

**ENTERTAINMENT AND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY**  
**REGULAR BOARD MEETING**  
September 25, 2018

A Regular Board Meeting was held Tuesday, September 25, 2018 at 4:00 PM in the Symphony Hall Mezzanine.

Board Members Present: Vice Chair Karen Pionk, Secretary Crystal Pelkey, Mary Finnegan-Ongaro, Yvonne Prettner Solon, Roz Randorf, Bill Nelson

Board Members Absent: Chair Don Ness, Greg Fox, Deb Messer, Roger Reinert, David Ross

DECC Staff Members Present: Chelly Townsend, Caty Kaups, Sue Ellen Moore, Erin Blazevic, Renae Matt

CALL TO ORDER: Pionk called the meeting to order at 4:06 PM.

**Communications**

Event Feedback: Townsend recapped last month's events; the UMD Women's Volleyball game went well and UMD joined with the U of M for their Pharmacy White Coat Ceremony this year. Positive remarks were received about the experience. The Duluth Police Department created an obstacle course in the DECC Parking Lot for a class and called to say thank you. The DECC was also host to a wedding and the PAVSA event. Townsend noted that the North Shore Inline Marathon had to adjust their finish line due to Harbor Drive being blocked. New arrangements were made and they were happy with the result.

Media Mentions: Townsend stated that Chris Johnson (*Marketing Coordinator*) has offered some fun posts on social media. Guessing when the Irvin would move was a big hit and the announcement for the Luke Combs country concert was the second highest rated post this month. Townsend mentioned that it's fun to see comments on DECC posts from media outlets such as the Bemidji Pioneer and Business North which notes our reach.

QUORUM: Finnegan-Ongaro arrived at 4:09 PM at which time it was stated that a quorum had been reached.

MOTION: Pionk requested a motion to approve the Regular Business Meeting Minutes from August 28, 2018. Randorf made a motion to approve the minutes as written and the motion was seconded by Nelson.

**Old Business**

Townsend recapped the move of the William A. Irvin, describing the plan and execution as brilliant. The vessel arrived at Fraser Shipyards at 6:00 AM on Saturday, September 22. There were 6 DECC crew members and 22 Naval Sea Cadets on board for the move. Townsend stated they will be investigating painting options and prices for the ship and will bring a recommendation to the Board after review from the Finance Committee. Prettner Solon asked if the Irvin will be staying at Fraser through the winter and Townsend confirmed that it would. Townsend announced there is a possibility of receiving a Historical Preservation Grant. In order to be eligible, they cannot move forward with the painting project until it is confirmed whether or not they will receive said funding. Finnegan-Ongaro requested that Townsend wait to request any action from the Board until receiving confirmation about the grant, as well as any recommendations from Fraser Shipyards regarding additional work that may need to be done on the Irvin. Finnegan-Ongaro stated that it would be best for Townsend to present all the information and Townsend's personal recommendations to the Board at one time so they have the big picture of the projects and costs required. At that time, the Board could move forward with decisions and approvals.

## **New Business**

Townsend mentioned she wanted the Board to be aware of a discussion going on regarding cruising. The City of Duluth would like the cruise vessels moored behind the DECC. Townsend stated that a decision has not been made and she would be working with DECC staff and the Port on the details. Townsend also announced that The Charlie Brown Christmas Show is booked and has been well received on Facebook.

## **Committee Reports**

**Finance:** Pelkey stated that the Finance Committee is hoping to hear a decision around November 1<sup>st</sup> regarding the grant for the Irvin that Townsend had previously mentioned. In the upcoming October and November Finance Committee meetings, the committee will have very focused items to discuss. Pelkey then recommended that the Board approve the Finance Report. Pionk stated they would request the approval after Kaups' Finance Report.

**Governance:** Finnegan-Ongaro announced that the Governance Committee has not held a meeting recently. She noted they have recommendations and their goal is to bring something to the Board in relation to the bylaws at the November or December meeting.

Nelson inquired if it was possible to include the members and chair of each committee on the agenda. Blazevic stated that it was previously requested by Ness that they not be on the agenda, but lists be provided separately. Finnegan-Ongaro asked if Randorf and Nelson have been assigned to committees, it was confirmed that they had not. Pionk requested that both new members review and express an interest in committees and at that point, the needs would be evaluated. Finnegan-Ongaro stated that the Governance Committee plans to discuss committee regulations in the upcoming meetings regarding bylaws. Prettner Solon suggested that it be added to the bylaws that no committee should have more than three members.

## **Attractions Report**

Townsend remarked that UMD Volleyball was a successful event. Finnegan-Ongaro stated she was in attendance, as well as Greg Fox, and believed UMD staff was appreciative of the support from the DECC Board of Directors. Townsend mentioned that the DECC experienced a last-minute cancellation for the Modest Mouse concert. It was noted that this particular situation is a rare occurrence. Cancellations are generally due to poor weather or illness. The Board continued to discuss contracts and how they could be updated in the future. Prettner Solon and Finnegan-Ongaro recommended inquiring with other venues to see what they have in their contracts regarding cancellations.

## **Staff Reports**

**Finance:** Kaups began the Finance Report and stated that Catering revenue was over budget due to a Yellow Ribbon Event for the National Guard that had not been in the budget. She remarked that Building Services expenses were under budget, mostly related to staffing in a slower month. Kaups stated that we are also down an employee in the Sales & Marketing department, bringing expenses under budget. Kaups pointed out that Concessions receives a small amount of revenue this time of year, but expenses were up due to a late invoice. She will be working with those managers to figure out the timing on processing invoices and when it gets counted towards the budget. Kaups remarked that she is expecting inventory to be clean going into the new season and not see that fluctuation in future months. In regards to Parking, Kaups stated that it was a busy month at Bayfront, but there was a variance in expenses due to a rebate for a select number of events. Randorf asked why Administration expenses were up and Kaups responded that it was due to computer licensing that was budgeted in July, but paid for in August. Kaups added that there were unexpected insurance requests from Fraser for docking the Irvin that was not in

the budget. Since it was more coverage than what the DECC carries, it was required to purchase additional insurance. Those costs will be discussed in the Finance Committee and will be added to the painting discussion when it comes to the Board at a later date. Finnegan-Ongaro requested that those costs be presented to the Board separated by what the DECC is responsible for and the portion that the City of Duluth will cover.

MOTION: Pionk requested a motion to approve the Finance Report and the Operating Fund Check Registers. Prettner Solon made a motion to approve and Nelson seconded the motion.

**Staff Reports, continued**

Sales and Marketing Report: Moore announced that there will be a new convention in 2019 for the MN Association of Nonsmokers and that there is a solid convention year planned for 2019. The American Society of Mining & Reclamation is an international conference that will be here in June of 2020 and the MN Defense Lawyers have committed to returning in 2019 and 2020. Moore said she has been working in conjunction with Visit Duluth to attract potential business for future opportunities.

Operations and Upcoming Events: Moore reviewed the upcoming October events and discussed some highlights.

**Other Business**

Townsend remarked that DECC staff put together a Hiring Task Force and offered two sessions of open interviews on two separate days, resulting in 130 new hires. Townsend introduced Renae Matt as her Administrative Assistant and the DECC Wellness Coordinator. Townsend explained that Matt was in attendance because she will be taking the minutes moving forward as Erin Blazevic has accepted a new position and will be leaving the DECC.

**Upcoming Meetings**

The next regular meeting is Tuesday, October 30, 2018 in the Senator Sam Solon Board Room.

MOTION: Pionk requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Finnegan-Ongaro made the motion to adjourn and Randorf seconded the motion. Pionk adjourned the meeting at 5:01 PM.

Minutes reported by Renae Matt, Executive Assistant.

Submitted by:

  
Don Ness, Chair

  
Crystal Pekey, Secretary