

**MINUTES**  
**IRVING CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**  
**IRVING CONVENTION CENTER**  
**FRIDAY, JULY 26, 2024**

Attendance: Richard Stewart, Jr. – Board Chair, Herb Gears – Board Vice Chair; Yasir Arafat, David Cole, Colvin Gibson, Julia Kang, Greg Malcolm, and Sam Reed – Committee Members; Joe Philipp – Board members; Tom Meehan and Jeremy Pierce – ASM/ICC; Councilman Kyle Taylor and Councilman Al Zapanta – City of Irving; John Maloney and Brian Thompson – Maloney Strategic Communications; Cara Frank and Ryan George – Simpleview; Maura Gast, Lori Fojtasek, Marianne Lauda, Brenda Lopez, Brice Petty, Diana Pfaff, Susan Rose and Matt Tungett – ICVB.

Board Chair Richard Stewart, Jr. called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. There were no citizen comments.

Stewart asked for a motion to approve the June 21, 2024, Executive Committee meeting minutes. On a motion from Board member Colvin Gibson, and a second from Board member Sam Reed, the motion was approved unanimously.

**ACCEPTING THE ICVB FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Accounting and Budget Director Marianne Lauda reviewed the ICVB June 2024 financials.

**General Fund:**

- Revenue received was from Hotel Occupancy Tax and Investment Income.
- Expenditures are 50% expended for the year.
- Ending Fund Balance is \$4,848,218.80.

**ICC Reserve/CIP Fund:**

- Everything is holding steady.
- Ending Fund Balance is \$2,310,380.32.

**Check Register:**

- SMG payments include Business Development Incentive Program payments, CIP expenditures, catering, Total Eclipse in the Park event reimbursements and Insight (cloud-based software).
- The third quarter subsidy payment was made to SMG this quarter.

**Cash Flow:**

- Cash Flow is in great shape, transfers will be made to other funds in August.
- Anticipated ending balance for September 2024 is currently close to 6.2 million, in great shape for new budget year.

**Fund Balance Chart:**

- General Fund is above goal.
- Reserve fund is above goal.
- Technology Fund is showing 52%; there is a plan to fully fund in the future.
- ICC CIP Fund is 77% of goal.
- Overall, we are doing well in financial standing.

Stewart asked for a motion to approve the ICVB June 2024 financial reports. On a motion from Board member Julia Kang, and a second from Board member Yasir Arafat, the motion unanimously was approved.

**REVIEW OF HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX COLLECTIONS:**

Lauda reviewed the report for April 2024:

- **Luxury & Full Service:**
  - The Doubletree by Hilton DFW Airport North and the Sheraton DFW Airport Hotel are both still delinquent. Outstanding balance plus penalties and interest are due.
- **All Suite / Extended Stay:**
  - Two properties did not pay in April: Candlewood Suites DFW Airport North and Country Inn & Suites by Carlson DFW Airport South.
- **Budget Service:**
  - Five properties did not pay in April: Budget Suites of America Las Colinas, Crossroads Hotel & Suites, Motel 6 Dallas DFW South, Motel 6 DFW North, OYO Hotel DFW Airport North.
  - Collected \$37,949.69.
- **Limited Service:**
  - One property did not pay in April: Fairfield Inn & Suites Dallas DFW Airport South Irving.
- **Short-Term Rentals:**
  - Collected \$24,788.45 from 33 reported properties.
- **Summary:**
  - April collected \$904,749.58. Budgeted \$936,361.00, short 3.4%.
  - Cumulative Year-to-Date Actual for April is \$5,339,181.53, down 3.5% from Budget.
  - Prior Year collected \$824,970.07.

Gast replied to a question from Gibson and stated it could be a timing issue as to why there are five Budget properties that have not paid, and it could be a one-time occurrence. This is not a trend as it has been with the two delinquent full-service properties.

**ACTION ITEM:** Request for a report of hotel properties that have not paid categorized by zip codes. Lauda will include in the next Executive Committee meeting.

**ACCEPTING THE IRVING CONVENTION CENTER FINANCIAL REPORT**

General Manager Tom Meehan reviewed the ICC May 2024 financials.

- There were 24 events, and 41 event days with \$32,754 in attendance.
- Year-to-date there were 124 events, and 185,697 in attendance.
- Adjusted Gross Income is \$5,891,394 and is \$710,172 ahead of budget.
- Ahead of this year's budget by approximately \$1,004,982.
- Rental Income is at an all-time high, and expenses are also higher than last year.
- Catering for the month was at \$481,472, which is a remarkably high net number for the month.
- SMG will be returning \$583,970 of the subsidy.

Meehan reviewed the ICC June 2024 financials.

- There were 17 events, and 32 event dates with 21,410 in attendance.
- Year-to-date there have been 141 events, last year there were 166 events.
- Revenue numbers are well ahead of last year with 25 less events this year.
- Expenses are up \$418,681 over last year.
- Ahead of budget by \$1,230,791.

- Year-to-date numbers for Rental and Catering have been the highest they have ever been since opening.
- Adjusted gross income last year was \$7.1 million, this year projected at \$8,102,605.
- ICC is projected to return \$878,558 of the subsidy, with 3 months left in the fiscal year.
- Well ahead of budget for the year and expect another record-breaking year.

Meehan replied to a question asked at the June Executive Committee meeting regarding new, first-time accounts and industries for the current year at ICC. So far this year there have been 43 new events: 24 Corporate, 3 Sports, 9 Association, 9 SMERF and 1 Government. This year's events have been larger and for longer durations. There has been a decrease in the number of events taking place but an increase in revenue.

Stewart asked for a motion to accept the ICC May and June 2024 financial reports. On a motion from Board member Sam Reed, and a second from Kang, the motion unanimously was accepted.

#### STAFF OVERVIEW OF SIMPLEVIEW CONTRACT

Gast introduced Simpleview CEO Ryan George and Chief of Staff Cara Frank. Simpleview is a leader of DMO Digital Marketing Solutions and Tourism software and provider of CRM and content management systems. Their company is also doing work now with ASM to develop many of their venue websites, in addition to what they do for the ICC and ICVB. Simpleview is invested in the CVB industry in time and services. George and Frank and many others on their team serve on many industry boards. Simpleview holds annual summits, user group gatherings and advisory board meetings, convening IT, sales, and marketing professionals.

VP of Sales and Services Lori Fojtasek presented the Sales Tools in Simpleview. The Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system is the primary tool for data and houses the Meeting Sales and Member Partner accounts, contracts and leads. The system also provides standard templates, as well as customizable reporting. Fojtasek is the administrator of the CRM for the Sales resources. The ICVB agreement with Simpleview includes support hours for projects and customization of the database for the ICVB. The system also incorporates the "Extranet" that allows hotel partners and other stakeholders to respond to leads, apply for BizDip, and manage their data. It also integrates with EmpowerMINT, Cvent and Outlook. Cvent is one of the biggest platforms for event management and RFP distribution. The system also creates account traces. There are 20,000 active accounts in Meeting Sales.

Fojtasek added, many of the tools that Simpleview provides has allowed for the Sales team staff number to stay flat.

Discussion was held on Simpleview's cyber security and information back up protocols. George added that cyber security is something that Simpleview takes very seriously. Data is hosted in multiple locations on the cloud, and if one were to go down, there are other locations in which it is backed up. Simpleview takes every precaution to make sure the data is safe and can provide documentation on security measures.

Fojtasek responded to Councilman Zapanta's question regarding EmpowerMINT. This is a Destinations International database which holds detailed histories on more than 80,000 meetings and events around the world. It is a tool that can be used to look up groups that could fit a particular "need" window and is beneficial when looking at new groups coming to Irving. Arafat asked if EmpowerMINT can project income. George responded, not income per say, but there is a system, Futurepace, that looks out to the future and projects how to get to that budget goal.

VP of Marketing and Communications Diana Pfaff presented Simpleview Marketing Tools. The Content Management System (CMS) allows the Marketing team to manage the Visit Irving and Convention Center website. Simpleview's CMS is customized to each CVB's need, allowing for enhanced flexibility and control over website updates, such as event calendars, partner listings, form builders and content, including blogs. It also tracks advertising performance, web traffic, ads, and campaigns, like the Staycations campaigns. Simpleview has a team dedicated to supporting Irving.

Pfaff mentioned that the Marketing team is looking at items for future budgeting, enhancing a media room and potentially incorporating an Artificial Intelligence (AI) component, such as a Chatbot, but that those discussions are in the very early stages. George added that AI is a new way for potential and existing customers to interact with content. With the proper training models and testing this will allow people to access content faster and can make tools better and invest in the industry.

Reed thanked George and Clark for coming and asked what role AI will play in the future, in terms of other tools and resources in our industry. George responded that it would assist in staying on top of trends and trying to implement ways to partner with other companies to envision destinations. It could also change the way data is processed. Simpleview has an AI task force with 20 participants.

Discussion was held on Simpleview's succession plan and if it is privately own. George added that there is a team behind the company's succession plan.

Stewart thanked George and Frank for coming to the meeting with the Committee and added a great presentation was received from Fojtasek and Pfaff.

#### STAFF OVERVIEW OF MALONEY STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS CONTRACT

Gast introduced John Maloney and Brian Thompson with Maloney Strategic Communications. MSC continuously provides creative solutions to the ICVB, ICC and the City that exceed expectations. They have direct knowledge and involvement with the ICVB's past and current marketing efforts, combined with their experience in the Irving community. They have taken the "Irving Rocks" tagline and graphics and incorporated these into trade shows and event activations. MSC has created Brand Identity and logos, graphic designs, creative ad campaigns, design and select placement, collateral production, event planning, and video production. MSC did all the creative concepting for *Irving on the Rocks*.

Board member David Cole asked if MSC are partners in winning Adrian awards. Pfaff added if we win, they win depending on what the award is for. Simpleview and MSC also work together, especially in advertising. The agency sets the visual terms as our identity and sends it to Simpleview who then implements the campaigns.

Gibson asked how much is spent with MSC. Gast responded that \$400,000 a year, and an hourly rate for projects. They are not paid to attend meetings. The annual amount includes production costs. Arafat asked if MSC is only contracted for the ICVB, Gast responded that they are not the City's agency, but they have done work with many of the City departments, the Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce and Irving Arts Center.

Pfaff added that the ICVB has a contracted amount of funds and hours and what is done within a year must come out of that budget.

**ACTION ITEM:** Request for a full picture of the Total Eclipse in the Park event dollars. Gast will have a breakdown of all the expenses and the return on those investments as soon as all the expenses come through.

#### REVIEW OF BOARD MEETING AGENDA

Gast reviewed the July 29, 2024 Board agenda:

- Toyota Music Factory update from General Manager Eric Albert.
- High Spirited Citizen recommendations from Community Engagement Committee.
- There will be three new employee introductions - one new ICVB employee and two ICC sales managers.
- Clare Venegas who has been the University of Dallas representative acknowledged that she cannot participate, and has suggested J. Lee Whittington, UD's Dean of the business school to fill the position. Waiting on a letter from the University President to request the City Council make this new appointment.

#### CITY COUNCIL UPDATES

Councilman Kyle Taylor reported:

- There will be a meeting with KOA Partners regarding information about the high-rise residential project being proposed near the Ritz-Carlton.
- Currently in the budget process and will be meeting with Chris Hillman and reviewing covering payroll costs.
- Boards and Commissions nomination forms will be coming soon.
- There are some Council concerns regarding things that are coming from Brookfield, especially as it relates to parking at Toyota Music Factory.

#### CHAIRMAN/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & STAFF REPORTS

Gast thanked Simpleview, Maloney Strategic Communications, Pfaff, Fojtasek and Tungett for providing great summaries.

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 23.

With no further comments or discussion, Stewart adjourned the meeting at 10:38 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  


Maura Allen Gast, FCDME  
Executive Director