

MINUTES
IRVING CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Irving Convention Center – Junior Ballroom C-D
November 15, 2021

Attendance: Karen Cooperstein – Board Chair; David Cole – Board Vice Chair, Bob Bourgeois, Beth Bowman, Herb Gears, Todd Hawkins, Nydia Hoskins, Julia Kang, Clem Lear, Kim Limon, Rick Lindsey, Greg Malcolm, William Mahoney, John Nicks, Hammond Perot, Joe Philipp, and Richard Stewart, Jr. – Board members; Mayor Pro Tem and Council Liaison Kyle Taylor, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Al Zapanta, and Councilman Oscar Ward – City of Irving Elected Officials; Assistant City Manager Philip Sanders, Financial Services Director Bret Starr, and Senior Assistant City Attorney Christina Weber – City of Irving; General Manager Tom Meehan and Director of Sales Matt Tungett – ICC Staff; Carol Boyer, Lori Fojtasek, Maura Gast, Brice Petty, Diana Pfaff, Susan Rose, and Monty White – ICVB; Guests – Michael Basoco, Colvin Gibson and Sam Reed – Newly Appointed Board Members; Audit Partner Laura Edwards and Audit Manager Mario Castro – Crowe, LLC.

Board Chair Karen Cooperstein called the meeting to order at 11:49 a.m. and inquired if there were any citizen comments; there were none.

Board member introductions were held for new Board member appointees Colvin Gibson, Michael Basoco, and Sam Reed who were attending the meeting. Cooperstein noted new Board member Yasir Arafat had previous commitments for today's meeting.

Cooperstein reported the ICVB Board Nominating Taskforce met and is recommending David Cole for Board Chair and Bob Bourgeois for Board Vice Chair. On a motion from Board member Clem Lear and a second from Board member Richard Stewart, Jr., the slate of Board Chair David Cole and Board Vice Chair Bob Bourgeois was unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approve the ICVB Board of Directors meeting minutes from September 27 and October 22, 2021
- Review of Hotel Occupancy Tax Collections
- Accept the Irving Convention Center September 2021 Financial Reports

Cooperstein asked 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 Consent Agenda unanimously was approved.

INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION

Accepting the Irving Convention Center Audit Report for FY 2020-21

Executive Director Maura Gast reported the ICVB Executive Committee met on Friday, November 12 and reviewed the ICC audit with good discussion. Gast introduced Crowe LLC Audit Partner Laura Edwards and Audit Manager Mario Castro. Edwards gave a review of the ICC Financial Statements report for September 30, 2020, and 2021.

- The audit is conducted under the current contract financial reporting provisions of the Management Agreement between SMG/ASM and the City of Irving, dated November 12, 2020.
- There were no collection issues found in the Balance Statement.
- The Statement of Revenue and Expenses shows expenses are down.
- Several individual events are under advanced deposit liabilities that have not set new event dates yet.
- Statement of Changes in Equity (Deficit) closes out to zero.
- Allowance of Doubtful Accounts is determined by management based on ICC's historical losses, specific customer circumstances and general economic conditions. There is no allowance for doubtful accounts as of September 30.
- It is noted under Risk and Uncertainties that COVID-19 can change future results that may differ from management's estimates and assumptions.
- A slight change in Related Party transactions includes "any organization" run by the City.

With no questions or further discussion on the Financial Statements, Edwards then reviewed the Audit Responsibility Letter.

- Overview of planned scope and timing of the audit is disclosed, as well as significant accounting policies.
- A test was run for allowance of doubtful accounts and bad debt expense.
- There were no errors found for Corrected Misstatements.
- There were no issues to report with management providing the documentation requested for other findings. It was again noted that the audit is performed in accordance with the contract between SMG/ASM and the City of Irving.

Audit Manager Mario Castro reviewed the Findings and Control Letter.

- Items organization/management can do to improve internal controls:
 - One Significant Deficiency found – Segregation of Duties. This is not unusual for small accounting departments, as well as the challenges of COVID-19. It was suggested to develop a process for electronic document approvals in a timely manner to ensure completeness and accuracy. It was also recommended to assess user roles and segregate the roles into the system to functions that pertain to their duties. It was noted that management is in the process of implementing a new automated electronic approval system.
 - Recommendation for management to compile a list of known Related Party (City of Irving) events and transactions for completeness of related party disclosure in the annual financial statements. Gast noted that the Board receives a financial breakdown of ICVB events at the monthly Executive Committee meeting. She will work with ICC to create a report that captures all the city's events in the facility each month. Gast clarified with the Crowe team's acknowledgement that the only "related party" concerns were strictly about designating in the financial reports the events that belong to the City of Irving as the facility owner.
 - A correction in the accounts receivable aging report was noted and has been corrected.

In response to a question from Mayor Pro Tem Kyle Taylor, Edwards replied there was not a walk-through of the audit for opportunities to correct any deficiencies before reporting.

Gast clarified Related Parties is singularly referring to the City of Irving. She reminded the Board that all financial reports, are presented, and reviewed at the monthly Executive Committee meetings.

Cooperstein asked for a motion to approve the Irving Convention Center audit report for FY 2020-21. On a motion from Board member William Mahoney and a second from Board member Gears, the motion was unanimously approved.

INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION (Continued)

Approving the ICVB Five-Year FY2021-26 Strategic Plan

Gast reported the ICVB Board met in September for a strategic planning retreat and out of that meeting developed the presented plan. The plan was distributed prior to the meeting in an email to Board members for review and posted on the Board portal.

- The Board Vision Statement was updated.
- Current organization mission was affirmed.
- The Board Mission Statement was updated.
- Four Goals were identified:
 - Maximize Organizational Sustainability & Growth
 - Increase Community Outreach & Collaboration
 - Advocate for Destination Enhancing Development
 - Enhance the Visitor Experience
- Each goal has a list of identified Objectives.
- The Board Chair and Vice Chair will assign each Board Committee Chair and Vice Chair and each Committee will work on their respective goals/objectives through the Strategic Process.

Cooperstein asked for a motion to approve the ICVB Five-Year FY2021-26 Strategic Plan. On a motion from Board member Rick Lindsey and a second from Board member Bob Bourgeois, the motion was unanimously approved.

BOARD REPORTS

COVID-19 AND AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT UPDATE

- Gast reported cancellations due to COVID-19 and the Delta variant have leveled off. November and December are typically soft months for hotel revenue, and staff will continue to review and update the Board. Staff has begun coding and expending ARPA funds and will working close with the City on documenting those funds for reporting purposes once the City provides the necessary templates or reporting formats.

CHAIR REPORT

- Cooperstein welcomed the new Board members and encouraged all Board members to be actively engaged in Committees and attend the monthly Executive Committee meetings.
- She expressed her appreciation to Lear and Lindsey at the conclusion of their terms for the remarkable guiding force, mentorship and friendship and hopes they will continue to be involved in Irving.
- The next Board meeting will be held on Monday, December 13 at the ICC.

Lear and Lindsey gave parting remarks, and both expressed their appreciation to the Board and the ICVB staff for the service they do in the community to support Irving as a destination.

Board Development Committee

Committee Chair Bob Bourgeois reported:

- The Committee last met on September 10 and discussed the upcoming Legislative Session and the Strategic Planning retreat plans.
- He thanked the Board for their approval of the ICVB FY2021-26 Strategic Plan, as well as their attendance and participation in the retreat.
- The next Committee meeting is scheduled for December 3.

Community Engagement Committee

Committee Chair Clem Lear reported:

- The Committee met on October 12 and discussed the High Spirited Citizen program, scheduling with City Council meetings, and community engagement.
- The High Spirited Citizens will have a float in the upcoming City Holiday parade on December 4. All Board members are invited to participate.
- The next Committee meeting date is to be determined once Committee assignments have been confirmed.

Destination Development Committee

Committee Chair Greg Malcolm reported:

- The Committee met on November 9. Presentations were provided on the Williams Square Plaza project and Heritage Park update.
- Thanked all for their support of the R-AB Ordinance change recommendations.
- The next Committee meeting date is to be determined once Committee assignments have been confirmed.

CITY REPORTS

Mayor Pro Tem and Council Liaison Kyle Taylor reported:

- Thanked the Board for their support of the R-AB Ordinance change recommendations. The recommendations were presented to the City Planning and Zoning Commission and staff was asked to continue to move forward with the changes.
- City Council continues to discuss short-term rentals and Hotel Occupancy Tax collections.
- Taylor thanked everyone involved in the Irving Eerie Halloween event and noted that over 4,000 people attended.

Councilman Oscar Ward reported:

- Irving Eerie Halloween was an outstanding event, as well as the Day of the Dead event that was held on the Mandalay Canal. He commented the R-AB Ordinance will hopefully help to liven up that area that is under-used.
- The Veterans Day event at Memorial Park was well attended and a beautiful event.
- City Council is working on redistricting based on the new Census data.
- The Irving Arts Museum Grand Opening event and community ice cream social was very successful, and the Irving Symphony concert was well attended. It is great to see so many in the community attending.
- Recently there was a Sudan nation peaceful protest at Irving Mall. It was heartwarming to see citizens involved in what is happening in their nation of origin.

- Shout out to Lindsey and the Irving-Las Colinas Rotary Club for the recent Boy Scout flag ceremony and the placement of 1,800 flags.

Assistant City Manager Philip Sanders reported:

- A new tenant in the Toyota Music Factory has signed an agreement for 50,000 square feet of office space and will be opening in 2022.
- Unemployment is trending down, even though hiring difficulties are occurring. The City has open positions, and some include hiring incentives.
- City leadership changes: Assistant City Manager James Childress is departing Irving and taking a position as City Manager for Flower Mound, Texas. Planning and Development Director Steve Reed and Police Chief Jeff Spivey are retiring.
- Fifteen Irving 360 program graduates were recognized at the last City Council meeting. The next program will begin in Spring of 2022.
- November 15 is the official start of the Irving Boulevard reconstruction project. Information is available in a monthly newsletter on the City's website as well as monthly stakeholder meetings.
- Eerie Irving Park was a wonderful event, and he thanked all those who volunteered.
- December 4 is the holiday tree lighting and Christmas parade.

BUREAU MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

Executive Director Maura Gast reported:

- The R-AB Ordinance will be presented at the January 3 Planning and Zoning Committee meeting, City Council will take action at the January 13 Council meeting. A copy of the Resolution is in the meeting packet. Letters of support and in-person attendance at Council meetings is appreciated.
- Gast congratulated Executive Director Arts and Culture Todd Hawkins on the Irving Archives & Museum grand opening events.
- Thanked Lear and Lindsey for their leadership, flexibility, mentorship, and friendship. Both are former Board Chairs and great influencers in Irving and will continue to stay in touch.
- Gast thanked Cooperstein for her guidance during this most difficult year and her unwavering presence and support was above and beyond.

Assistant Executive Director Sales and Services Lori Fojtasek reported:

- Welcomed new Board members and thanked Lear, Lindsey and Cooperstein for their support.
- As of today, the Sales team is reporting at 140% of the year-to-date goal, but only one month into the new fiscal year.
- The Sales team has started traveling again but noticing tradeshow recovery is slow. The attendance/clients are few and the quality of shows is down.
- There were 80 leads created in October, compared to 69 last October and 2019 had 185 leads.

Assistant Executive Director Marketing and Communication Diana Pfaff reported:

- Welcomed new Board members and expressed appreciation to Lear, Lindsey and Cooperstein for their mentorship and friendships.
- The MarCom report is a year-end summary, and the full report is included in the packet. Pfaff noted the results are due to CARES Act funding.
- Website traffic reports 760,000 sessions and 640,000 total users, with 1.1 million pageviews on both websites.
- There was a 30% increase in sales leads and inquires.

- Digital Campaign ads due to CARES Act funding show outstanding results.
 - The Leisure market generated 294,642 site visits.
 - The Meetings market generated 45,232 site visits.
 - Promoted Content Campaign generated 29,000 blog visits.
 - The Visit Irving blog had 119,000 page views from 147 blog posts in the year.
 - The OTA (Online Travel Agency) campaign, which ran in partnership with Expedia and Priceline, generated a total of 11,932 hotel bookings, resulting in \$2.2 million in direct hotel revenue.
- Pfaff complimented Director of Marketing Monty White for his leadership of these projects, which performed well with 26,000 impressions and 338 site visits.
- Social media added 15,000 followers, resulting in 122,932 total influences. Additionally, the Visit Irving Instagram account recently passed the 10,000 follower threshold, which will unlock additional features.
- There will be a horse-drawn carriage for High Spirited Citizens at the City's December 4 holiday parade and all Board members are invited to participate. Invitations will be sent out this week.
- The MarCom October/November reports will be included in the December Board meeting packet.
- Year-end earned media total is \$335 million impressions, which is equivalent of \$5.8 million in Public Relations value.
- The ICVB sponsored a section at the Eerie Irving Park event. Visitor Services Coordinator April Stallings and Marketing Coordinator Carol Stoddard represented the ICVB as a mummy and explorer.

Assistant Executive Assistant Administration and Finance Susan Rose reported:

- Looking forward to working with the new Board members. Thanked Cooperstein for her support and mentorship as Board Chair, and echoed appreciation to Lear and Lindsey for their service on the Board.
- September 2021 AirDNA Report
 - There were 412 available listings in Irving, which was a 1.7% increase over last year's figure of 405. Average Daily Rate was \$269.08, with an Occupancy percentage of 60.8%, which was an increase of 11.08% compared to last year.
 - Hotel comparable subset reports for September \$109.53 Average Daily Rate, which is an increase of 13.61% from last year. Occupancy was 63.2%, an increase of 14.09% from last year.
 - October 13 – November 6 Occupancy was 68.9%, with Saturday being the highest Occupancy rate of 90%.
- Administration and Finance Team
 - The Administration/Finance team is working on the Tourism Economics Irving lodging forecast.
 - Holiday Committee is planning a fun week of holiday activities for ICVB and ICC staff.
 - Teams are participating in giving back with the Irving Salvation Army Angel Tree distribution and Red Kettle Campaign.
 - Continuing to update the ICVB Board portal.
 - In IT initiatives, all data has been moved into the cloud, which is a very large accomplishment.

Cooperstein thanked both the ICVB and ICC staff for the heavy lifting over the past year with pandemic challenges. She gave her thanks and appreciation to ICC General Manager Tom Meehan and the ICC team for their diligence in cutting expenses and working at events to cover the staffing deficit.

IRVING CONVENTION CENTER

General Manager Tom Meehan reported:

- It takes a village to continue to make strides during this difficult time, and Board members are a part of the family and support system.
- Last fiscal year is in the past, but September Catering did more than all of last year.
- Moving forward into this fiscal year and working back to 2019 figures.
- The next challenge will be staffing, supply shortages and rising food costs.
- Working on several projects in the building – changing lighting in the Exhibit Hall to LED lights, and new monument signs have been designed and submitted for approval.

Director of Sales Matt Tungett reported:

- Thanked Lear, Lindsey and Cooperstein for their support and welcomed the new Board members to the family.
- Delta variant cancellations gave a slow start to the first quarter, reporting \$200,000 in F&B and Rental Income.
- \$100,000 in contracts were adjusted to keep events on the books.
- Future bookings are picking up for the last half of Quarter 2 and Quarter 3.
- Public Shows - Express Cheer event is in the building this weekend. USA Judo is scheduled for next weekend and showing the highest registration for their past events. Preserve Halloween event also scheduled for next weekend.
- December has Battle of Texas body building. A Dallas Fan Festival ComicCon event is scheduled and has contracted again for next October.
- First-ever New Year's Eve event at the ICC with Irving Cares.

INDUSTRY PARTNERS

Hotel Partners

Board member Greg Malcolm reported:

- The STR report for September shows Occupancy of 59.6% for the City, with weekends dominating at 69.1% and weekdays at 56.1%. Average Daily rate is \$103.46 and RevPAR of \$61.66.
- South Irving reports Occupancy of 68.4% and Average Daily Rate of \$124.89.

Board member Kim Limon reported:

- The Hampton Inn Las Colinas preliminary October reports 63.2%% Occupancy, Average Daily Rate of \$92.21 and RevPAR of \$58.26.
- Hotel continuing to be #2 in the competitive set.
- Limon reported she has been at the property for 21 years and in the Irving area for almost 28 years.

Restaurant Industry

Board Vice Chair David Cole reported:

- More and more restaurants in Irving are closing due to staffing issues.
- The Restaurant/Hospitality industry is facing the hardest time for labor and supply shortage in history; however, the business is steady. Cole reminded everyone to be patient when visiting restaurants and hotels.
- Menu items will disappear, and service will be slow, but important to be tolerant.
- He encouraged everyone to keep shopping, traveling, and visiting restaurants and hotels.

Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce

Chamber Chair John Nicks reported:

- As newly elected Chamber Chair, Nicks reported he enjoys the Board and staff reports, and noted the importance of continuing to support the industries involved.
- Nicks congratulated the new Board members and thanked Cooperstein for her leadership and service on the Chamber Board.
- The Chamber Economic team is reporting 32 wins, 15 retention/expansions, and \$307 million in capital investment, 5,300 jobs and 2.7 million square feet of commercial space.
- FY2020-21 reports 180 project queries, 21% of properties were corporate headquarters.
- Texas unemployment for September 2021 reports 4.2%, down from 4.8% in August. This is the lowest unemployment rate since before the pandemic in March 2020. Irving's unemployment rate is 4.1% for September, which is lower than the State at 5.6% and the National rate of 5.2%.
- Chamber Annual meeting was sponsored by Flowserve and was well attended. Chamber Annual Award recipients are:
 - 2021 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Champion – Irving Police Chief Jeff Spivey
 - 2021 Healthcare Hero – Steve Love, Dallas-Fort Worth Hospital Council
 - 2021 Corporate Stewardship Award – Baylor Scott and White Medical Center – Irving, and Medical City Las Colinas
 - 2021 Employee of the Year – Portia Washington
- The Irving-Las Colinas Chamber and the Irving Hispanic Chamber will hold a joint ribbon-cutting ceremony in celebration of Erickson Dental on November 18.
- 2022 State of the City Signature Program will be in-person on Tuesday, January 25, 11:30 a.m. at the Irving Convention Center. Tickets are on sale and sponsorships are available.

Chamber President Beth Bowman commented she attended the Express Cheer Competition recently held at the Irving Convention Center and was proud of the comments from other attendees. Concession lines were full, people were patient, and it was nice to see vibrancy back in the community. Toyota Music Factory restaurants were full, and she witnessed supply and labor loss first-hand while visiting. She encouraged everyone to be patient and kind. She congratulated the ICC team and thanked them for amplifying the Irving-Las Colinas story and reputation as first-class.

Arts and Culture

Executive Director Todd Hawkins reported:

- Irving Archives & Museum Grand Opening Weekend was successful and a big win. Hawkins thanked the ICVB Board, ICVB staff and ICC team for their support. It was the first-time for alcohol sales at an Arts and Culture event, and the ICC was there to serve.

- Several local restaurants were represented at the Museum grand opening celebration and donated food. Desserts were made and distributed by Nimitz High School students.
- Arts Board meeting is scheduled for today and will hope to pass a Resolution in support of the R-AB Ordinance recommended updates.
- IAM:
 - *Two Minutes to Midnight*
 - *Spirited Prohibition in America* through January 7
- Arts Center:
 - *Our Voice – Red, White and Blues Holiday with Soul*
 - *The Blues & Other Colors Exhibition* through February 26, 2022, in Carpenter Hall Lobby Gallery.
 - *Shadows of the 60's Holiday Tribute to Motown* on December 3 in Carpenter Hall.
- Main Stage – *Nonsense* through November 20.
- Las Colinas Symphony – *The Nutcracker*, November 27-28.
- Holiday decorations will begin installation after Thanksgiving.
- New Arts Board Chair will be introduced to the ICVB Board at the December Board meeting.

Las Colinas Association

Board member Hammond Perot reported:

- Thanked Lear, Lindsey and Cooperstein for their support and guidance and looks forward to seeing them around the community.
- LCA Director of Security Penny Hayter is retiring at the end of 2021. A new Director of Security is in training.
- LCA annual year-end Board meeting is scheduled for tomorrow and will be reviewing the budget for the next fiscal year and focusing on not only recovering from the pandemic but the effects of the 2020 winter freeze. Also proposing a 7% reduction in assessment rate for members.
- Staffing struggles continue with the loss of the Director of Security and one other employee resignation.
- LCA Paws Colinas 5K-9 event in October had over 300 runners and eager pups.
- LCA Holiday in the Plaza Marketplace on December 4 from 10:30 am – 3:00 p.m. will have a Ferris wheel, live music, ice skating, photos with Santa, hot chocolate, and cookies.
- Perot thanked the Chamber and City teams for supporting development which has shown an increase in 18% in projects for architectural control, with 20% of that in real estate trading.
- Looking forward to a great year in 2022.

Cooperstein added her experience with Black Girls Golf event recently and their enthusiasm for their experience in Irving. The event was held at the Four Seasons Dallas Resort and Club and received a proclamation from Mayor Stopfer. Cooperstein noted it is a testament to the hotel teams, ICVB Marketing and City staff in selling the Irving story as the destination place to be.

Councilman Al Zapanta added his thanks to the Las Colinas Association team and everyone who supported and attended the *Day of the Dead* event on the canal. People were happy to be out and about. It showcased the area and canal with class.

Board member Richard Stewart, Jr. stated it is an appropriate way to end the meeting with a statement on behalf of the ICVB Board for Cooperstein's extraordinary leadership during a pandemic year and her ability to maintain a steady course in moving forward. He expressed appreciation for her leadership.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Allen Gast, FCDME
Executive Director