

River's Edge Convention Center Advisory Board

Meeting Notes – February 13, 2018

Present Jodi Domeier, Brian Hart, Marty Mahowald, Alvin Yu

Not Present Ibrahim Abdi, Patty Gaetz, Julie Lunning

Staff Present Rich Gallus, Tony Goddard

1. The meeting was convened at 5:05 pm at the Convention Center. Board members introduced themselves and welcomed new member Brian Hart.
2. The Board considered the minutes of December 12, 2017. Domeier moved acceptance of the minutes as submitted; Yu seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
3. Goddard distributed a historical P&L statement showing the years 2012 through 2017. The 2017 numbers are still preliminary, but he had made adjustments for outstanding receivables and for other revenues not yet posted. The expenses for 2017 tracked the budget closely except for increasing repair costs and stable electricity cost, despite our substantial investments over recent years in energy saving technology. Revenues lagged the budget in many categories, and the gap was exacerbated by the fact that the City began booking deferred revenues in 2017. More than \$130,000 of earnings in 2017 were booked to future years, making comparison to earlier years more difficult. Other factors affecting 2017: the remodeled Rochester convention center was back in the mix, and our wedding business declined steeply as the popularity of outdoor venues rose dramatically. The current year will benefit from being back in the rotation for two very large events: Minnesota Quilters and the School Nutrition Association. Final budget numbers will come back to the Board at a future meeting.
4. Gallus provided an overview of marketing initiatives that management is undertaking, based partly on the board discussion at the December meeting. Patty Gaetz is providing names and contacts among Minnesota distillers and we will propose an event at River's Edge. Rich is working with a local tool manufacturer who is considering launching a new trade show here. We will seek to connect to similar-sized convention facilities in other parts of the country to share ideas on event development.
5. Gallus summarized the results of our electronic customer satisfaction survey process, which has been favorable. Once the process is de-bugged, we will launch other, targeted surveys. Board members offered ideas on improvements.
6. Mission Statement review was laid over to the April meeting.
7. Gallus provided an update of operations at the facility in January and February – including the exciting Vex Robotics competition this month. Occupancy is up, compared to prior years, but revenues are down: the size of shows is on the decline.
8. Goddard reviewed the capital improvement requests for the convention center, Paramount and MAC.
9. Next Meeting: Tuesday April 10, 2018, 5:00 pm
10. Adjournment at 6:40 pm.

Submitted by Tony Goddard