

MINUTES
IRVING CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
IRVING CONVENTION CENTER – JUNIOR BALLROOM C-D
July 19, 2021

Attendance: Karen Cooperstein – Board Chair; Kim Andres, Beth Bowman, Bob Bourgeois, Rose Cannaday, Dallas Burke, Stephanie Fenley-Garcia, Herb Gears, City Manager Chris Hillman, Nydia Hoskins, Julia Kang, Clem Lear, Kim Limon, Greg Malcolm, Hammond Perot, and Sam Reed – Board members; Mayor Rick Stopfer, Council Liaison/Mayor Pro Tem Kyle Taylor, Councilman Oscar Ward, and Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Al Zapanta – City of Irving Elected Officials; General Manager Tom Meehan and Director of Sales Matt Tungett – Irving Convention Center; Assistant City Manager Philip Sanders, Financial Services Director Bret Starr, and Senior Assistant City Attorney Christina Weber – City of Irving; Carol Boyer, Lori Fojtasek, Maura Gast, Marianne Lauda, Brice Petty, Diana Pfaff, Susan Rose, and Monty White – ICVB. Guests – Communications Specialist Rebecca Banks, Assistant to the City Manager Anthony Cao, Communications Manager Claudia Garibay, Senior Executive Assistant City Manager’s Office Tesla Harlan – City of Irving.

Board Chair Karen Cooperstein called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m. and inquired if there were any citizen comments; there were none.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approve the ICVB Board of Directors meeting minutes from June 28, 2021.
- Accept the ICVB June 2021 and Third Quarter Financial Reports
- 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

- Approve the Community Engagement Committee recommendation for High Spirited Citizen Nomination – Jearlene Miller.

Cooperstein noted the nomination form was included in the packet. Miller’s list of volunteerism and honors came highly recommended for a nomination. With no further discussion, Cooperstein asked for a motion to approve the nomination for Jearlene Miller as a High Spirited Citizen. On a motion from Lear and a second from Board member Julia Kang, the motion was unanimously approved.

BOARD REPORTS

Executive Director Maura Gast report:

- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
 - Gast is working closely with City staff on submittals relative to ARPA funds. The funds received will open doors for ICVB programming.
- The ICC welcomed the North Texas North Texas Job Fair for 200+ businesses across the Metroplex; several Irving hotels and restaurants were among the participants. Federal and State elected officials were a part of the event. It was well produced and well attended.

Chair Report:

- The ICVB Strategic Planning meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 23-24 and will keep the Board informed of final dates.

Board and Business Development Committee

Committee Chair Bourgeois reported:

- The next meeting is scheduled for September 10.
- Cooperstein added Board members will be contacted for input on interest in serving in an Officer role on the Board. Cooperstein will appoint a taskforce to work through the slate of interested Board members and present to the full Board later this summer.

Community Engagement Committee

Committee Chair Clem Lear reported:

- July 13 Meeting Recap:
 - Thanked the Board for approving Jearlene Miller for High Spirited Citizen.
 - There are eight High Spirited Citizen approved nominations that are waiting to be recognized, due to COVID delays
 - Staff is working with the City Secretary's Office to schedule these award presentations as quickly as possible to get back on a more regular schedule.
 - Discussion was held on the November 2022 Hospitality Industry 50th anniversary celebration. It was agreed to that an event with broader community engagement, and perhaps a lasting impact on the industry as an outcome, would be ideal.
 - The Committee discussed September 11 remembrance ideas, including volunteer opportunities. Staff is investigating possible dates and location for a community blood drive.
 - Engaging former Board members was discussed and they will be invited to participate and/or volunteer at the blood drive and extend the invitation to serve as a volunteer for the Irving Visitor Information kiosk when that program kicks-off again.
- The next Committee meeting is scheduled for October 12.

Board member Herb Gears noted the 50-year anniversary of the opening of Texas Stadium will be October 24, 2021.

Destination Development Committee

Committee Chair Greg Malcolm reported:

- The next Committee meeting is scheduled for August 10.

CITY REPORTS

Council Liaison Mayor Pro Tem Kyle Taylor reported:

- He attended the North Texas Job Fair at the ICC representing Irving Cares. The event was well done and encouraged good conversations.
- The City is now taking applications for the Irving 360 Academy. It is an 11-week study and in-depth look at how the City operates and is a great place to find the next generation of leaders.
- Upcoming City Council agenda items include approving resolutions for the purchase of advertisements to promote the Irving Arts Center, Irving Boulevard reconstruction project, and a 2022 Infrastructure & Economic Development Investment Summit Event Planning Services agreement.
- The Irving-Las Colinas and Irving Hispanic Chambers of Commerce will present their third quarter results at this week's Work Session.

Councilman Oscar Ward reported:

- Youth 360 Civic Academy program has been postponed due to COVID-19 but will continue.
- Ward also attended the North Texas Job Fair and a concert on Friday night at The Pavilion and an auto show at Toyota Music Factory on Saturday. It was a great crowd and good to see people out attending concerts.
- City Council will be reviewing the budget and final property tax numbers this week.

Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Al Zapanta reported:

- Thanked the City staff, ICVB Marketing and Communications team, as well as the Chamber of Commerce for their assistance with Irving Olympic Day. It was such a fantastic event and important for the promotion of Irving.

Mayor Stopfer reported:

- It has been a busy few weeks and it is great to have the Toyota Music Factory back up and running again with concerts, restaurants, and public events.
- Christus Healthcare headquarters construction has begun and will bring the Urban Center back with tall office buildings.
- City staff is working on the 10-year TIF projections and re-evaluating how to address distribution of those funds.
- Held a meeting with Charles Cotten and DCURD on the Urban Center Area Personal Transit (APT) and discussions were on tearing down, rebuilding the APT or building a park along the track, similar to the High Line in New York. Next step is to meet with the surrounding landowners for their input and decisions on funding for the project.
- Over 100 companies are considering locating in Irving and economic development continues to grow.
- DART Update – Nadine Lee, an engineer and experienced industry leader, has been appointed the new president and CEO. She will be meeting with business leaders, mayors, and city managers on how to move forward with DART, and how to best utilize the \$400 million the agency received from the CARES Act.

City Manager Chris Hillman:

- The City achieved the Silver level in 2021 for What Works Cities certification. The certification is the national standard of excellence in data-driven city governance and evaluates how well cities are managed by measuring the extent to which city leaders incorporate data in their decision-making. Irving is one of 16 cities in the country with Silver level certification and the goal is now to reach Gold level.
- Irving radio tower replacement project is now underway. This is a \$4 million project that will increase radio communication and capacities and will be especially effective for Metroplex-wide emergency communications.
- The July 4th celebration event was fantastic, and Hillman thanked all who assisted.
- Fritz Park Animal Connection petting zoo is open again and he highly recommended visiting. A short video is on the City website. These are the small things residents see and love that help build connection.
- City staff is working on the FY2021-22 budget. A budget retreat will be held August 18 to walk through proposed uses of the ARPA funds. The City is scheduled to receive \$54 million. The first tranche of \$27 million has been received from the federal government. Gast presented the ICVB budget with and without ARPA funding to Hillman and they will now meet on how to put together the budget presentation to City Council for approval. The ICVB has requested approximately \$3 million for this year and \$10 million next fiscal year, and these will be fully funded in his recommendation to the Council. The City is focusing on areas that were hit the hardest with revenue impact. The biggest hit came in Hotel Occupancy Tax, which affects the ICVB, the Arts and the City's ability to pay the debt service on projects such as the Convention Center, Entertainment Venue and the headquarter hotel. Prior to providing a recommendation for the second round of ARPA funds, which the City will receive in May 2022, a review of the state of the Hotel Occupancy Taxes will take place to evaluate the state of HOT recovery, as the City will still be working to identify other ARPA projects, including ADA compliance, community projects and other projects from the General Fund.

Gast thanked Hillman and the Board for their support during this complicated budget time. The ICVB was able to accomplish a lot of things but only due to CARES Act dollars. Funding requests for the ARPA dollars include with the Business Incentive Development Program, marketing campaigns, a hotel tax projection study, sales and marketing initiatives and sales and social media support. The budget documents will be adjusted to present to City Council and a revised budget will be brought forward to the full Board at the August meeting.

Hillman introduced City staff members attending the meeting: – Assistant City Manager Philip Sanders, Financial Services Director Bret Starr, Communications Specialist Rebecca Banks, Assistant to the City Manager Anthony Cao, Communications Manager Claudia Garibay, and Senior Executive Assistant City Manager's Office Tesla Harlan. He also recognized Economic Development Project Administrator Imelda Speck and the Communications team for their coordination of rental assistance and social services funds available to residents if needed. He noted that Chief Financial Officer Jeff Litchfield will be retiring at the end of the calendar year. Gast added that Starr is a great resource for the ICVB, and Senior City Attorney Christina Weber is the assigned attorney to the ICVB. She also acknowledged the roles and support of Cao, Harlan, and Sanders through the CARES Act process.

STAFF REPORTS

Assistant Executive Director Sales and Services Lori Fojtasek reported:

- The Sales and Services Report is included in the packet.
- Room nights are coming in, but groups remain apprehensive about signing contracts.
- Staff is very busy with site inspections. Planners are excited to see what is new in Irving and meet people face-to-face.

Assistant Executive Director Marketing and Communications Diana Pfaff reported:

- The Marketing and Communications Report is included in the packet.
- There are several articles in the packet highlighting Irving: *travelawaits.com* "13 Fabulous Restaurants to Try in Las Colinas in Irving, Texas"; *Paper City* covered Irving Olympic Day; and poolside lounging at the Omni Las Colinas with a mention in a *Dallas Morning News* article.

Assistant Executive Director Susan Rose reported:

STR and AirDNA Data:

- The May 2021 data report is included in the packet.
- For June, the AirDNA report shows there were 441 available listings, a 32% increase over last year at 15%. Occupancy was 64.8%, a slight decrease. Average Daily Rate was \$225.42.
- Occupancy in hotels for July 4 is reporting trending upward at 61% compared to last year at 34%.
- Administration/Finance Department:
ICVB staff fully returned to the office full-time on July 6 and had a BBQ lunch to celebrate.
- Rose thanked Hillman and team for their support on funding and the budget.
- Rose congratulated Office Manager Carol Boyer for her invitation to serve on an academic panel at Bauer Business College at the University of Houston for the Customer Experience Program. She is the only CVB representative on the panel.

IRVING CONVENTION CENTER

General Manager Tom Meehan reported:

- The General Manager's Report is included in the packet.
- Due to the early Board meeting date, there is no June ICC financial report included in the packet.
- All ICC staff are working on events and concessions in the building.
- Contracts are signed and the calendar shows a definite uptick next fiscal year.
- Expenditures included replacing mechanical equipment and roof inspection. There are small cracks forming on the lower roof of the northwest side of the building and will be addressed in the next few months.
- Fire sprinkler inspection is scheduled for today.
- Working on capital projects for next year, including replacing ballroom and exhibit hall chairs.
- Staff prepared for 3,000-5,000 attendees at the July 4 celebration in beverage sales and were overly busy. The event was fantastic, well put together and crowd was enthusiastic.

Director of Sales Matt Tungett reported:

- ICC Event calendars for July through September 2021 are included in the packet.
- Excited to attend the first trip to Austin, Texas since pandemic for Texas Society of Association Executives Showcase. It is a very lucrative show for sales leads and contacts.

Cooperstein added her gratitude for the ICC staff working so hard on set up and breakdown for all the events at the ICC.

INDUSTRY PARTNER REPORTS

Board member Greg Malcolm reported:

- Attended as a vendor at the North Texas Job Fair and was surprised by the good attendance. There were several inquiries at his booth, and he hopes they will follow through and apply for employment.
- STR report for Irving in May 2021 reports Occupancy at 61.9%, weekends are extremely busy at 73.2% versus weekday at 57.8%. Average Daily Rate is \$92.54, and RevPAR is \$57.29.
- South Irving for most of June through July 10 reports Occupancy at 71.6% and \$118.64 Average Daily Rate. Malcolm's hotel owners have seven properties in the Metroplex, and each month rate is growing.

Board member Kim Limon reported:

- Las Colinas-Irving Hampton Inn finished June at 62.5% Occupancy.
- Average Daily Rate of \$92.51, weekdays at reporting 57% Occupancy and weekends are at 76-78%.
- Property does not have enough housekeeping staff to be at 100% Occupancy.
- Limon attended the North Texas Job Fair and was amazed by the number of businesses out looking for help.
- Sales Manager for Hilton Garden Inn and Hampton Inn is hired and in training, and also hired a Desk Clerk.

Board member Nydia Hoskins reported:

- Omni Las Colinas reports a great June with 42% Occupancy and Average Daily Rate of \$175.22.
- Groups are valuable and this week welcoming TIVA for 6-7 days and hotel is full.
- August and September forecast is strong.
- July 4 business was decent but expected higher numbers for transient business.
- Food and Beverage numbers are doing well at the pool and outlets.
- Back up to over 100 employees; had 285 employees before pandemic and went down to 8 employees. Omni is happy to welcome them back home.
- Banquets and Catering are doing well, and it is a great outlook for Fall.

DCURD, IFCD and IFCD III:

Board member Dallas Burke reported:

- Urban Center APT meetings have been held with constituents. The system has been shut down for a few months and COVID-19 knocked out ridership. It costs \$2 million per year to operate the APT. Burke will keep the Board updated on the project.
- All projects are progressing well.
- Dredging at Las Brisas west of Story Road is continuing.
- Major dam projects underway on the south fork of Hackberry Creek at Hwy 161 near Hwy 114.
- Emergency Backup Generators Project for the Storm Water Pump Station set to complete in September.
- Upstream lakes (Ray Roberts, Lewisville, and Grapevine) are beginning to back off releases which should allow additional projects to progress as early as this Fall and City trails are open.
- Maintenance efforts continue as crews remove an average of 100 tons of trash and debris from flood control waterways, the Mandalay Canal, Lake Carolyn, and the canals of Valley Ranch each

year. District crews put in over 6,000 man-hours toward this effort annually. This fiscal year alone, due to the heavy rains this Spring, the average collection amount is above average and there are two more months remaining in the fiscal year.

IRVING-LAS COLINAS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chamber Board Chair Sam Reed reported:

- The Chamber Economic team for 2021 is reporting 17 wins, 11 recruitments, 6 retention/expansions, and over \$300 million in capital investment, which equates to 3,000 job opportunities and 1.6 million square feet of commercial space.
- There are 144 prospective projects in the pipeline, \$29 billion, with 82,000 job opportunities, and 25 million square feet of commercial space, of which just under 20% are corporate headquarters.
- Texas unemployment for May decreased from 5.7% in April to 5.4%, and the national rate decreased from 6.1% in April to 5.8%.
- Governor Abbott has called a Texas Legislative Special Session and the agenda has 11 priorities and more than 350 Bills filed. A Women's Leadership Program is scheduled for July 27 at 3:30 p.m., presented by the Technology Leadership Council.
- Also on July 27 is the Chamber Virtual Five-Star Business Mixer at the Nylo Las Colinas Hotel from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.
- The chamber staff is returning to the office on Tuesday, July 6 with a 14-day rotation schedule.

IRVING ARTS AND CULTURE

Irving Arts Board Chair Kim Andres reported:

- The Irving Arts Board held an in-person Board meeting in the Dupree Theatre and approved their FY2021-22 budget.
- The Arts Center is open, and exhibits are displayed.
- Summer Arts program is in gear and supported arts organizations are creating seasonal series. Updates to ticket charging and use of the facility were adopted and hoping to raise from \$50,000 to \$200,000 to give to the supported arts organizations.
- The 21st Annual Art Connection Members' Show is in the Main & Focus Galleries from July 24-August 21.
- The Irving Museum and Archives is open with reservations. The bookstore is open and increasing its content.
- "A History of Walls: The Borders We Build" temporary exhibit is on view from June 12 – August 14. The exhibit features a closer look at four historically significant walls: the Great Wall of China, the Berlin Wall, the Israel/West Bank Barrier, and the US/Mexico Border Wall.

LAS COLINAS ASSOCIATION

Las Colinas Association President Hammond Perot reported:

- A review of properties for residential home resale or commercial resale indicates:
 - A 50% increase in residential resale and 7,700 houses for potential sale.
 - Commercial resale is down 30%.
- Architectural Control activity is up 39% this year.
- Enforcement is down 40%.
- Cases resolved are up 50%.
- Last three months reported the third most resale residential agreements in the last 12 years.
- There are 14 retail properties being developed.

- Construction updates include 30 new single family homes, 721 apartments and 2 hotels; Element and Embassy Suites are still under construction. The Sandman Hotel project has been delayed and others have not been approved to date.
- Christus Healthcare site development is approved.
- The July 4th celebration was a great event at Levy Event Plaza.

Cooperstein thanked everyone involved with the July 4th celebration. It was a great event for families and made Irving proud. She thanked the Mayor, City Manager and City staff for their support on the ICVB budget and ARPA funds.

Mayor Stopfer recognized the behind-the-scenes people and talented City employees for their effort on the short turnaround request to host the North Texas North Texas Job Fair at the ICC. The ICVB and Chamber of Commerce teams made it happen and Irving had a chance to show over 40 mayors and 300 businesses what Irving can do, without missing a beat. The reception and North Texas Job Fair were put together quickly and in the limelight is where we shine best.

The August Board meeting venue location details will be coming soon.

Cooperstein adjourned the meeting at 1:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Allen Gast, FCDME
Executive Director