

**CIVIC CENTER COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
March 23, 2017**

**Attendees:**

CCC Members: Chairman John Budd, Vice-Chair Jim Knowlton, Commissioner John Harrity, Commissioner John Brissette, Commissioner Lowell Alexander

City: John Odell, Candee Raphaelson

SMG: Sandy Dunn, Julia Iorio, Jim Moughan

Guests: William Eddy, Massachusetts Democratic Party

Minutes Prepared by: Paige Williamson, SMG

**1. Call to Order:**

Chairman Budd brought the meeting to order at 12:33pm.

**2. Acceptance of the Meeting Minutes – February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017**

Commissioner Harrity motioned to accept the meeting minutes from February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016; Commissioner Knowlton, Seconded. (5 yeas, 0 nays) *Motion passed.*

**3. Rent Waiver Application – MA Democratic Party – June 3, 2017**

William Eddy represented the Massachusetts Democratic Party and addressed the Commission on the rent free application for the upcoming convention emphasizing the long history of conventions held in the City of Worcester and the economic spinoff that the events create. Sandy Dunn further commented that the City of Lowell was originally supposed to be the host of this convention but had a conflict on their calendar, presenting the opportunity for the DCU Center. The Committee has also already conducted a walk-through of the facility and the date is available. Commissioner Brissette asked to recuse himself from this vote as he is a member of the Mass Democratic Party Convention organizing group.

Commissioner Harrity motioned to accept the rent free day for the Massachusetts Democratic Party, June 3, 2017; seconded by Commissioner Alexander. (4 yeas, 0 nays) Unanimous. *Motion Passed.*

**4. Phase 2 – Designer Status Update – John Odell**

Populous held their first post walk-thru meeting presenting their preliminary report which contained two main sections; 1) capital improvements to maintain the facility with associated costs over the next 5, 10, 15 & 20 year period, and 2) what the City might do to improve the facility to state-of-the-art 21<sup>st</sup> Century standards including the surrounding area, hotels, amenities, etc. John Odell noted that this is a significantly larger undertaking than the infrastructure recommendations, and is obviously over and above the budget currently being discussed.

Additional meetings will be scheduled approximately two weeks from this point, with revisions to the preliminary report planned. John commented that the City felt that the preliminary report was very helpful. Sandy Dunn commented that she was very pleased to hear that the facility was in overall good shape with no “critical” issues or big surprises being identified. Sandy also added that the report was visionary, comprehensive and a good starting point. It also provided an informative overview of what newer facilities have incorporated into their designs.

## 5. Major Projects - John Odell

### a. **Capital Projects – Status Updates**

Commissioner Harrity requested that the font size be made larger if at all possible.

- i. Windows* – As soon as the weather cooperates, the first set of two window installation phases will begin. The estimated start is the latter half of April.
- ii. WIFI*– The RFP for the next installation phase has proven to be more challenging than originally anticipated. In particular, determining what is eligible under the primary contract with Presidio and what work does not qualify. John was hopeful that it will be put out to bid by next weeks with more detail to be provided at the next meeting.
- iii. Scoreboard* – The project is moving forward as planned with parts ordered. Staff anticipates a mid-spring delivery with a June 20<sup>th</sup> estimated start date for installation. Commissioner Brissette inquired if this will have any effect on graduations. Sandy Dunn commented that no impact will be felt as this will install will occur after those dates.
- iv. Lighting* – Finalizing the last pieces of this project and also compiling a public relations story to close this item out.

## 8. **SMG Reporting Sandy Dunn / Julia Iorio / Jim Moughan** (*detail included in monthly packet*)

### a. **Monthly Highlights / Financial Statements – FY 2017**

Commissioner Harrity inquired about staffing levels as that was a concern coming into the busiest time of the season. Sandy Dunn responded that at this point SMG will struggle through the remainder of the season with the help of temp agencies. The facility has also been assisted by the New Hampshire and Rhode Island SMG managed facilities to fill in when staff has been low for larger events. Staff will gear up for the next season in August/September. Commissioner Harrity also asked about the metal detectors and how that has progressed since their installation. Sandy Dunn responded that the staff has become very proficient and attendees are used to the process, however, having them in place is expensive as they are very labor intensive to ensure a quick entry. This summer, permanent power will also be installed to replace the initial temporary power for these units.

### b. **Sales Report**

Jim Moughan reported on hosting a *High School Drill & Percussion Competition* for the first time in the Arena on Saturday, April 1st, which will be bringing in over 5,000 people to the facility for a day/evening event. *Brew Woo*, the successful Annual Craft Beer Festival (in the 9<sup>th</sup> year) will also be happening this same weekend in the Convention Center Exhibit Hall. *UMass Epic Program* has contracted five training seminar events thus far with potential for additional dates and a potential new dance competition program is looking at booking in May.

### c. **Price Waterhouse Coopers Annual Report (reference piece – Facility by Size)**

SMG participates in an annual survey, which results in a report being provided by Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) comparing our operation to “like sized” facilities. This has been a useful tool for benchmarking our operation. In addition, PWC provides an annual “state of the industry” for the convention industry. Details of this report were shared with the Commission. Currently trending are more informal networking spaces and smaller breakout groups rather than the larger scale type

meeting sessions. This was consistent with what Populous, the City architect had previously stated in initial design meetings.

The DCU Center's primary marketing organization is Discover Central Massachusetts (DCM) DCM received both City and State funding and Christina Andreoli is the President of DCM. She is also the VP of the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce. DCM also has two dedicated sales staff that contributed in generating 23,000 room nights this year. Sandy Dunn indicated that DCM staff would be happy to attend a monthly meeting and present their marketing plan for the facility and the City, if interested. The Commissioners indicated that they appreciated DCM efforts but that a meeting was not necessary at this time.

- d. **NCAA Venue Selections for Men's Basketball 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Round and Regional Hockey will be announced on 4/18.** The bids were for 5 years into the future and submitted by Holy Cross in partnership with the DCU Center.

## **10. Adjournment**

Commissioner Brissette motioned to adjourn; seconded by Commissioner Knowlton.  
(5 yeas, 0 nays) Motion passed.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:03pm

***Next Meeting: April 27, 2017 - 11:45 Lunch, 12:30 Meeting – DCU Center Conference Room***