
Tuesday, January 20, 2026
Monthly Joint Staff Meeting Minutes

Those in attendance included Maura Gast, Breanna Gallagher, Kathy Levine, Wendy Foster, Susan Rose, Lori Fojtasek, Cheryl Hopkins, Matt Tungett, Monty White, Brice Petty, Corey Goode, Kim Ates, Kayla Perez, Casey Villasenor, Marianne Lauda, Donna Groves, Brenda Lopez, Anabel Espinoza, Breahn Fisher, Bria Scott, Cassie Molinari, Kim Ates, Austin Sneed, Kayla Mansour, Andrea Sawall, Amanda Adams, Carol Boyer and Luke Bauer

Meeting began at 9:02am

1. Executive Director

a) Living Our Values Out Loud

- Kathy Levine recognized Lori Fojtasek for managing events, Wendy Foster for handling calls, setting expectations for follow-up and supporting customer service needs, and Brenda Lopez for consistently taking on and resolving unusual/special requests and keeping operations moving – all while Kathy was out on leave.

b) Maura shared that the Fired-Up Training survey will be coming this week (earlier than previously communicated).

c) Maura provided an overview of this week's Destination Board Leadership Symposium meeting being hosted onsite, including:

- Approximately 50 destination colleagues attending (U.S. and Canada).
- Opening reception - Wednesday, sessions all day Thursday, and a half-day Friday
- Rick Anderson scheduled as Thursday morning keynote speaker (noted as a prior annual meeting speaker)

2. ICVB

a) Sales and Services

- Lori shared a team lunch with Marriott Las Colinas and noted significant staff turnover across roles (including chef and other positions). Updates will be made in systems once the new team settles in.
- Retirement announcement: Lori announced Cheryl Hopkins will be retiring. Cheryl shared she has no specific post-retirement plans yet, noted 33 years with the organization, and expects to remain through the end of March.
- Matt shared a meeting with Rare Steak regarding "giving back" and sponsorship opportunities for this year, and noted improvements needed from last year (including napkins/napkin station logistics).

- A large upcoming group was discussed requiring 850 doubles, likely needing approximately 15 hotels and multiple (three) contracts to secure room inventory.
- b) Marketing and Communications
- Monty White shared updates including:
 - Breanna Gallagher was featured in [Convention South](#) magazine (interview published on December 16th).
 - The second mailer (“We’ve got you covered” blankets) is shipping soon; samples will be shared once office extras arrive.
 - ICVB will kick off a new Economic Impact Study later this month with Future Partners (noting the prior study is about three years old).
 - Year-end analytics highlights shared: December website traffic exceeded 200,000 sessions (attributed to the “12 Days” campaign), Instagram crossed 30,000 followers, and the Expedia partnership generated 82,000 room nights for the year and \$10.5 million in hotel revenue (as stated).
 - Lori Sirmen is attending IMM (International Media Marketplace) for travel media networking and relationship-building.
 - Headshots will be offered during the February board meeting day, with a signup sheet forthcoming. The window shared was approximately 10:00 AM–4:00 PM, with priority blocks reserved for board members before/after the meeting. Staff also discussed being mindful of whether individuals want headshots posted publicly. Group/team photos should be coordinated with Kayla Mansour due to time/location needs.
- c) Finance and Administration
- Team Irving
 - Maura shared appreciation for recent cross-team efforts and noted positive outcomes on ICC-side operations (including acknowledgments tied to State of the City support).
 - 2026 Fired Up Training – Revised Calendar with times
 - i. Tuesday, March 3, 2026 – ICVB
 - 8:30am-1:00pm
 - ii. Wednesday, March 4, 2026 – ICC
 - 12pm-5:00pm
 - iii. Thursday, March 5, 2026 – Joint
 - 8:30am – 1:00pm
 - CVB team will proceed to City Hall afterward
 - Susan Rose noted Meg from Fired Up will be in town for the symposium and will meet regarding the Training.

3. ICC General Manager Report

a) Building/Project Updates

- Grab and Go opened last week and was a success; final numbers pending.
- Employee lounge: additional update to follow (with a note that it is looking good and may support staff pizza day).
- Ongoing work on grand ballroom lights.
- Parking garage elevator: awaiting a part

b) Building Security

- Security has new uniforms with a “softer touch”.
- Weather preparedness reminder: keep a basic kit in vehicles (water, food, blankets, flashlight) in case of roadway issues.
- Situational awareness reminder referencing a Homeland Security message; staff were encouraged to stay alert and prioritize safety.

c) Events

- Edmundo’s last day today; staff were encouraged to wish him well as he transitions to a new opportunity.
- This week: Texas Prime is in-house; contingency planning underway for weather impacts.
- Next week: Family First Life returns for the third year; All questions/issues related to Family First Life should be routed to Kim.
- February outlook: very busy month with events including Delta Regional Luncheon (Feb 1) projected 1,400–1,500 attendees (one day), plus returning/new events such as Talent on Parade, Vistage Executive Summit, Southern Baptist (likely largest February event; week-long), and IPD Banquet (annual).
- Kim also recapped a recent multi-group configuration from Hilti (three separate groups across the week) and noted they are considering returning with the same structure next year.

d) Finance

- December financials came in slightly under budget
- Expectation that this year will be more challenging compared to last year’s performance.

e) Food and Beverage

- Grab and Go launch was noted as a positive start; additional metrics to follow once final numbers are available.

f) Information Technology

- All staff have transitioned to Windows 11 (fully supported).
- New/awaited information has been received related to the building automation system (lights/plumbing/HVAC). Brice and team will use it to develop related policy.

A reminder was shared to keep devices updated, including an Apple update referenced as “the 26 update” for certain devices.

g) Sales

- Open positions and interview activity (Casey anticipated two interviews this week).
- Cassie noted a strong start to the quarter with over \$500,000 closed in the first 20 days.

Recognitions / Closing

- New receptionist: Caroline was announced. Helena is shifting to part-time with an overlap training schedule: Helena Mon–Wed mornings; Caroline Wed afternoons + Thu/Fri starting next week.
- Recognition was given for Employee of the Month, Bria Scott and a milestone acknowledgment for a 32nd anniversary for Lori Fojtasek.
- Brenda Lopez was reiterated as the first recipient of the new semi-annual “Superstar” award program.

Meeting ended at 9:32am

**Trust, Respect, Communication,
Personal Responsibility, Integrity, Empowerment, Purposeful**

Team Irving Vision

Irving will be a uniquely vibrant destination attracting visitors of all kinds for unforgettable experiences.

Team Irving Mission

The Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau enhances Irving's economy and quality of life by marketing and advocating for the development of Irving as a premier destination.

Team Irving Values

TRUST

Trust is our foundation: We trust in each other, our teams and the process and know each of us is true to our word.

RESPECT

Everyone and everything deserve my respect.

COMMUNICATION

I Listen, I Hear, I Respond, I Act.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Do the right thing.

EMPOWERMENT

Do what needs doing when it needs to be done.

PURPOSEFUL

We are deliberate in our actions towards the common purpose of making Irving stronger.