

MINUTES
IRVING CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
ZOOM VIDEO MEETING
January 25, 2021

Attendance: Karen Cooperstein – Board Chair; David Cole – Board Vice Chair; Kim Andres, Beth Bowman, Bob Bourgeois, Dallas Burke, Stephanie Fenley-Garcia, Herbert Gears, Todd Hawkins, City Manager Chris Hillman, Julia Kang, Clem Lear, Kim Limon, Rick Lindsey, William Mahoney, Greg Malcolm, Hammond Perot, Joe Philipp, Mike Rilley, Sam Reed, Roy Santoscoy, Richard Stewart, and Clare Venegas – Board members; Deputy Mayor Pro Tem and Council Liaison Kyle Taylor and Councilman Mark Zeske – City of Irving; General Manager Tom Meehan and Director of Sales Matt Tungett – Irving Convention Center; Chief Financial Officer Jeff Litchfield, Assistant City Manager Philip Sanders, and Senior City Attorney Christina Weber – City of Irving; Carol Boyer, Lori Fojtasek, Maura Gast, Marianne Lauda, Diana Pfaff, Susan Rose and Monty White – ICVB. Guest – City of Irving Economic Development Project Administrator Jennifer Ramirez.

Board Chair Karen Cooperstein called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m. and noted this meeting is taking place as a video conference due to the COVID-19 restrictions. She inquired if there were any citizen comments; there were none.

Cooperstein extended a welcome to everyone attending and asked for a moment of silence in remembrance and reflection for ICVB Sales Manager Kelly Roche and Irving prominent member and supporter Clint Howard. She asked the Board to keep the ICVB staff in their thoughts and prayers during this time for the passing of a beloved staff member.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approve the ICVB Board of Directors meeting minutes from December 14, 2020
- Accept the ICC Financials for October 2020
- Accept the ICVB Financials for September, October, November, and December 2020
- Review of Hotel Occupancy Tax Collections
- Review of ICVB Cash Flow Report

Cooperstein asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. On a motion from Board member Bob Bourgeois and a second from Board member Clem Lear, the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved.

INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION

- Acknowledging Proposed Terms for Operating Loan from the City of Irving.

Executive Director Maura Gast asked for the Board's acknowledgement of the proposed terms for the Operating Loan from the City of Irving and noted the document is included in the packet. The item is scheduled to go before City Council on February 11. The loan will assist with ICVB cash flow and becomes an interfund transfer from the City with repayment included in the ICVB budget. The loan would need to be repaid to the City by September 2022.

On a motion from Board member Bill Mahoney and a second from Board member Roy Santoscoy, the Board's acknowledgement of proposed terms for an Operating Loan from the City of Irving was unanimously approved as presented.

- Approving Further Detailed Investigation and Potential Application for Payroll Protection Program Loan through the CARES Act.

Gast reported ICVB staff is working with the City Attorney's Office and City Bond Council on investigation and potential application for the Payroll Protection Program Loan through the CARES Act. She noted the hurdle in applying is there is no mechanism in Texas state law to allow government agencies to apply for a loan for operational purposes. The motion for the Board's approval to have staff continue researching and reviewing opportunities through Federal relief programs and grants.

Cooperstein asked for a motion to approve moving forward with further detailed investigation and potential application for a Payroll Protection Program Loan through the CARES Act. On a motion from Board member Herb Gears and a second from Lear, the motion was unanimously approved as presented.

BOARD REPORTS

Gast gave a brief COVID-19 Update noting currently hotel Occupancy is sitting in the mid to upper 30% range, and weekends are holding stronger than weekdays.

Chair Report:

- Cooperstein welcomed all new Board members in attendance.
- Congratulations to the Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce for a wonderful job on the State of the City virtual event. The event showcased all the positive in Irving during a difficult year.
- Board Committees and assigned members are listed in the packet with meeting dates. Anyone still interested in signing up for a Committee should let ICVB Office Manager Carol Boyer, Gast or Cooperstein know in the next few weeks.
- Board meeting and activities schedule is included in the packet and on the Board portal.
- The Community Engagement Committee meeting is being rescheduled for February 3.
- Board Orientation meeting will be scheduled in the next few weeks. All Board members are invited to attend.
- Conflict of Interest Form will be sent to Board members in an email for completion and return to Boyer or Gast for filing.
- Irving Hospitality Industry Annual Meeting is being reviewed and alternative logistics are being considered. It may be possible to combine the meeting with the National Travel and Tourism week in May.

Board and Business Development Committee:

Committee Chair Bob Bourgeois reported the Committee has been revising the Board Bylaws. He gave a brief overview of the changes and edits. The document is included in the packet. He expressed his thanks to Assistant Executive Director Finance/Administration Susan Rose, Marketing Director Monty White, and Boyer for their work on the revised and reorganization of the Board portal. The portal offers ease of use for specific and important information. The Committee will also be working on the Board Strategic Plan update. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for March 12.

Community Engagement Committee:

Committee Chair Clem Lear reported the next Committee meeting is scheduled for February 3 and all Board members are welcomed.

Destination Development Committee:

Committee Chair Greg Malcolm reported all Board members are welcome to attend the next Committee meeting on February 9.

CITY REPORTS

City Manager Chris Hillman extended his deepest condolences to Kelly Roche's family and friends, including his fellow colleagues from the ICVB. Roche was well known in the City, as well as across the hospitality industry and he will be greatly missed.

Hillman reported:

- On January 11, the City approved to receive approximately \$74 million from the U.S. Department of Treasury to provide residents Emergency Rental Assistance. The program will provide aid for rent, utilities, and other housing expenses, directly or indirectly related to COVID-19.
- An interactive map for vaccine provider availability and locations across Texas is available on the City's website and shared on social media. Individuals will need to call the vaccine provider for hours, availability and eligibility before visiting.
- Governor Abbott announced individuals can receive vaccines at any county facility, regardless of residency in that county or not. Abbott also announced a therapeutic infusion center is available in Irving for COVID-19 outpatient care to provide antibody treatment for patients. Individuals must meet certain criteria and have a referral from a hospital or doctor.
- Dallas County opened a vaccination clinic at Fair Park by appointment only to administer vaccines to individuals in Phase 1A and 1B.
- Irving was recognized by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for its commitment to use 100% renewable energy by 2023.
- Hillman gave a shout out to everyone who participated in the Martin Luther King Day Celebration on January 17. It was a virtual event, and the video is posted on ICTN's YouTube page and Parks and Recreation Facebook page.

Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Kyle Taylor reported:

City Council will revisit the Bond election and proposal. It is an important issue as it affects the quality of life for Irving's citizens and visitors.

Councilman Mark Zeske thanked Cooperstein and the Board for the opportunity to support the ICVB and the Convention Center.

STAFF REPORTS

Assistant Executive Director Sales/Services Lori Fojtasek reported:

- Fojtasek thanked everyone for their thoughts, prayers, and messages regarding the passing of Roche.
- The Sales team has developed a plan for temporary coverage of Roche's accounts and bookings.
- The pandemic is still having a major effect on hotel room cancellations, with over 87,000 rooms nights cancelled.
- There are 60,000 room night leads in motion that are now lost due to the pandemic.

- Some groups have rebooked, cancelled, or moved into 2022 dates.
- Sales staff is focused on the immediate goal to get business in Irving as soon as possible, focusing on short-term business.

Assistant Executive Director Marketing/Communication Diana Pfaff reported:

- Pfaff echoed the thanks to the Board for reaching out in memory of Roche. Several industry publications have reached out to do stories on his legacy and spirit.
- December was a slow month for analytics.
- The CARES Act Campaign continues to do well.
- The team is focused on the leisure market now and will start transitioning to industry advertising later in the second or third quarters.
- StaffMeals Holiday Edition did receive local news coverage on December 21.
- High Spirited Citizen nominations are received through the VisitIrving website. A note has been added to the site that recognitions are on standby due to the pandemic and new nominations may go into 2022 for recognitions.

Marketing Director Monty White reported:

- The first round of CARES Staycations and Meetings Campaigns ran from September 1 through December 31.
- Staycations Campaign generated 59,000 website sessions to the landing page and nearly 22,000 referrals to our hotels, resulting in approximately \$4.5 million in potential economic value. The top markets for the campaign were DFW, Houston, San Antonio, and Austin.
- Safe Meetings Campaign generated 19,000 website sessions to the landing page, generating 77 sales leads. A combination of website forms, RFP submissions, emails, and phone calls.
- Second round of the CARES Act campaigns began this month and will continue through the Spring 2021. There are five planned campaigns; the first two are a continuation of the Staycations and Safe Meetings campaigns, an Online Travel Agency Campaign through Expedia and Priceline, and two campaigns will be targeted micro-campaigns – one promoting local businesses through social media and the other built around live music in Irving.

Assistant Executive Director Finance/Administration Susan Rose reported:

- Irving's AirDNA Data Report for November 2020 shows 463 available listings, which is a 10.2% increase over last year's figure of 420.
- Average Daily Rate is \$171.86, which is down 20.59% over last year.
- Occupancy is 48.2%, down 23.37% compared to last year.
- The hotel comparable subset reports and Average Daily Rate of \$86.45, down 14.98% from last year and Occupancy at 47.2%, down 28.85%.
- December's data is not available at the time of this meeting.
- The Administration Team is working on the Board portal updates and reorganization, as well as the Munis HR software conversion with the City.
- Rose is working on the LodgingRev project with City Finance.

IRVING CONVENTION CENTER

General Manager Tom Meehan reported:

- The ICC October 2020 financial report is included in the packet.
- The month-to-month financials will look a lot different than in the past as the budget was done in the summer with several unknown factors and budgeted conservatively for the first six months of the fiscal year.
- Several events have been moved to the second six months of the calendar year and with hopes they will stay in “Definite” status. There is quite a bit of movement in events. Every major event lost will create a big hole in the monthly financials and show ups and downs as the year progresses.
- The goal is to balance out by the end of the year through expense cuts – nine employees have been laid off and two have accepted other positions elsewhere and will not be replaced. Quite a few employees are still furloughed and no specific date in sight for returning.
- ICC Sales and Finance staff worked the concession stand at the gymnastic event over the weekend to reduce staffing expenses.
- Of the \$721,000 in expenses on report, \$425,000 is payroll, utilities and miscellaneous.
- There are several events booked the second six months of the year.
- Staff is working on pipeline events and moving some events around the calendar to make them work.
- The Grand Ballroom lighting project is 99% complete and looks amazing.
- Other building projects include the head exchange on the boiler, chiller, and a lighting project on the back loading dock.
- Texas Prime Meet gymnastic event over the weekend went well with safety protocols in place, everyone wore masks, temperatures were checked and socially distanced seating.
- Meehan reviewed the CARES Act Funding Reconciliation report for ICC projects.

Director of Sales Matt Tungett reported:

- Cancellations and postponements are being worked on and flexibility is key.
- Sales team is making phone calls to upcoming events and covering precautions the ICC has taken to make their group successful and in place for their peace of mind.
- Working with the Southern Baptist group next month to cut their dollars to match the 50% Occupancy protocol and make it work.

INDUSTRY PARTNERS

Live Nation and Toyota Music Factory – Mike Rilley reported:

- Rilley’s staff is looking at calendars and changing events on a daily/weekly basis.
- Private business is still hosting events.
- Corporate business keeps dwindling and moving.
- Some religious and educational events have been recently hosted.
- Live Nation is working on entertainment concepts in a reduced capacity. Struggle with artists calendars and stringing dates together.
- Company Strategic Plan meeting was held before the holidays and hoping to be at scale sometime this summer but could be August instead of June for live entertainment.

- Quarter four of this year holds the most confidence and Quarter three has some opportunity, but uncertain.
- Working on rolling things out, but most important factor is the vaccinations, wearing masks and socially distancing.

HOTEL INDUSTRY

Board member Greg Malcolm reported on the December STR Report:

- Irving's Occupancy is reporting at 36.6%, down 36.3%. Year-to-date ended at 41.6%, down 41.6% to last year.
- Average Daily Rate is \$68.89, down 33.4% to last year. Year-to-date \$86.60, down 21.6% from last year.
- RevPAR is \$25.19, down 57.7%. Ended year \$36.03, down 54.2%.
- January starting out in South Irving is running Occupancy at 42.6%, which is slightly up. Average Daily Rate is \$85.36, and RevPAR is \$36.33.
- Hilton Garden Inn DFW South has had an uptick in the last three weeks with positive growth. Last week reported 60 rooms and the current week is 70 rooms occupied.
- The hotel airport shuttle is back in service.

Board member Kim Limon reported:

- The Hampton Inn – Irving/Las Colinas reports a December Occupancy Index of 72.8 and an Average Daily Rate index of \$108.6 with RevPAR at 79%
- YTD finished RevPAR index at \$109.3 – and very proud of that result for the year.
- January is looking better and hoping to finish over budget this month.

RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

Board Vice Chair David Cole reported:

- Irving's monthly restaurant closings include Taco Diner and The Original Pancake House. Both closings are a significant loss.
- Thai Bangkok Orchid by the Target on Hwy 183 and the Empress of China restaurants are both doing better with take-out and delivery business and may never reopen their dining rooms.
- The Texas Restaurant Association Board meeting will be held in Austin, Texas on February 20. It is the second in-person board meeting.
- Discussion was held on the "Raise the Wage Act" and the challenge for the restaurant industry.

DCURD

Board member Dallas Burke reported:

- Currently under the most aggressive waterway maintenance program in history with projects in Cottonwood, Hackberry, Qual and Beaver Creeks. Projects in Lake Carolyn and Southfork Hackberry Creek near Hwy 161 to begin soon.
- Storm water pump station on Lake Carolyn is undergoing a very large upgrade to prevent Urban Center flooding.
- Emergency backup generators are being added to the station so pumping can continue in the event of a power outage.
- Projects in excess of \$4 million are underway.

- IFCD I is near completion of an electrical upgrade at one of the two pump stations. The upgrade will make the system much more reliable and is the first upgrade of the facility since it was constructed in 1975.
- IFCD III pump station upgrades are underway. These upgrades will increase the capacity of the station to release more storm water into Elm Fork.
- The Tilting Weir Project adds the release capacity equaling two storm water pumps.

IRVING-LAS COLINAS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chamber Board Chair Sam Reed reported:

- Economic Development: five project wins, one retention/expansion project and \$76 million in capital investment, just over 430 new job opportunities and occupancy of 413,000 commercial space.
- The team has 72 projects in the pipeline of which 20% are headquarters.
- Unemployment dropped to 6.3% in December, below Texas at 7.2% and National rate of 6.7%.
- Chamber expressed appreciation and support to Cooperstein and the ICVB Board for the recognition of the Annual State of the City event, and the ICC for use of the building for portion of the recording.
- January 12 is the kick-off of the 87th session of Texas Legislature with key initiatives of COVID challenges, ensuring better healthcare, law enforcement support and safeguarding freedom for all Texans.
- Upcoming Events: Virtual Mixer on January 26, Coffee Break on February 3, and Business Industry Call with Judge Clay Jenkins on February 3.

Cooperstein encouraged everyone to subscribe to the Chamber Weekly Legislative Update and expressed her appreciation of Chamber Vice President of Governmental Affairs & Communications Erica Mulder for her knowledge and presence in Austin, Texas.

IRVING ARTS AND CULTURE:

Board member Todd Hawkins reported:

- Expressed condolences for loss of ICVB Sales Manager Roche and noted his name has been placed on the “Faces of COVID” exhibit. There has been an incredible outpouring of participation in the yellow heart memorial wall and is a catalyst for community healing.
- This is the last week of “*Apron Strings: Ties to the Past*” event. There is a 360-degree tour online or group reservations are being taken to visit in person.
- ICVB Board will be invited to view the permanent exhibit – *The Irving Story, nationally travelling exhibit – Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Stories* and visit the Spark!Lab. Hawkins will coordinate a firm date with Gast for Board visit.
- Irving Arts Center is celebrating Black History Month with an exhibit presented by the *Irving Black Arts Council – Artistry & Inspiration* in the Main Gallery. An artist reception will be held on February 6 from 2:00 – 6:00 p.m. and reservations are required.
- The Focus Gallery will hold a Natalie Lambert painting exhibition from February 6 – March 27.
- The Courtyard Gallery will host *City of Hope: Resurrection City & The 1968 Poor People’s Campaign*. A collection of posters toured by The Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibit Service. The exhibit commemorates Dr. Martin Luther King Jr’s daring vision to end poverty in the United States.

- February performances include: Entertainment Series of Irving presents *Dionne*, New Philharmonic of Irving presents *Sundays at the Symphony* on February 14, honoring first responders.
- Second Sunday Funday moves to a “to-go” format with take-home craft projects offered for curbside parking lot pick up. While supplies last, on Sunday, January 10 art kits inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr’s legacy and vision will be available for pick up. Irving Arts Center has partnered with All Things Made New, supplying them with all left over to go kits for families in need.
- Going through planning stage for a two-year work plan and five-year forecast. The ICVB Board will be asked for input as stakeholders.

Pfaff added the ICVB holiday tree at the Irving Arts Center did receive the most Facebook “Likes”. It was one of the last projects Roche worked on, which makes the win extra special for the team. She thanked everyone for their votes.

LAS COLINAS ASSOCIATION

Board member Julia Kang reported:

- LCA Board meeting was held on January 23 via Zoom video conference.
- A new Board Chair will be elected in March.

UNIVERSITY OF DALLAS

Board member Clare Venegas reported she is look forward to staying involved in the Board activities and getting to know everyone.

Final discussion was held on the Hotel Tax Collection report. Chief Financial Officer Jeff Litchfield stated the collections have been converted from quarterly to monthly and all hotel properties have been notified. Certified letters were sent to late paying properties for notification.

It was asked and noted that nothing has been finalized for where the Irving COVID hub would be located.

With no further discussion, Cooperstein adjourned the meeting at 1:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Allen Gast, FCDME
Executive Director