

**GREATER TACOMA REGIONAL CONVENTION  
CENTER PUBLIC FACILITIES DISTRICT**

Telephonic Meeting of Directors – January 21, 2021  
Necessitated by COVID-19 Measures

Directors Participating: Jani Hitchen (Pierce County), Mike Brandstetter (Lakewood), Colleen Barta (Tacoma), Dean Burke (Tacoma), Tom Pierson (Tacoma), Lisa McClellan (Fife)

TVE Staff Participating: Kim Bedier, TVE Director; Adam Cook, TVE Deputy Director; Tammi Bryant, Director of Marketing; Chelene Potvin-Bird, Travel Tacoma, Vice President

Secretary/Treasurer Brandstetter called the meeting to order at 7:52 am. This meeting was held virtually by phone/Zoom, with discussion limited to necessary and routine matters as defined in RCW 42.30.2020 to comply with Governor Inslee's proclamation limiting public gatherings in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

The board was asked if there were corrections to the October 16 meeting minutes. None were noted, Dean Burke requested a motion for approval of the minutes. It was so moved by and seconded by Colleen Barta and unanimously approved by the board.

Financial Update

Adam Cook presented Q4 2020 financial information. Operating revenues through the end of 2020 were under budget by approximately \$1.7 million as a result of COVID-19 related event cancellations and postponements. Expenses were under budget by approximately \$2.1 million due to a commission structure revision with the food & beverage provider, Aramark; a change in the structure of the contract with Travel Tacoma; and, a cost savings plan with facility operations and staff furloughs. The facility's net revenue for the year was over budget by \$474K due to this expense savings.

Hotel/motel tax is down \$2.1 million versus budget for the year. While there has not yet been a rebound as the pandemic continues on, the numbers remain higher in the Pierce County region than Seattle and nationwide trends. PFD Sales Tax is has made a quick improvement back to budget levels and ended the year \$58K over budget. Sales tax may see a second dip, but is not anticipated to be as severe as previous decline.

Operating capital cash balance remains unchanged at \$1.7 million. Operating cash is \$3.6 million (up \$4K), debt service is \$161K, decreased \$3.2 million for debt service payments in December. Hotel/motel tax fund is at \$3.9 million, down \$489K, and the PFD sales tax fund is at \$1.7 million, up \$81K based on stronger than anticipated sales tax revenue (\$36k higher than Q3).

Bond debt balance reduces to \$67,875,806.

Estimated impact of COVID-19 on events in 2020 includes 100 cancelled or postponed events for 181 event days. These events amount \$8.8 million in economic impact to the market and more than 6,000 lost room nights. 24 events with 58 event days have rescheduled for 2021-2025. Direct economic impact of \$3.2 million, 6,100 hotel nights and 15K attendance.

Adam Cook shared an update on the County and City-funded measures to safely reopen during the COVID-19 pandemic. CARES Act funding has been used to improve the experience and ensure safety for guests. These changes include protocols to reduce touch points and increase cleaning and sanitation. Portable contactless ticket scanners, interior signage and communication tools, electrostatic disinfectant sprayers, HVAC upgrades including Bi-Polar ionization tools, UV-C germicidal light arrays, PPE, staff-training, retrofit of restrooms to include touch-free fixtures, barriers will provide assistance in creating safe line queues, tables, a new key access system, and signage to communicate new policies to guests. Kim Bedier reminded the board that staff were working with Marriott Tacoma Downtown hotel staff to ensure our protocols were aligned.

Reverse ATM's (cash-to-card) kiosks will be installed to eliminate cash payments. These machines provide a VISA-branded gift card that can be used anywhere VISA is accepted and there is no fee charged to the guest. The Greater Tacoma Convention Center would absorb operational fees. Secretary/Treasurer Brandstetter indicated he would like to monitor these costs after implementation.

Tacoma Venues & Events received notice that the facility has earned Global Bio-Risk Advisory Council (GBAC) STAR™ Facility Accreditation. GBAC STAR™ is the cleaning industry's only outbreak prevention, response and

recovery accreditation for facilities

#### Hosting of Association of Washington State PFDs

The board and staff discussed hosting a virtual meeting in 2021 and confirmed that a virtual meeting would be in addition to meetings planned for fall of 2021 in-person in Tacoma. Colleen Barta will reach out to former PFD Board President Connie Ladenburg to determine if their sub-committee would continue to work on organizing these events. Kim Bedier and Colleen Barta will do further planning and Colleen requested through Dean Burke that Travel Tacoma update an invitation video for the fall meeting. Kim Bedier will investigate replacement for Connie Ladenburg on the Association's Executive Committee.

#### Washington Safe Meeting & Convention Coalition – Re-opening Update

Kim Bedier shared an update from the Washington Safe Meetings & Conventions Coalition and the work this taskforce is doing to create guidelines to safely reopen. She shared the events currently scheduled including training, testing (approved), and youth sports activities scheduled for March and April 2021 (pending Governor Inslee's Roadmap to Recovery approval).

Kim Bedier shared the protocols again that have been outlined in the convention center's "The Greater Way Forward" and optimism from consumer surveys that show that with vaccines, guests are willing to return to events.

Chelene Potvin-Bird shared an update from the sales and marketing efforts of the Travel Tacoma team. At this time, the leads for event bookings are reduced significantly as the market awaits further guidance on re-opening. They have seen some interest in long-term plans for booking 2022. Her team has been maintaining relationships with the top 100 accounts and continue to network using opportunities such as appearing in panel discussions (including the keynote at MPI Cascadia conference) and planning virtual familiarization and 360 video tours. CM Jani Hitchen asked about demand for virtual events or hybrid in-person/virtual events and Potvin-Bird explained that Encore (formerly PSAV) has the capabilities and would be presenting these on a panel to Society of Government Meeting Planners. She also explained that while we can provide the virtual options, it is more beneficial to have in-person meetings for a greater positive economic impact on the city.

#### Director's Report

Kim Bedier provided an update on the staffing plan in place with TVE employees working a '0/40' schedule where they work one week on and one week off (receiving unemployment benefits) as a method to retain valued staff while also reducing expenses. She reminded the board of the savings in place due to changing the food & beverage partnership to a commission fee based plan two years ago and that Aramark would be presenting new pre-packaged food items to replace buffets for guest safety. Bedier shared that the Marriott Tacoma Downtown has officially opened and the Room Block Agreement is in place. The Tacoma Dome will be holding a closed/private event in March and April which is anticipated to generate hundreds of room nights for the Marriott and positive economic impact for downtown.

Dean Burke provided a high-level overview of the market and shared that Pierce County outperformed the rest of the region with higher occupancy and revpar (revenue per available room) than the national average. Pierce County occupancy was 55% vs. national average of 44% for 2020. Walk-in room bookings remain high due to the region's hotel placement on the interstate corridor, military and National Guard activity, real estate/home improvements needs, and people looking for alternatives to staying home during the pandemic.

#### Board Member's Terms

Connie Ladenburg has been replaced on the board by Pierce County Councilmember Jani Hitchen. Colleen Barta nominated Dean Burke for Board Chair, Lisa McClellan seconded the nomination and the Board unanimously approved Burke's appointment. Following adjournment of this meeting, Dean Burke is Board Chair. Lisa McLellan nominated Mike Brandstetter to renew his position as Secretary/Treasurer, Colleen Barta seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved Brandstetter's renewal.

#### New Business

No new business was presented.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 am.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting (Telephonic) is April 15 at 7:45 am.

Recorded by Tammi Bryant