovations have started, the carpet in the ballroom has been replaced. Some meetings will be displaced during construction but is hopeful it will be completed as scheduled.
- The invitation-only Summer Kick-Off event is scheduled for Thursday, June 15 and an invitation and link to stay in the hotel for a discounted rate will be sent to Board members.

Board member Kim Limon:

- The Hampton Inn Las Colinas occupancy for April was 81.2%, up 18.6% over comparative set.
- The ADR ended at \$120.98, down 1.3%.
- RevPAR is \$98.26, up 17.2%.
- A successful year to date.

PARTNER ORGANIZATION AND STAKEHOLDER REPORTS

Restaurant Industry

Board member David Cole reported:

- The Texas Restaurant Association Legislative Bills are moving in the right direction. The session ends at the end of May, and Cole will give a more detailed report next month.
- The Ginger Man restaurant at Water Street has moved within the site and an upscale Indian restaurant will move into their old spot.

Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce:

Chamber Chair Janie Perelman reported:

- Thanked Ward for his support, and noted he has always been kind and helpful and she is thankful for their friendship and how the business relationship has blossomed. The Chamber also thanks him for his support for Irving business, residents, and visitors.
- The Economic team continues to have success.
- Cacique Foods announced plans to shift its corporate headquarters to Irving from California.
- The Economic Development team attended Consultant Connect Chicago in May and met with 16 national site selection consultants to learn about industry trends and client needs, as well as tell the Irving-Las Colinas story.
- Irving's Unemployment Rate declined to 3.2% in April from 3.6% in March. Texas Unemployment Rate is 3.7% and National is 3.1%. This is the first time Irving's rate has exceeded the National rate since February 2022.
- Celebrated Small Business Week and visited 1,000 small businesses to say Thank You for choosing Irving for your business, creating jobs, and providing products and services. The week concluded with a celebration and small business resource fair at Toyota Music Factory.
- Future Leaders of Irving graduation ceremony for class of 2022-23 was held at University of Dallas. This program has graduated more than 300 students since its inception in 2011.

Las Colinas Association

Board member Hammond Perot reported:

- Echoed the sentiments to Ward, noting he was kind and considerate and a tremendous asset to the community.
- The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Home Tour event was a great community event celebrating the community and embracing Ben Carpenter’s vision for Las Colinas. Residents and businesses have been incredibly supportive. There were more than 300 attendees, and the event was a fitting example of what others do not know what Irving has to offer. As a follow-up event, a commercial architecture event is being planned for later this year.
- Carpenter Cup Golf Tournament – wonderful event.
- October 20-21 is the Glow event on Mandalay Canal. LCA is bringing in artists to the event that fit the Glow concept.
- Senator Nathan Johnson and Senator Tan Parker passed a State Resolution of recognition to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and extend best wishes for the future.

Cole commended the Convention Center and Chef Eduardo Alvarez on the presentation and exceptionally prepared lunch for the meeting.

Bourgeois adjourned the meeting at 12:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  


Maura Allen Gast, FCDME  
Executive Director