

MINUTES
Irving Convention & Visitors Bureau Board of Directors
Monday, June 24, 2024
Irving Convention Center
500 W. Las Colinas Blvd. – Junior Ballroom C-D
Irving, Texas 75039

Attendance: Richard Stewart, Jr. – Board Chair; Board Vice Chair Herb Gears, Michael Basoco, Beth Bowman, David Cole, Tommy DeBeaudry, Stephanie Fenley-Garcia, Colvin Gibson, City Manager Chris Hillman, Cambria Jones, Julia Kang, William Mahoney, Hammond Perot, Joe Philipp, and Sam Reed – Board Members; Mayor Rick Stopfer, Councilman Mark Cronenwett, Assistant City Manager Philip Sanders, Chief Financial Officer Bret Starr, and City Attorney Kuruvilla Oommen, Councilman Al Zapanta – City of Irving; General Manager Tom Meehan and Assistant General Manager Jeremy Pierce – ICC Staff; Carol Boyer, Lori Fojtasek, Maura Gast, Marianne Lauda, Brice Petty, Matt Tungett, and Monty White – ICVB.
Guests: ICVB Sales Manager Breanna Gallagher and Marketing Manager Kayla Mansour.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approving ICVB Board Meeting Minutes for May 20, 2024
- Accepting ICVB Financial Reports for May 2024
- Reviewing the Hotel Occupancy Tax Collections
- Accepting the Irving Convention Center Financial Reports for April 2024

Stewart asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. With a motion from Board member William Mahoney, and a second from Board member Colvin Gibson, the motion passed unanimously.

INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION

OVERVIEW OF BUDGET AND MARKETING PLAN FOR FY 2024-25

Gast gave an overview presentation. The handout for the presentation is available on the Board portal.

Key Priorities for the ICVB:

- Restore financial stability.
- Solicit meetings and groups to convene in Irving.
- Build optimal awareness of Irving among travelers, decision-makers, and influencers.
- Influence appropriate product development.
- Provide leadership that unites the hospitality industry with the community.
- Secure resources that will allow the ICVB to achieve its vision, mission, objectives, and goals.

Five-Year Path to Financial Stability

- \$2 million General Fund Balance Minimum
- \$5 Million Catastrophic Reserve Fund Minimum
- \$1 Million Technology Fund Minimum
- \$3 Million ICC CIP Reserve Fund Minimum

- TPID Establishment

Board Actions Requested

- Approve 2024-25 Budget & Marketing Plan
- Approve ICC Capital Improvement Plan
- Accept Updates to the Strategic Plan
- Accept the Destinations International Code of Ethics

Stewart added the Executive Committee reviewed the budget documents extensively in the Committee meeting on Friday, June 21.

With no further questions or discussion, Stewart asked for a motion to approve the FY 2024-25 Budget and Marketing Plan as presented. With a motion from Board member Sam Reed, and a second from Board member Mahoney, the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVE THE ICC CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Gast gave a brief overview of the plan that included:

- Key Goals
- Project Priorities
- Achieve and sustain a minimum balance of \$3 million in the fund.
- Respond nimbly to emergencies.
- 20-Year Capital Improvement Plan

With no further discussion or questions, Stewart asked for a motion to approve the ICC Capital Improvement Plan. On a motion from Mahoney, and a second from Gibson, the motion passed unanimously.

ACCEPT THE STRATEGIC PLAN ANNUAL UPDATE

Gast reviewed the Strategic Plan of Four Priorities in Five Years:

- Maximize organizational sustainability and growth.
- Increase community outreach and collaboration.
- Advocate for destination-enhancing development.
- Enhance the visitor experience.

A presentation reviewing each goal and objectives was reviewed. With no further discussion or question, Stewart asked for a motion to accept the Strategic Plan Annual Update. On a motion from Board member Julia Kang, and a second from Reed, the motion passed unanimously.

ACCEPT THE DESTINATIONS INTERNATIONAL CODE OF ETHICS

The Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP) requires that each accredited organization adhere to the Code of Ethics to reinforce the need and demand for transparency and accountability within the profession. Gast reviewed the Code of Ethics and asked for a motion to accept.

On a motion from Mahoney, and a second from Gibson, the Destinations International Code of Ethics was unanimously accepted.

ARD CHAIR REPORT

- Gast introduced ICVB Marketing Manager Kayla Mansour and recognized her service to the ICVB for the past 10 years. Mansour received her service award from Stewart, Mayor Rick Stopfer, City Manager Chris Hillman and ICVB Senior Director of Marketing Monty White.
- ICVB Sales Manager Breanna Gallagher was introduced to the Board and Gast shared a brief biography of her industry experience. She is a welcome addition to the ICVB Sales Team.
- Stewart noted the next Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 29.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Board and Business Development

Committee Chair Sam Reed reported:

- Recap of the June 14 Committee meeting included:
 - An overview of the new Board member orientation that was held on May 31 was given. Two new Board members attended the orientation, and both found it to be very educational and insightful.
 - Discussion was held on the Board Member Self-Evaluation Form. No updates to the form were made at this time and it will be distributed at the August Board meeting.
 - The Former Board Member Luncheon is scheduled for December 9 at the Irving Convention Center.
 - The Committee's Strategic Plan goals were reviewed, and discussion was held on next steps.
- The Next Committee meeting is scheduled for September 13.

Community Engagement Committee

Committee Chair Colvin Gibson reported:

- The next Committee meeting is July 9.
- The High Spirited Citizen Luncheon is scheduled for October 25 at the Irving Convention Center.

Destination Development Committee

- The next Committee meeting is August 13.

CITY REPORT

Councilman Al Zapanta reported:

- The City Council spent time last week going over the FY2024-25 budget and reviewing items to put forward for the final budget presentation.

Mayor Rick Stopfer reported:

- The City is at the height of budget season. Stopfer thanked Gast and team for staying the course and the superb management of the Convention Center facility. The dollars the ICVB generates draw businesses and retain residents, saving taxpayers \$700-800 a year in taxes. He congratulated the team on the budget process. He also thanked the Irving-Las Colinas Chamber Economic Development team. The team works diligently with the City Manager and his team to bring companies to Irving. These two entities do a tremendous amount of work.
- Citizen input is important to the budget process and Hillman tackles every problem and

does a tremendous job in leading his team.

- The City has retained the Triple A bond rating and Chief Financial Officer Bret Starr and the finance team do an amazing job in forecasting to have all the bases covered. Irving has a unique budget and is fortunate to maintain the Triple A rating.
- Where other cities are running short on funds, Irving is thriving. Last year reported \$1 billion in permits, including housing and business remodeling and expansion.
- The City is working with *Operation Finally Home* that works to improve or build homes for American veterans, and the City has three Habitat for Humanity homes being constructed.
- The downtown area has ten new owners who purchased buildings and are investing in improvements. Moving forward with the second investment in the downtown area with Weitzman Group.
- DART member cities are considering decreasing contributions. There has been a significant drop in ridership since the pandemic and concerns over cleanliness, safety, and the overall condition of DART services. Several cities will come together to nail down costs and Return-on-Investment. State legislature will be addressed to move forward with equality in participation.
- The City Council held a special meeting to discuss land options, roads, water, parks, new construction and where tax dollars are going and what has been accomplished.

Councilman Mark Cronenwett reported on upcoming City Council agenda items:

- City Council is discussing the Toyota Music Factory construction and signage for the BBQ restaurant on site.
- Texas Poker House development was forwarded to City Council from Planning & Zoning with a recommendation of denial.
- Recommendation for a \$437,000 expenditure for the City to use in clean up on Texas Department of Transportation roadways.
- Great to see the Irving Police Department leading the charge on drones and technical advances.
- A 20-story high rise condominium building near the Ritz-Carlton is under consideration. The Council will review the impact and infrastructure impact on the community.

City Manager Chris Hillman reported:

- The two-day Sparks and Stripes event kicks off on July 3 with a drone show and fireworks on Lake Carolyn, and the parade the morning of July 4.
- The budget priorities are listed on the City's website and Hillman encouraged feedback.
- The *Let's Play Irving* effort addresses three aquatic and recreational centers. A public input session on Mustang Park is scheduled in August.
- Federal disaster funds are available for homeowners and businesses. The application is available online at the City's website.

BUREAU MANAGEMENT AND STAFF REPORTS

Bureau Management

Executive Director Maura Gast reported:

- Assistant Executive Director Administration/Finance Susan Rose is on vacation; however, the Hotel

Performance and Short-Term Rental April data report is included in the packet.

- Special thanks to Budget and Finance Director Marianne Lauda for her work on the budget preparations, and Senior Marketing Director Monty White for the FY 2024-25 Budget and Marketing Plan document. The budget process has taken up a lot of time and Gast expressed her thanks for their support.
- Omni Las Colinas General Manager Nydia Hoskins has been promoted to Omni Corporate as the Vice President of People and Culture. She was recognized for her service on the Board at the Executive Committee meeting. Hoskins will make a recommendation to fill her Board position.
- Board member Greg Malcolm and Board member Kim Limon have both been pulled for other duties today at their respective properties.
- The STR Report for April shows:
 - The last six months' performance vs. the previous year flat for Occupancy, and up 6% for Average Daily Rate and RevPAR.
 - A detailed data report will hopefully be available next month for eclipse event activity.

Assistant Executive Director Sales and Services Lori Fojtasek reported:

- Sales has been busy attending trade shows, traveling and planning events.
- Groups: SuperCopa Soccer produced 2,500 room nights, Texas Takeover at the Marriott had 1,450 room nights, Pamm Expo Model and Talent event is a repeat piece of business with 1,127 room nights, and Steubenville returned to the Convention Center for the seventh year and utilized every space and the parking garage with 2,700 room nights.
- Coming soon: Teachers Association is happening at the Gaylord, but Irving is receiving 3,200 overflow room nights; International Municipal Signal Association at the Convention Center has 1,500 room nights and in July there are events that cover several days, i.e., USA Junior Badminton Tournament July 1-9 with 800 athletes and 1,600 family and fans attending, with 90% coming from outside of Texas.

State Trust fund agreement is in place for the Badminton tournament and Gast noted the item has been placed on the City Council agenda.

Marketing and Communications Marketing Director Monty White reported:

- Website sessions in May increased 22% year-over-year with 102,133 total sessions and 91,021 active users.
- May had the second highest blog numbers with 11,806 blog pageviews.
- Staycations Campaign generated 8,300 hotel referrals and a 35% conversion rate.
- Event Micro-Campaigns generated 8,313 website visits.
- Promoted Content Campaign generated an additional 3,200 website visits.
- In May, launched an Entertainment Hub Campaign and in the first month it generated 3,400 website visits.
- Relunched the Online Travel Agencies campaign in partnership with Expedia and had 5,400 hotel bookings, for 10,786 room nights and generated \$1.5 million in direct hotel revenue.
- Social media added 2,653 new followers, the largest increase this year, bringing total influence to 173,878 followers.

Board member Michael Basoco asked if one online travel agency is doing better than others. White replied

TripAdvisor and Expedia tend to perform the best for Irving.

CONVENTION CENTER MANAGEMENT

General Manager Tom Meehan reported for April 2024:

- The Convention Center has been extremely busy the last few months.
- The building hosted 85 events year to date, compared to 104 prior the year but with 112,719 attendees vs 91,423 prior year.
- YTD Customer Service score is 92.6%.
- Steubenville event hosted 4,200 youth for the Catholic youth conference. Meehan was amazed by the number of buses in front and behind the Convention Center and the different states represented.
- Looking forward to hosting the Badminton Tournament.
- Building projects:
 - Updated all the LED lights in the meeting rooms and Junior Ballroom with new controls and lights. Project should be complete by December or January. It is a challenge to find an open date with rooms not occupied for installation.
 - Outside lighting is complete and the color of lighting can be changed for groups, holidays, etc.
 - The next phase of the new monument sign construction on Hwy 114 is waiting for electrical inspection.
 - New lobby furniture will give guests places to sit and congregate.
- Financial report is included in the packet for April 2024. Meehan was excited to report last year was a record-breaking year, but those records will be broken this year.
- The audit process will begin soon.

In response to a question regarding the Enterprise Rental Car facility in the Convention Center, Meehan reported he has been told it will reopen in two months. The challenge has been staffing for this location.

Gast thanked Hillman for his assistance in getting location access from the Wells Fargo construction site for recent Convention Center photos. A photographer was in town to assist with ICVB Board and staff headshots and took some great outside photos of the Convention Center both daytime and at night, and some drone photos. She also acknowledged ICC Operations David McMillan for his assistance in acquiring lighting for the outside night photos. Photo shoots also took place at the Omni Las Colinas and the Westin Convention Center Hotel for classes in food photography for local restaurants, hotel food and beverage and social media staffs.

INDUSTRY PARTNERS

The Pavilion at Toyota Music Factory/Live Nation

Board member Tommy DeBeaudry reported:

- There are 91 confirmed promoted events this year and will surpass budgeted amount with 8-10 more coming.
- There are 25 special events confirmed and another dozen pending, with many over multiple days.
- The Jake Paul / Mike Tyson Netflix special has been rescheduled for November 15 at AT&T Stadium and will stream live globally.

- The Pavilion is one of 16 venues with a goal of 70% or more landfill waste and will soon end single-use plastics. This is a big issue with Live Nation corporate. The Pavilion is currently at 75%, including compost.
- Budget is on track.

Stewart asked if the new parking guidelines at Toyota Music Factory and The Pavilion have made an impact. DeBeaudry stated nothing noticeable so far in impact.

Hotel Industry Updates

Gast gave a brief overview in the Bureau Management report.

Restaurant Industry Update

Board member David Cole reported:

- P.F. Chang's To Go on Highpoint Road and Hwy 161 has closed.
- Michael's Italian in Valley Ranch has closed.
- Cole traveling in July to San Antonio, Texas for the Texas Restaurant Association Show. It is the nation's second largest restaurant show; Chicago holds the number one place.

Industry-At-Large Report

Board member Stephanie Fenley Garcia stated no update at this time.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS & STAKEHOLDERS

Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce

Chamber President Beth Bowman reported:

- Economic Development successes are a collaborative effort and Bowman expressed her appreciation for the ICVB, City of Irving, Las Colinas Association, and business owners.
- The Economic Development team is working on 100 projects, 18 are corporate headquarters, over 140,000 jobs, \$72 billion in capital expenditures that transitions into tax dollars, and 721,000 square feet of commercial property.
- The pipeline is full. Working to bring other projects home and she thanked Mayor Stopfer and City Council who are actively involved in those projects.
- The unemployment rate for Irving in May was 3.3%, trending below Texas at 3.5% and below the National rate of 3.7%.
- There is a big push for employers mandating their staff back to the office with some pushback from employees. It is quite possible that shift will continue.
- Thanked City Manager Hillman, Mayor Stopfer and Councilman Cronenwett for their assistance in meeting with a commercial real estate broker interested in the Freeport area. Hillman provided a presentation and spoke about the importance of retaining businesses.
- Participated in the Texas Triangle Trade Mission to Panama. Irving delegation represented the business community in diplomatic discussions with both the U.S. and Panama government. To achieve international goal opportunities, it takes a team effort and personal stories that are shared to support economic development.
- Attended the opening of Delucca Gaucho Pizza.

Irving Arts and Culture

Las Colinas Association

Board member Hammond Perot reported:

- The 2024 Annual Assessment has been distributed to all Las Colinas property owners. This is the third consecutive year the assessment rate has decreased.
- Repairing lights in partnership with DCURD on Lake Carolyn and the canal. The lights were a substantial investment, and they will be repaired.
- Light Club events were a success and there will be Light Club events for three weeks in the Fall.
- Working with the U.S. Mexico Cultural and Educational Foundation for the Day of the Dead festival in November.
- Staff volunteers for The Great Flag Caper and is a highlight during the year. Each year over 40,000 flags across the community are placed to promote kindness, inclusion, unity, respect, and patriotism.
- Will change out the Flower Clock decorations for the July 4 holiday.
- Met with TxDOT last week on improvements to Hwy 114. It is an ongoing endeavor, possibly 3-4 years away and will take 5-7 years of construction to complete but will have a significant impact on the community.

TIF

No report this month.

Stewart added to employee recognition with a shout out to Budget and Finance Director Marianne Lauda and her excellent work not only in budget season, but throughout the year.

With no further discussion, Stewart adjourned the meeting at 1:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Allen Gast, FCDME

Executive Director