

WILL COUNTY METROPOLITAN EXPOSITION AND AUDITORIUM AUTHORITY

Date: January 24, 2024

Authority Memo Number **005-2024 January 24, 2024 Regular Meeting**

The January 24, 2024 regular meeting of the Will County Metropolitan Exposition and Auditorium Authority Board was held at 15 E. Van Buren Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432. Chairman Bob Filotto called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm with a quorum present. Board members and staff were invited to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Present: Bob Filotto, Tim Broderick, Donnie Chestnutt, Jane Condon, Bill Kent, Jeff Pierson

Staff: Wade Welsh, Lisa Murphy, Rafael Ramirez, Jack Ericksen, Leann Hoffrogge, Christine Sturm

Absent: Kathy Trizna (excused)

Others: Legal Counsel, David Silverman; Mike Piehl, VenuWorks; Pete Bohler, Carol Mulvihill

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Authority Memo Number **078-2023 December 20, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes**

Discussion and Vote:

The Chairman asked if there were any changes to be made to the December 20, 2023 minutes. No corrections or changes were suggested.

The Chair invited further discussion and, hearing none, he called for a voice vote. No opposing votes were expressed. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: J. Condon moved and T. Broderick seconded approval of the December 20, 2023 regular meeting minutes.

AYES: Members Filotto, Broderick, Chestnutt, Condon, Kent, Pierson

ABSENT: Trizna

NAYS: None

Public to be Heard Re: Agenda Items – None.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Authority Memo Number **001-2024 Operational Bills Paid, Payable and Payable Age Listing**

Discussion and Vote:

The Chair said that there were several large checks paid in December which accounted for 80% of the total: \$200,000 for performance related fees; \$24,000 to Wermer Rogers for the audit; \$57,000 to VenuWorks; \$23,000 to Busey Bank; \$38,000 to Elliott Electric for the electrical issues in September; and \$11,000 to the Illinois Department of Revenue for sales tax payments. Welsh told Board members that staff are using an app called Expensify and their expense reports are now listed in the check detail report.

The accounts payable by vendor total for December was \$355,036. Two vendors accounted for 90% of the total: \$291,000 to VenuWorks and \$14,000 to Gand Concert Sound. Filotto said the accounts receivable aging report showed an open total of \$11,480 but included prepayments which brings the actual total to \$48,000. He asked about the \$13,000 showing for a wedding. Piehl said it has been fully paid. One of the payments did not get deposited until January. The couple had given Nancy Lindmark a cashier's check the night of the wedding.

The Chair invited further discussion and, hearing none, he directed roll to be called. No opposing votes were expressed. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: J. Condon moved and D. Chestnutt seconded approval of the Operational Bills Paid, Payable and Payable Age Listing.

AYES: Members Filotto, Broderick, Chestnutt, Condon, Kent, Pierson
ABSENT: Trizna
NAYS: None

Authority Memo Number **002-2024 Financial Statements**

Discussion and Vote:

The Chair commented that the financials are consistently doing great every month. Total income is over budget by \$485,000; net income is \$334,000 over budget and about \$477,000 ahead of budget overall. Event related income is up more than expected thus causing event related expenses to be over budget as well. Welsh said that he provided a six-month comparison of FY23 to FY24. During this period, there was \$2.2 million in revenue this year as compared to \$1.5 million last year. He said that the budget was increased by \$1.8 million and the numbers are still exceeding it. He said that so far FY24 has had more events and continues to get busier.

Filotto noted that a check from the State was finally received for the roofing project. Welsh said that with that check, R. Berti has been fully paid to date.

The Chair invited further discussion and, hearing none, he directed roll to be called. No opposing votes were expressed. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: J. Condon moved and D. Chestnutt seconded approval of accepting the Financial Statements into the minutes.

AYES: Members Filotto, Broderick, Chestnutt, Condon, Kent, Pierson
ABSENT: Trizna
NAYS: None

OLD BUSINESS

Renovation Project Update: Pete Bohler from R. Berti told Board members that the roofers are still working on the coping and they are close to finishing. The roof above the theatre will be started on April 1st. There are still some walk-ways and stairways on the roofs that need to be replaced. There are also a few more lights above the grotto which have to be replaced.

Authority Memo Number **003-2024 Phase II HVAC Project Updates**

Discussion: Welsh informed the Board that he is waiting for the specifications for the long lead-time equipment for the HVAC project. The issue is that the air handlers don't fit in the basement due to some pillars. Calor is talking to a manufacturer about getting a custom-made unit to fit in the current location. If this can't be done, it will have to be put elsewhere. He said there is still time for the bid process and to get the equipment purchased. There will be about a 12-week turn-around period. Welsh said he received the 60% drawings. The new boilers will be going from a steam heating system to a hot water system. This is a product that is more efficient, doesn't run as hot, not as pressurized and a little cheaper. All of the steam lines throughout the entire building will be replaced. It is expected that the existing duct work can still be used but some may have to be replaced. Welsh said that R. Berti is also working up an updated cost estimate which he will present to the Board. He also said that the Board will have to purchase the two large air handlers and six smaller air handlers. He felt that it might be necessary to call a special meeting in February to approve the bids.

Bohler said that he spoke with the architect as well some of their contractors to get a more realistic price for the bathroom project. Welsh said that Bulley & Andrews believes the price for the bathroom renovation will be around \$800,000. Welsh said that he has noticed that Bulley & Andrews tend to be very conservative in their estimates. They allotted for contingencies whereas DLR had no real contingencies. He said that he was expecting the cost to go up after two years. Condon asked why there was such a large increase. Ramirez said that a 16-18% increase is standard and there were contingencies left out such as asbestos removal.

Welsh said that on the positive side, Michael Judy from R. Berti believes the roof project may only be around \$4.3 million rather than \$5 million. He hopes that whatever dollars are not used on the roofs could be put toward the HVAC/bathroom project.

Authority Memo Number **004-2024 City of Joliet Vault Work Update**

Discussion:

Welsh said that the work on the vaults in front of the theatre started on January 29th. The City put up fencing in front of the north end of the building and began moving dirt. There will be no access to the Chicago Street entrance of the theatre from February 1st until February 29th. Welsh said he was guaranteed to have access to the front of the building on March 1st. During the month of February, it will be necessary to use the 15 East Van Buren Street entrance to bring patrons into the building. Ramirez is working on signage to direct patrons to the proper entrances. On show nights, the Box Office will be relocated to the USF lobby. On non-show days, the ticket office will be located in the Suite. A phone number will be on the signs to assist patrons who are uncertain about where to go. Before the shows in February, a **“Know Before You Go”** message will be sent out to give patrons instructions on how to access the building. Welsh said he has also talked to TicketMaster about scanning tickets from the Van Buren entrance to be certain it can be done. He said there will be two officers at each show during this time period. One officer will be assigned to the theatre as normal and the other will be placed in the USF lobby for security reasons. The cost of the extra officer will be passed on to the promoter. Condon asked how the handicapped patrons would enter the building. Welsh said there will be a handicap entrance at the catering kitchen door so that the patrons will have access to the elevator.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS

RSTF Report: Condon said the next Foundation meeting will be February 7th. She said the planning for the third ***Shamrockin’ Good Time*** will begin on March 14th. Jack Ericksen said that Tim Placher will not be the planner for the event. The Foundation is working with a couple from Manhattan who are instrumental in planning the Manhattan Irish Fest. He expects that the same musicians and vocalists will be used. Ericksen said that he will have the final numbers from ***Home for the Holidays*** at the next meeting. He also informed the Board that the Foundation was approved for the Route 66 grant of \$35,000. Ericksen said that the Foundation has also been told that they are unable to put the new sign over an existing sign that was painted on the building in the 1930s. He said that the Foundation is trying to find out more about the restrictions. He said that a bid went out for the sign and a company from Elk Grove was hired. The new sign will be placed on the back of the theatre to recognize the collaboration of Route 66 and the Rialto. It will be similar to the sign on the Ottawa Street parking deck and Old National Bank. It will be made of a material that will be adhered to the brick.

Executive Director's Report: Welsh said that more volunteers are needed on January 26th for the Charlie Berens shows. He said that any help would be appreciated. He also told the Board that it will be announced on February 7th that the Rialto is switching beverage providers from Coke to Pepsi. A 5-year deal with Pepsi has been signed that will provide better pricing and sponsorship dollars on an annual basis. Welsh said this will be the first time that there will be sponsorship dollars and a pouring rights deal from a soft drink company.

He said that he is still trying to find someone to fill the Accounting Manager’s position. He has gotten several decent resumes. Piehl is screening the applications and has reached out to a couple of candidates. No one has responded yet.

Chairman’s Report: The Chairman said that he is keeping in touch with Bob Rubens. Filotto said that he spoke with Doc Gregory from the carpenters’ union about getting help to build whatever protection would be necessary for the items that Rubens would be donating back to the theatre. Welsh said the biggest priority needs to be putting the items in a place where they don’t ever have to be moved.

Committee Reports: No report.

City of Joliet Liaison's Report: No report.

Lobbyists' Report: Broderick said that an application has been submitted for the Federal grant, *Saving America's Treasures*, for \$750,000. The application will be under review until August. He said that one of the benefits of applying for this grant was that the grant writer now has all the data to utilize for future grants. Another benefit is now being able to reach out to private foundations. There are six that will be targeted in April and May with a total of 20 for the year. The grants range from \$20,000 to \$100,000.

Condon and Broderick said they had a conversation with the lobbyists about the hotel/motel tax and a shell bill was created to hold the position until details were worked out. Broderick said he feels that the Board is getting good counsel from the lobbyists. He wants to have further detailed conversations to ensure that protocols are being followed to get the greatest return on the Board's investment. Filotto asked if they have the support of Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant for the hotel/motel tax. Broderick said they do but they are going to verify that.

PUBLIC TO BE HEARD: Leann Hoffrogge said that the Rialto Volunteers are having a fundraiser at Chicago Street Pub and would be getting 15% of every transaction made today. She asked everyone in attendance to go over and make a purchase to help out the volunteers.

Carol Mulvihill asked if the hotel/motel tax would be in addition to the City's hotel/motel tax. Welsh said it is a County tax that would be in addition to any tax currently on hotels and motels. The goal was to tax visitors from out of town, not the citizens of Will County. Bohler asked where that would put Joliet. Condon said it would be very competitive to the area and Joliet would still be below Bolingbrook. David Silverman said this new tax was only in the preliminary stages and not a done deal. No legislation has been drafted. This is just a conversation period and to get feedback from interested parties.

Motion: The Chairman requested a motion to adjourn the regular meeting. J. Pierson moved and T. Broderick seconded the motion.

AYES: Members Filotto, Broderick, Chestnutt, Condon, Kent, Pierson

ABSENT: Trizna

NAYS: None

The meeting adjourned at 4:36 P.M.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Christine Sturm, Recording Secretary.

Kathy Trizna, Board Secretary

*Unapproved minutes distributed in Board Packets are subject to change.
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