

**GREATER RICHMOND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY  
MEETING  
March 15, 2024  
Greater Richmond Convention Center  
Administrative Offices  
401 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Richmond, VA 23219  
10:00 a.m.**

Mr. John Vithoulkas, Chairman, called the Greater Richmond Convention Center Authority Meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. A quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Authority reviewed the minutes from the January 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Nancy Thomas, which motion was seconded by Dr. Joe Casey. **The Board approved the motion by the following vote:**

<b>Ayes:</b>	<b>Budesky, Casey, Saunders, Thomas, Vithoulkas</b>
<b>Nays:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Absent:</b>	<b>None</b>

**REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

Finance

Mr. Brandon Hinton, chair of the Finance Committee, reported on the first eight months of FY 2024, hotel tax remittances exceeded budget by \$2,535,295 or 12.2% and were greater than prior year's collections by \$161,576 or 0.7%. Jurisdiction results compared to prior year collections are as follows: Chesterfield 5.9%, Hanover 7.8%, Henrico 6.8% and Richmond (12.7)%. While Richmond is still down in collections, Sabrina Joy-Hogg and her team in the City of Richmond are continuing to work on collection discrepancies.

Mr. Hinton reported that he is continuing to move forward with the contract for Supervision Agreement and a draft will be reviewed by the Finance Committee as well as the Henrico County Attorney. The Finance Committee will meet in April to review the FY25 budget and will be ready to present the budget in May.

Legal

Mr. Brennen Keene stated that there will be a closed session but has no other report at this time.

OVG360

Mr. Jeremy Phillips, Interim General Manager of OVG360, reported that Galaxy Con will open today and is their biggest event with Saturday being sold out. The Authority discussed the Trump Rally which was booked on short notice. Mr. Phillips commended his team for excellent customer service and a tight security event with a very large crowd. It was also reported that Richmond Public Schools will be utilizing the facility for their May graduations and that the news media has reached out for a comment from the facility.

For November 15 events were held vs. a budget of 21. Attendance was up slightly. There was a \$285,000 positive variance for the month with the total up \$68,000 over budget. For December, 23 events were held vs. a budget of 25. Attendance was strong at over 30,000 in the building during the first two weeks of December. Event income was up, and expenses were under budget with a positive variance of \$85,000 for the month. For January, 13 events were held vs. a budget

of 16. Attendance was down 8,000 and license fee income was also down. Year to date Mr. Phillips reported \$550,000 ahead of budget.

Dr. Casey inquired about the total capacity of the building or what a sell-out means. Mr. Phillips reported that Galaxy Con is exceeding the size of our venue and has started using other facilities such as the Marriott Hotel and off-site venues such as the Byrd Theatre. For the Trump Rally, there were slightly under 5,000 people in the hall but approximated 10,000 in line outside.

#### Aramark

Mr. Jack Berry reported on behalf of Blaine Scalard who is currently out due to a personal situation. Both January & February were challenging months for food and beverage. For January sales came in at \$186,000, about \$78,000 below budget. Most of the January business was repeat groups like NCA Cheer & Dance, Commonwealth Prayer Breakfast, Virginia Bankers Association and the RAMMY Awards Banquet. Richmond Volleyball sales came in at about half of what they historically have had. Cost of Sales was 4.6% above budget and payroll was 27% over budget. The concession sales were at times very slow which increased labor costs. For GRCC profit/loss, we lost about \$34,000.

For February, Sales came in at \$162,000, about \$102,000 below budget. Catering sales really lagged from past years. Mostly repeat groups like Mother & Daughter Dance, Dance Makers, Cheer & Dance, Ignite Dance. Most of these events generate little sales, we are more of a service added component of the building for their attendees. The Virginia Auto Show, the Boat Show and the Catholic Diocese Youth Conference were also held in February. Cost of Sales was 5% over budget and payroll was too high mostly because of the dance group concessions and portable food and beverage service needs. For GRCC profit/loss, we lost approximately \$52,000. March is expected to be very good which should get food and beverage back on track.

#### Richmond Region Tourism

Mr. Jack Berry reported that RRT has partnered with Blue Room Research to provide a more enhanced data collection and some new hotel occupancy charts were shared with the Authority. Mr. Berry reported that occupancy is flat but that the average daily rates remain high. Mr. Berry updated the Authority on the Trump Rally and how the team at the facility pulled off the event with four days notice. The event was peaceful and the building team along with RMC Events and Richmond Police Department did an outstanding job. Mr. Berry described the other events that occurred throughout March such as Jefferson Cup weekends and noted that downtown hotels were getting \$800 as a nightly rate due to the number of visitors in the region. The A10 Women's Basketball Tournament was a huge success in Henrico's new Sports and Events Center. After Galaxy Con the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts will move in and end the month with NASCAR. Mr. Berry discussed the competition that is occurring in the North and South of the region. Kalahari Resort, a new venue in Spotsylvania, will open in the Fall of 2026 and the Raleigh Convention Center will be expanded. Williamsburg is also looking to create a sports venue very similar to Henrico's facility. The headquarter hotel project in City Center is critical to compete with the impending competition growth surrounding us.

Mr. Berry presented one fee waiver for the Virginia Recreation & Parks Society for 2026. Ms. Nancy Thomas approved the fee waiver, seconded by Mr. Budesky. **The Board approved the motion by the following vote:**

<b>Ayes:</b>	<b>Budesky, Casey, Saunders, Thomas, Vithoulkas</b>
<b>Nays:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Absent:</b>	<b>None</b>

Dr. Casey discussed the upcoming Presidential Debate which will be held at Virginia State University in October and noted that a special group may need to convene to discuss supporting the college with the event.

Ms. Katherine O'Donnell presented a fee waiver for Jack Berry's Retirement Party which will be held on June 20<sup>th</sup> at the Greater Richmond Convention Center. Ms. Nancy Thomas made a motion to accept the waiver, seconded by Dr. Casey. **The Board approved the motion by the following vote:**

<b>Ayes:</b>	<b>Budesky, Casey, Saunders, Thomas, Vithoukas</b>
<b>Nays:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Absent:</b>	<b>None</b>

CLOSED SESSION  
GREATER RICHMOND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY

Pursuant to Sections 2.2-3711(A)(3), (5), (6), (7), and (8) and Section 2.2-3712 of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act (Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3700 et. seq.), I move that the Board go into closed session to consult with legal counsel and staff for the following purposes:

- (1) To discuss the possible acquisition or disposition of real property;
- (2) To discuss a prospective business or industry;
- (3) To discuss the potential investment of public funds where competition or bargaining may be involved; and
- (4) To discuss specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by counsel.

Motion -- Lincoln Saunders  
Second -- Nancy C. Thomas

Vote:	Ayes	Nays
John A. Budesky	<u>  X  </u>	_____
Joseph P. Casey	<u>  X  </u>	_____
Lincoln Saunders	<u>  X  </u>	_____
Nancy C. Thomas	<u>  X  </u>	_____
John A. Vithoukas	<u>  X  </u>	_____

Absent During Meeting: None

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED SESSION

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners (the "Board") for the Greater Richmond Convention Center Authority (the "Authority") convened a closed session on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by this Board that such closed session was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed session to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed session were heard, discussed, or considered by the Authority.

The following roll call vote was taken:

Vote:	Ayes	Nays
John A. Budesky	<u>  X  </u>	_____
Joseph P. Casey	<u>  X  </u>	_____
Lincoln Saunders	<u>  X  </u>	_____
Nancy C. Thomas	<u>  X  </u>	_____
John A. Vithoukaskas	<u>  X  </u>	_____

Absent During Session:       None

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m. The next meeting date is scheduled for Friday, May 17, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.