

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

November 24, 2015

A regular Board meeting was held on Tuesday, November 24, 2015 at 4:00 p.m. in the Senator Sam Solon Board Room. In attendance were David Ross, Jay Seiler, Greg Fox, Carrie Heffernan, Deb Messer, Karen Pionk, Roger Reinert, and Yvonne Prettner Solon. Staff members Dan Russell, Chelly Townsend, Caty Kaups, and Sue Ellen Moore were present. Crystal Pelkey and Mary Finnegan-Ongaro were excused from the meeting.

Ross called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. and noted that a quorum had not yet been met, so agenda items needing votes would be held until more members arrived.

Russell gave the Attractions Report, stating that the Haunted Ship had a great year, with attendance over 3,000 admissions more than the previous year. A 3-year financial recap was drawn up since the DECC took over production of the haunt, and although expenses have gone up, revenue has also increased, with a higher profit margin for this year than the last few. The advertising in both the Twin Cities and in town definitely paid off. The amount paid for contract staff has decreased dramatically, using mostly in-house labor and talent.

Fox arrived at 4:06 p.m. Prettner Solon arrived at 4:07 p.m.

Ross asked for a motion to approve the minutes from Regular Business Meeting, October 27, 2015. Reinert made the motion to approve, and Messer seconded the motion. October's Minutes were approved unanimously.

Old Business

The Duluth Curling Club ice floor process is moving forward with construction documents being drafted, and bids will be requested on December 28th. The bid will be awarded January 26<sup>th</sup>, and construction would start immediately after the Dog Show, which ends July 17<sup>th</sup>.

Pionk arrived at 4:11 p.m. Heffernan arrived at 4:13 p.m.

New Business

Russell stated there was no new business at this time.

Staff Reports

Russell gave the Event Recap, mentioning that Jackson Browne went very well, and Chris Young is on track to sell 4,000 tickets before December 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Buddy Holly Story has already cleared \$28K in ticket sales, and the show isn't until February 20. We are working with a national promoter for Bayfront's summer 2016 season, and possible acts include Trampled by Turtles, Atmosphere, The Alabama Shakes, Huey Lewis and the News, and Kid Rock, who has a local connection with Brett Hull. James Taylor is close to booking the AMSOIL Arena at the end of May 2016. Russell also noted that the DECC has an annual Manager's Meeting, and planning is underway for January 2016 to use the new meeting space at the Great Lakes Aquarium. With recent events in Paris and around the world, safety will be the main priority of the meeting agenda, with time to come back to the space here and run safety drills.

Kaups gave the Finance Report, and noted that October was a really good month with 7 conventions, 4 weddings, Theresa Caputo, Machine Gun Kelly, The Magic Flute, the Haunted Ship, and plenty of hockey. For revenues, catering was above budget due to busy conventions – the Fire Chiefs convention was up on food purchasing by 50% from the last time they were here. Liquor sales was up with Machine Gun Kelly and Theresa Caputo. Concessions were down due to the lost hockey game. The Irvin was up \$45K due to the Haunted Ship, and the Ticket Office

was up from the concerts and shows through the month. Expense highlights include catering being up due to more business, concessions down with the lost hockey game, and marketing was up with Haunted Ship and other event promotions.

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

Moore gave the Sales and Marketing Report and remarked that it's been a busy month for convention booking. Badger Yellow Ribbon returns on December 5 with 200 guests. The Northland Career Fair will be held in April with an estimated 1,000 guests and exhibits, and the Institute on Lake Superior Geology will be here in May 2016 with 300 guests. Cirrus Symposium will return September 2016, and the MN Organization of Leaders in Nursing will return in October of both 2018 and 2019. A planning team for Health and Human Services met this week to recap 2015, with 2,600 guests even with the Blue Bridge out of operation and the power outage that occurred, to begin preparations for next year's conference. A discussion was held about the donation of space for military groups.

Townsend gave her Operations & Upcoming Events Report and mentioned that it will be a good December. The month starts with Home Free and Chris Young right off the bat, as well as an ALLETE safety meeting. The first weekend of the month is very busy with both UMD Men's & Women's Hockey, the Banff Mountain Film Festival, a Cirrus holiday party for 1,200 employees, Phi Sigma Sigma, Badger Yellow Ribbon, the Spirit of Duluth hockey tournament, and the 148<sup>th</sup> Air National Guard awards ceremony. The following week holds the VFW Pearl Harbor event, Senior Programs Holiday Banquet, and a Duluth Sister Cities' Reception. The second weekend holds Gamma Sigma Sigma, UMD vs North Dakota, the Nutcracker, and the Shamrock Ice Fishing Show. The month begins to slow down after that weekend, and the third week will hold the MN CPA Tax Update, Edison Charter Schools Holiday Concert, the annual Board Holiday Gathering, high school hockey between Marshall and East, TBI Holiday Dinner, the East High School Holiday Concert, and the Duluth Gun Show. All that's left for the month after that is a City Skate on the 27<sup>th</sup> and the New Year's Eve DSSO Concert on the 31<sup>st</sup>. Townsend also noted the Bentleyville schedule and hours. Russell relayed that the Air Show and Tall Ships will no longer be on the same weekend.

Reinert departed at 4:37 p.m.

The Board discussed several additional issues, including Bentleyville and DECC event traffic, the City Council budget presentation, and the Minnesota Slip issues brought up again in a recent Duluth News Tribune article.

The next regular meeting is on December 15, 2015 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 Heffernan seconded the motion. Ross adjourned the meeting at 4:49 p.m.

Submitted by:

  
David Ross, President

  
Crystal Pelkey, Secretary