

**ENTERTAINMENT AND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

December 15, 2015

A regular Board meeting was held on Tuesday, December 15, 2015 at 4:00 p.m. in the Senator Sam Solon Board Room. In attendance were David Ross, Jay Seiler, Crystal Pelkey, Mary Finnegan-Ongaro, Greg Fox, Carrie Heffernan, Deb Messer, Karen Pionk, and Yvonne Prettnr Solon. Staff members Dan Russell, Chelly Townsend, Caty Kaups, and Sue Ellen Moore were present. Member Roger Reinert was excused from the meeting.

Ross called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m. and noted that a quorum had been met.

Ross asked for a motion to approve the minutes from Regular Business Meeting, November 24, 2015. Pionk made the motion to approve, and Prettnr Solon seconded the motion. November's Minutes were approved unanimously.

Communications

The DECC was thanked by the group that organizes the annual Veteran's Day Event for the use of Symphony Hall and free parking.

Old Business

A mandatory walk-through has been scheduled for bidders on the Duluth Curling Club ice sheet project for January 5, 2016 at 10:30 a.m. Construction documents are done, and all is on track to award the winning bid at the next board meeting.

New Business

There was no new business to report at this time.

Staff Reports

Russell gave the Event Recap, mentioning that the DECC is hard at work booking shows in AMSOIL Arena for the coming year. Barry Manilow will book a date on his farewell tour in AMSOIL for Saturday, March 19, and the Chris Young concert was rescheduled to Saturday, January 9 due to artist illness; additional tickets are being sold for the reschedule above the number of refunded tickets. James Taylor will play in AMSOIL on June 1 over the ice, as there is a hockey tournament the weekend following. Plans for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary are confirmed with the Beach Boys and The Temptations playing on Saturday, August 6. Receptions are being planned for all past DECC Board Members and a reunion for all DECC employees. Branding for the event will be unveiled at the January Board Meeting.

Kaups gave the Finance Report, and noted that November financials are not done, so a full report will be given at the January meeting and it will be approved at that time. Preliminary numbers show that revenues were about \$70k over budget, with Concessions and Parking the only departments under budget. Expenses show to be right at or just over budget. Kaups will send the report with the variance sheet to the Board. Russell also stated that a claim has been made to MN Power for the net revenue lost on the night of the postponed UMD hockey game in October. It's expected that the revenue on the rescheduled date on a Tuesday in February will be 40% less than it would have been in October. It was suggested that UMD provide a promotion for the February game to get more in attendance.

Ross asked for a motion to approve the Operating Fund Check Registers. Seiler made a motion to approve, and Messer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Moore gave the Sales and Marketing Report and remarked that the only convention booked for the month was the MN Association of Children's Mental Health with confirmed dates for April of

2017 and 2018. It was a strong year in 2015 with 50 conventions and an estimated 51k attendees. The forecast for 2016 looks good with 90% of the 2015 numbers booked, and there are still dates and groups that have not yet moved from tentative to definite. The Sales team at the DECC and Visit Duluth are working on client appreciation for the holiday season. Moore's hopes for successes in the coming year include improvements on the Blue Bridge issue, the new skywalk making attendees more comfortable coming over, Hockey Day MN bringing a good crowd, and a great opening for the new neighboring Pier B Hotel. Russell noted that they are already sold out for their expected opening of Grandma's Marathon weekend.

Heffernan arrived at 4:25 p.m.

Townsend gave her Operations & Upcoming Events Report and mentioned that January should be a great month with the annual Manager Meeting planned and most events filling up the weekends. The year starts out with a wedding and UMD Men's hockey against the US U18 team on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, and the City of Duluth Inauguration on the 4<sup>th</sup>. United Piping will have a full training followed by a holiday party, and the 9<sup>th</sup> will hold the Duluth Wedding Show, a holiday party for JAMAR/ADSCO/Arrowhead Refrigeration, and the rescheduled Chris Young concert in AMSOIL Arena. The third weekend of the month holds both UMD Men's and Women's hockey and the Icebreaker Hockey Tournament. The annual Martin Luther King Day event will be held in Symphony Hall on the 18<sup>th</sup>, the Greater Downtown Council holds their Annual Dinner on the 20<sup>th</sup>, and the Arrowhead EMS Association Conference will take the Cityside Convention Center and Pioneer Hall the 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>. The fourth weekend of January is busy with UMD Women's hockey, a DSSO Masterworks concert and a National Bank of Commerce pre-symphony reception, a wedding, and the Cloquet High School Sno Ball dance. Duluth Edison Schools will have a second winter concert, and the next DECC Board Meeting is scheduled for January 26<sup>th</sup>. The month will close with the MN Operators of Music and Amusements Pool & Dart Tournament from the 27<sup>th</sup> through 31<sup>st</sup>, UMD Women's Hockey, and a City Skate. Townsend noted that plans are being made for improvement projects before the anniversary celebration this summer, including painting the DECC Arena concourse, painting and lighting upgrades for the DECC Ticket Lobby, and painting and lighting upgrades for our end of the Northwest Passage skywalk.

Finnegan-Ongaro arrived at 4:40 p.m.

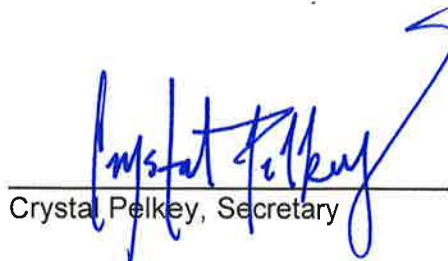
Russell gave the Attractions Report, stating that plans are under way for the Irvin summer season, and staff is already meeting to plan the 2016 Haunted Ship. Admission for the Haunt will be raised \$2 per person, but discounts for donating food or coats will also increase. It should also be a great season for the regular tours, as the Tall Ships has historically increased traffic drastically.

The next regular meeting is on January 26, 2016 at 4 p.m. in the Senator Sam Solon Board Room.

Ross asked for a motion to adjourn the Regular Business Meeting. Messer made a motion, and Prettnner Solon seconded the motion. Ross adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.

Submitted by:

  
David Ross, President

  
Crystal Pelkey, Secretary