



**Newport & Bristol County Convention & Visitors Bureau
DBA Discover Newport
Board of Directors Meeting
Tues. June 20, 2023
Innovate Newport
513 Broadway
Newport, RI
12PM**

The meeting was called to order at 12:02pm by T.R. McGrath, Board Chair

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE WERE: Pamela Baldwin, Meredith Brower, Keith Chouinard, Keri Cronin, Patrick Fitzgerald, Matt Gray, Charlie Holder, Rocky Kempenaar, TR McGrath, Tom McNiff, Andrew Moore, Sean O'Connor, Missy Varao

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & EXCUSED WERE: Karen Binder, Peter Connerton, Gillian Friedman Fox, John Nunes
BOARD MEMBER ABSENT & NOT EXCUSED: N/A

MEMBER(S) OF THE PUBLIC: Savana Dunning – Newport Daily News, Chris Allen – Providence Business News

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Alyson Adkins, Anna Duffy, Kathryn Farrington, Alex Hurd, Tim Walsh

I. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chairman T.R. McGrath introduced our host Kevin Buck, Community Manager at Innovate Newport. He briefed the board on the history of the building which was renovated in 2019 and currently used for co-working space, meeting space rentals and long-term leasing to ten businesses.

II. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

The previous meeting minutes for May 16th were reviewed by the board. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Sean O'Connor and seconded by Tom McNiff. The motion passed unanimously.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT:

The treasurer's report for May was presented by Pamela Baldwin: For March bed taxes, the City of Newport was down -47% as compared to budget, Newport County (excluding City of Newport) was down -17% as compared to budget, and Bristol County was up 26% as compared to budget. Total private revenue for the month of May was up +24% as compared to budget, with total revenue down -32% as compared to budget. Total expenses were underbudget by 25%. Year-to-date bed taxes were down by -3% as compared to budget, with total revenue down -2% to budget. Discussion followed. A motion to approve the treasurer's report was made by Keith Chouinard and seconded by Rocky Kempenaar. The motion passed unanimously.

Alyson then reviewed FY 2024 budget. Total revenue is expected to be flat as compared to projected FY 23 actual, this is due to a projected decrease in grant revenue (\$160K for FY 24 compared to \$413K for FY 23). We used Smith Travel Research (STR) forecasting module to project FY 24 bed tax revenue, with a 1.5% delta. For FY 24,

we are projecting a 5% increase of FY 23 actual, which is ~ \$5.3 million. Alyson also noted we are budgeting a deficit for FY 24, due to the HBO series *The Gilded Age* now airing from Winter 23 to Fall 23. Alyson then went over the major changes for each department. Discussion followed. A motion to pass the FY 24 budget as presented was made by Keri Cronin and seconded by Tom McNiff. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. STAFF/REGIONAL UPDATES:

- Tim Walsh, V.P. of Sales brought the board up to date on the following:
The Sales Dept. has a robust trade show schedule: New York City – FICP, Boston Luncheon with 38 planners, DC area CVB representatives’ membership.
- Kathryn Farrington, V.P. of Marketing brought the board up to date on the following:
Discover Newport is sponsoring the free hop-on hop- off RIPTA Rte.67 (transportation center and all of Bellevue Ave.) trolley this Summer through October 31st. The Episcopal Church of RI is sponsoring Rte. 68. (North End of Newport to the Second Beach). To park at the transportation center a discounted fee of \$5 per day will be charged if a RIPTA rider receipt is shown when exiting the parking lot.

Brand USA and RI Commerce coordinated a visit last week for group of Italian journalists. Kathryn thanked the board members for their help accommodating these guests.

- The following board members gave updates on their respective townships: Sean O’Connor– Newport, Keri Cronin – Warren, Matt Gray – Portsmouth, Patrick Fitzgerald – Newport, Andrew Moore – Little Compton, Tom McNiff – Jamestown, Keith Chouinard – Portsmouth, Charlie Holder – Newport, Rocky Kempenaar – Middletown, Missy Varao – Newport, Meredith Brower - Tiverton. Discussion followed.

- V. ADJOURNMENT:** A motion to adjourn was made by Sean O’Connor and seconded by Charlie Holder. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:05pm.

**The next Board Meeting will be held:
September 27, 2023
TBA**