

MINUTES

**Irving Convention & Visitors Bureau Board of Directors
Monday, August 28, 2023 at 11:45 AM
Irving Convention Center – Exhibit Hall B
500 W. Las Colinas Blvd.
Irving, Texas 75039**

Attendance: Bob Bourgeois – Board Chair; Richard Stewart, Jr. – Board Vice Chair; Yasir Arafat, Michael Basoco, Beth Bowman, David Cole, Karen Cooperstein, Tommy DeBeaudry, Herb Gears, Colvin Gibson, City Manager Chris Hillman, Nydia Hoskins, Julia Kang, William Mahoney, Greg Malcolm, Kelly O’Briant, Hammond Perot, Joe Philipp, and Sam Reed – Board Members; Mayor Rick Stopfer, Assistant City Manager Phillip Sanders, Senior Assistant City Attorney Christina Weber, Finance Director Brad Duff, Councilman Mark Cronenwett and Board Liaison Councilman Kyle Taylor – City of Irving; General Manager Tom Meehan and Assistant General Manager Jeremy Pierce – ICC Staff; Lori Fojtasek, Maura Gast, Marianne Lauda, Brenda Lopez, Brice Petty, Diana Pfaff, Susan Rose and Monty White – ICVB.

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

- Approving ICVB Board Meeting Minutes for July 24, 2023
- Accepting the ICVB Financial Reports – July 2023
- Reviewing the Hotel Occupancy Tax Collections
- Accepting the ICC Financial Reports – June 2023

Bourgeois called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. On a motion from Board member William Mahoney, and a second from Board member Herb Gears, the motion was unanimously approved.

INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION

Bourgeois asked for a motion to accept the following for individual consideration:

APPROVAL OF RESERVE FUND POLICY REVISING THE TECHNOLOGY FUND MINIMUM BALANCE TO \$1,000,000

With a motion from Board member Julia Kang and a second from Board member Karen Cooperstein, the motion was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF RESERVE FUND POLICY REVISING THE GENERAL FUND MINIMUM BALANCE TO \$3,000,000

With a motion from Board Vice Chair Richard Stewart, Jr. and a second from Board member Colvin Gibson, the motion was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF 2023-24 BUDGET CHANGES AS REQUIRED BY CHANGES IN CITY COSTS:

- INCREASE IN INTEREST INCOME – GENERAL FUND; RESERVE FUND; TECHNOLOGY FUND; ICC RESERVE/CIP FUND
- INCREASE IN PROPERTY AND CASUALTY INSURANCE
- INCREASE IN HEALTH SELF INSURANCE FUND (TO FUND INCREASE IN RETIREE HEALTH DISCOUNTS)

With a motion from Gibson and a second from Mahoney, the motion was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF SMG CONTRACT AMENDMENT TO AUTHORIZE MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF NEW MONUMENT SIGN ON WEST IRVING CONVENTION CENTER AT LAS COLINAS PROPERTY

Executive Director Maura Gast added this is for the Convention Center sign in Las Colinas off the HWY 114 access road. The sign will be replaced with a much larger sign that matches the new Convention Center sign at the front of the building. A sign variance is required. The agreement with Provident, the hotel owner's representative, will be revised. The SMG agreement will also be revised to include the care, maintenance, and installation of the sign. Approval has been received from the Las Colinas Association. Items will be on the August 31 City Council agenda.

With a motion from Cooperstein and a second from Gibson, the motion was unanimously approved.

CHAIR REPORT

- Bourgeois reminded Board members to volunteer for the CVB Visitors Information kiosk and presented a slide with upcoming Convention Center events and dates. The information will be sent to the Board. Please reach out to ICVB Office Manager Carol Boyer if you are interested. Volunteers are still needed for DFW Fiber Fest and future events.
- Bourgeois congratulated Cindy Schamp and her team at Baylor Scott and White for being recognized by *U.S News & World Report* as one of the 10 best hospitals in DFW and one of the 25 best in Texas. Five of the Baylor campuses received national recognition for their specialties.
- He also made note of the *USAE News* "Wyndham Announces Development of Extended Stay Hotels" and *Hotel Business* "Waterwalk opens Live/Stay property in Tucson" articles in the meeting packet as examples of how the industry continues to evolve.
- Bourgeois requested Board members that are still interested and eligible to serve on the Board to please respond accordingly to the letter sent out by the City Secretary prior to the deadline.
- The next Board meeting will be on September 25 at the Irving Convention Center in Junior Ballroom C-D.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Board and Business Development

Committee Chair Herb Gears reported:

- The next Committee meeting is scheduled for September 8 at the Convention Center in the office boardroom.

Community Engagement Committee

Committee Chair Colvin Gibson reported:

- Gibson reminded the Board of the 2023 High Spirited Citizen Awards Luncheon and ceremony on Tuesday, September 5 at 11:30 a.m. at the Irving Convention Center. The Mayor, Council and ICVB Board will be recognizing 12 to 13 honorees. There may be 2-3 honorees that will be unable to attend, and they will be recognized later.
- Gibson made a correction to the agenda, the next Committee meeting is scheduled for October 17, not October 10.

Destination Development Committee
Committee Chair Greg Malcolm reported:

- The next Committee meeting is scheduled for November 7 at 11:30 a.m.

CITY REPORTS

Councilman Kyle Taylor:

- Update on MacArthur Blvd. Construction project:
 - Phase 1 – Northgate to Byron Nelson Way: Concrete has been poured on a section of the roadway and along the southern portion of Byron Nelson Way. Work on the southernmost half of the northern driveway of the Tom Thumb parking lot is scheduled to start this week.
 - Phase 2 – Metker Street to Northgate Drive: Scheduled to start the first week of September. The Northgate project value is approximately \$28 million and is approximately 28% complete. Segment includes new storm drainage installation, wastewater and water facilities will be upgraded.
 - The MacArthur Blvd. project is slated to be completed by February 2025.

Finance Director Brad Duff:

- August Hotel Occupancy Tax, June collections update. Currently trailing budget in hotel occupancy tax collections by approximately \$2.8 million but about \$2.7 million ahead of budget year to date over the prior year. There is a budget of \$34.3 million, approximately \$28 million has been brought in year-to-date.

Councilman Mark Cronenwett reported:

- The City is currently in the budget process. The Budget Retreat was held on August 18. Council will be voting on the budget in the upcoming Council meeting.
- Looks forward to attending future ICVB Board meetings.

Mayor Rick Stopfer reported:

- DART Transportation is celebrating its 40th Anniversary.
- A cooperative group that includes City Manager Chris Hillman, other City Managers and Mayors will be working together with Michael Morris, North Central Texas Council of Governments, to conduct a study of the whole metro system to determine the future of transit in the area. This will include looking at the DART budget and financial plans and getting a better handle on how funds are spent.
- The City continues to see tremendous emphasis on new restaurants. There are approximately 625 restaurants in Irving.
- Many businesses are looking at moving to the metroplex. One of these new companies coming to Irving is a zero water, environmentally friendly, data center.
- The Police Department is working closely with Mothers Against Drunk Driving. They will be focusing and working diligently in promoting safety in school zones.
- The August “Clear the Shelter” event was a remarkable success with many animals adopted. The Animal Shelter has gone through a lot of challenges since COVID, including having less volunteers, more pet surrenders, and many long-time staff retirements.
- Mayor Stopfer attended the *Tigers Be Still* production in the downtown Irving venue, MainStage 222, and encouraged everyone to visit the location.

- The City will be keeping the same tax rate. Much of the budget will be allocated for moving employees to the 80th percentile and an increase in healthcare costs.

City Manager Chris Hillman reported:

- The proposed budget does recommend maintaining the property tax rate of \$0.5891 per \$100 valuation. The new growth plus the increase of assessed valuation based upon maintaining the tax rate will bring in an additional \$7.5 million to the General Fund.
- The cost of bringing employees to the 80th percentile will be approximately \$18 million. This will be covered by sales taxes, and not property taxes.
- Crews have demolished the pool at Lively Point Youth Center. Once the contract is awarded, Lee Pool will be demolished. It will take a year to construct the new pool which should be ready for the 2025 season.
- Small business owners are encouraged to apply for the City Grant Program. The program offers two grant opportunities: up to \$15,000 in direct financial assistance and training and technical assistance. All information and recorded webinars can be found on CityofIrving.org/SmallBizGrant.
- Trash collection will go back to twice-per-week and will be implemented on December 4. Doing this requires hiring an additional 21 solid waste collection employees. Residents' solid waste bill will go up \$2.71 per month.

Gears asked Hillman if the City plans to move to an automated trash system and if there would be cost savings. Hillman explained he would anticipate a cost savings, but unfortunately a study has not been conducted to finalize and assess how that system would be set up.

BUREAU MANAGEMENT AND STAFF REPORTS

Bureau Management

Executive Director Maura Gast reported:

- Discussion was held with the Executive Committee regarding the status of delinquent hotels. Of the three perennial delinquents, one has paid in full, the other two have not. City staff is monitoring as another is on the bubble of becoming delinquent. After City Council is briefed in Executive Session, the City Attorney's office and Finance will determine their next steps.
- Gast asked the Board to please RSVP if attending the High Spirited Citizen Luncheon on September 5.
- The ICVB will be hosting a Former Board Member Luncheon on November 14 at the Convention Center. It will be a chance to reconnect with former Board members and bring them up to speed on things happening with the organization.
- ICVB assisted with the DART 40th Anniversary Kick-off event at the North Lake station.
- The ICVB budget is following the same lead as the City regarding the 80th percentile and will make those adjustments in January. The compensation study is being finalized. There is a placeholder in next year's budget to accommodate any adjustments that are necessary.
- There will be a briefing at the Public Safety Committee meeting regarding off-duty or outside event staffing from Police and Fire.
 - One of the challenges that trickles down to ICC and ICVB customers is that it is usually the longer tenured staff members that understand the value of overtime and are willing to work various events. Even the smaller events require a large amount of personnel to run.

- Gast thanked Mayor Stopfer and City Manager Hillman for their work in keeping and retaining Police and Fire.
- Several members of the ICVB staff will be attending the Texas Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus (TACVB) Conference in College Station on August 29-31.
- Susan Rose will be attending the City Council meeting on Thursday, August 31.

Discussion was held on Police and Fire overtime for outside events. Hillman added there have been difficulties trying to encourage Police and Fire to take overtime opportunities. If this continues it will be challenging to staff outside events. The City Council is discussing this concern and wants to find a solution.

Mayor Stopfer mentioned that the City is also using overtime to staff other departments' needs on a temporary basis. The City is trying to be strategic and keep up with other cities regarding hiring and is also furthering hiring incentives.

Assistant Executive Director Sales and Services Lori Fojtasek reported:

- The Sales team is at 109% of their goal for the year.
- Highlighted some of the larger groups hosted in the month of August: Texas Cornhole, North Texas Sewing and Quilt Expo and TexSom. The Bangladesh Association of North Texas event will be starting at the end of the week.
- Debbie Roberts, CVB Sports & Entertainment Sales Manager, is retiring on September 30. One position will be upgraded to a Director of Sales position.

Assistant Executive Director Marketing and Communications Diana Pfaff reported:

- Website traffic increase over 110,000 sessions for the Irvingtexas.com website, which is a 30 percent increase from July 2022
- July blogs have over 6,800 page views, with the top posts being "5 Ways to Have Fun in Lake Carolyn", "Uniquely Irving Eateries: Momo Spot" and "Top Martinis in Irving".
 - There was a complaint received from a Mexican restaurant that was not included in the *Top Martinis in Irving* blog. Contract writers are brought in for Round Up and Restaurant blogs. The writers can choose the location they would like to write about. This helps bring a different voice to the blogs.
- *Houstonian Magazine*, a high-end leisure magazine, was the top advertising performer for July, followed by TripAdvisor and Priceline. Paid search increased with nearly 14,000 site visits.
- The Staycations campaign generated over 12,000 hotel referrals in July and continues to perform well. Our Micro campaigns generated an additional 5,600 hotel referrals in July.
- DART reached out in July needing help with their 40th Anniversary celebration. They hosted block parties at several stations. ICVB assisted with contact information and hosted a cooling station at the kick-off event on August 1 at the North Lake station with cooling towels, water, and concert ticket giveaways.

Administration and Finance

Assistant Executive Director Finance and Administration Susan Rose reported:

- The AirDNA reports for July show:
 - There were 569 available listings, which is about a 6.2% increase in listing over last year's figure of 536.
 - The Average Daily Rate was \$225.59, which was an increase of 1.16% over last year.
 - Occupancy percentage of 61.2%, which was a decrease of 2.07% compared to last year.
 - Hotel comparable subset reports an Average Daily Rate for July of \$110.57, a decrease of 5.30% from last year, occupancy at 64.5% with an increase of 12.98% from last year.
- On August 22, Officer Hutson gave the ICVB staff a class in Active Attacker training, formerly called Active Shooter training. It was extremely informative and well received. Rose thanked the Irving Police department and Officer Hutson for having this resource available.
- City Hall engaged with Weaver and Associates to perform the internal review of our ARPA funds and its related activities. This is the City's effort to be proactive and ensure we have everything ready ahead of any questions that may be asked.

CONVENTION CENTER MANAGEMENT

General Manager Tom Meehan reported:

- The Convention Center is well ahead of budget for the year and has had record revenue and record expenses. The building is in great shape to end the fiscal year in September.
- For the year, there have been 166 events, compared to 155 events last year. Attendance for the year is approximately 200,000 compared to 150,000 last year. Attendance for June was 3,500.
- Currently, the Customer Service score for the year is 92.4%.
- There are 26 events happening in September, many of which are multi-day events. Swim Spa Blow Out, Body Building, DFW Fiber Fest, TPMA Southwest Foot and Ankle Conference, MDA Uncork a Cure Gala, Ultimate Women's Expo, just to name a few.
- Building projects include:
 - Starting on the new monument sign, if approved. The completion date is set for December.
 - Currently in the programming phase of the outside LED lighting project.
 - The walls in the pre-function area have been painted from orange to navy blue.
 - The carpet has been replaced and the walls have been painted navy blue in the office area.
 - Concrete joints and broken concrete have been repaired and replaced in the plaza area in front of the building.
 - Wood has been replaced on the upper terrace.
 - Concrete patches have been repaired on the top floor of the Westin garage.
 - A new crosswalk and additional fencing have been added near the ICC garage entrance.
 - The floor in the scullery room in the kitchen has been replaced.
 - Purchased additional equipment for Food and Beverage.

INDUSTRY PARTNERS

LIVE NATION UPDATES

Live Nation General Manager Tommy DeBeaudry

- On target for approximately 95 promoted events for 2023, which is similar to last year. December is closing strong with private events and continue to see booking for holiday parties and corporate events.
- There were 12 promoted shows in August, closing the month strong with three amphitheater shows in the last five days. The Counting Crows, Kidz Bop and Jodeci concerts had a total of approximately 20,000 tickets.
- Three cancellations in September due to low ticket sales. Official communication will be sent out for GERA MX on September 8, B Praak on September 9, and Edwing Luna on September 24.
- There are 16 promoted events in October and a few private events.
- Hozier is confirmed on October 10 and will be announced soon as an amphitheater show.

HOTEL INDUSTRY UPDATES

Board member Greg Malcolm:

- The STR report for July shows Occupancy for the City at 66.2%, up 6% compared to last year.
- The Average Daily Rate of \$114.15, up 1.6% from last year, RevPAR at \$75.52 up 2.2% from last year.
- Hotels on the south side of Irving off State Highway 183 and Valley View month to date for August Occupancy of 71.3%, Average Daily Rate of \$136.64, and RevPAR at \$97.40.

Board member Nydia Hoskins:

- Occupancy year-to-date through July 62.3% up 11 points, from last year at this time.
- The Average Daily Rate of \$214.86, up \$14 for last year, RevPAR at \$130.08, up \$28 from last year at this time.
- Transient business is softening but Group, Social and Catering are doing very well.
- Short-term is not so short-term as it has been, more future year business is starting to come back.
- The Omni model guest room for the upcoming renovation was approved by ownership. An invitation will be sent out for the first week in October. There will be two full days with Sales customer service events and a Sip and See throughout the day on October 4 and 5.

RESTAURANT INDUSTRY UPDATES

Board member David Cole:

- Fogo de Chão Brazilian Steakhouse is coming soon to Irving.
- Aunt Cissy's Kitchen and Catering has closed. There is a Thai restaurant sign at the former Aunt Cissy's location.
- Irving Police Athletic League opened at the old Armory location on O'Connor Blvd.

PARTNER ORGANIZATION AND STAKEHOLDER REPORTS

Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce:

Chamber President Beth Bowman reported:

- Thanked everyone for their patience with the Wells Fargo construction.
- *Inc Magazine* released the 5,000 fastest growing product companies in America. Eighteen of the companies recognized call Irving home.
- Common Desk, a flexible office space provider, opened at 400 E Las Colinas Blvd.

- *The Dallas Business Journal* "9th Annual Middle Market 500 List" recognized three companies from Irving.
- Irving's unemployment rate for June was slightly higher at 3.8%, up from 3.6% in May. Irving's rate is still below the State of Texas 4.5% but tied with the National unemployment rate.
- Bowman thanked Meehan, Gast, ICC and ICVB teams for their help with the North Texas Job Fair. The Irving Chamber had the opportunity to partner with Mayor Stopfer and Congresswoman Beth Van Duyne on the North Texas Job Fair held at the Irving Convention Center. Companies were looking to fill 15,000 jobs. There was a steady stream of job seekers throughout the day.
- On the economic development side, there is a healthy pipeline with over 300 projects, those projects represent just under 200,000 potential job opportunities in Irving.
- Bowman thanked the Mayor, City Manager, Council, and the Board for continuing to amplify the positive assets and tourism story within the City.

Mayor Stopfer thanked Bowman and her team for all their work bringing businesses to the City. Recently the Governor was in the Valley and mentioned Irving, Texas as an example of how regionalism works and how the City brings in big businesses that help the entire City.

Hillman added, last year Congressman Veasey was able to provide \$750,000 for the development of Southwest Park. This year he has identified \$500,000 as a proposal for work at Thomas Jefferson Park. City staff were able to secure \$44 million worth of assistance from the State for a large storm drain project, with a \$6 million grant and \$39 million as zero interest loan. This will be a \$30 million interest savings.

Irving Arts and Culture

Irving Arts Center:

Arts Board Chair Kelly O'Briant reported:

- Currently on display at the Irving Arts Center:
 - *Works* by Benjamin Muñoz in the Carpenter Lobby Gallery through October 28.
 - *Creating For Change* in the Courtyard Gallery through September 30.
- *Thank God It's Funny Comedy Nights*, featuring Eliot Chang on September 22.
- Coming Soon to the Irving Archives and Museums, September 2 through February 3, 2024:
 - *Popol Vuh* Illustrations by Jamie Arredondo.
 - *Ballet Folklorico/Fashion of Ballet Folklorico*: Expressing Mexican Culture through Dance
 - Artist reception featuring Jamie Arredondo and Avila Fleming on September 2.
- On September 8, the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) will award the National Award of Excellence to Irving Archives & Museum and the Irving Black Arts Council for "The Local Green Book Project" at its annual convention in Boise, Idaho.

Las Colinas Association

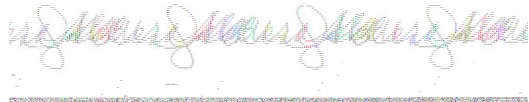
Las Colinas President Hammond Perot reported:

- The Las Colinas Association will hold a Special Meeting of Members on October 3 to consider use changes in following Supplementary Declarations:
 - Las Colinas Commons, West Walnut Hill, SD No. 8, has requested membership consideration allowing event and fitness centers as permitted uses on property.
 - Dallas Communications Complex, CCI, SD No. 26 has requested to add an indoor event center, fitness establishment, or sports facility.

- Las Colinas Village, Whitestone Las Colinas Village, SD No. 161 is seeking approval for a venue that combines a private club with a public restaurant, bar, and other entertainment uses.
- Blazing Hospitality, SD No. 163 is requesting a change in use and adding 22 single-family detached residences along with a private school.
- The Las Colinas Architecture Tour will be held on September 22. The tour stops include Verizon, Toyota Music Factory, Mandalay Canal, Pioneer Natural Resources, Williams Square and ExxonMobil. The Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce will be kicking off the tour with breakfast at William Square. Verizon will be hosting lunch, ExxonMobil, and Capital Commercial Investments will be hosting happy hour.
- Hammond congratulated the Las Colinas Security Dispatch team who earned the Five Diamond designation from The Monitoring Association.

With no further discussion, Bourgeois adjourned the meeting at 1:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Allen Gast, FCDME

Executive Director