

**ST. JOSEPH COUNTY HOTEL MOTEL TAX BOARD
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2022
CENTURY CENTER – RECITAL HALL
8:00 A.M.**

Members Present

John Anthony	Kurt Janowsky	Jenny McNeil	Carmen Piasecki
Greg Downes	Micki Kidder	Paul Phair	Ron Zeltwanger

Members Absent

Mark McDonnell	Dan Parker	Gary West
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The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by President Anthony. Mary Ellen Smith conducted roll call of board members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Anthony entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2021, meeting. Greg Downes moved to accept; Jenny McNeil seconded; and motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Ron Zeltwanger reported that the Hotel-Motel Tax fund 1-1-21 cash balance was \$4,242,389.67; with revenue up to 9-30-21 of \$2,541,172.35; and disbursements of \$2,763,526.19; leaving a cash balance of \$4,020,035.86 on 9-30-21. The original 2021 budget included revenue of \$2,750,000 was revised in August to \$3,600,000 to adjust for additional revenues received the first part of 2021. Total 2021 actual revenue was \$4,326,612.34 and disbursements of \$3,861,626.28 leaving a cash balance of \$4,195,417.88 on 12-31-21. The Mishawaka Sports Complex fund ended 2021 with a cash balance of \$1,338,964.04; Potawatomi Zoo fund \$840,792.63; Morris Performing Arts Center fund \$156,575.87; and Tourism Capital Improvement Fund \$313,151.76. Jenny McNeil moved to accept the Treasurers Report; Greg Downes Seconded; and motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Anthony welcomed new member Micki Kidder to the board as an appointee of the St. Joseph County Commissioners and replaces Scott Rieth. She is Vice President for University Enterprises and Events at the University of Notre Dame. Micki spoke on upcoming Notre Dame events: ND Class of 2022 commencement on the weekend of 5-14-22; ND Class of 2020 commencement celebration on Memorial Day weekend; Blue Gold Game on 4-23-22; ND Alumni weekend the first weekend in June; and summer sports camps with many people coming from out of town. Tickets for the Garth Brooks concert in the round on 5-7-22 go on sale 2-25-22. Over 88,000 people are expected and his first concert at Notre Dame brought mostly people from out of town. Pre-concert hospitality events are planned.

AGENCY REPORTS

MISHAWAKA SPORTS COMPLEX

Ken Prince gave an update on the Mishawaka Sports Complex after a year of reviewing adding ice to the facility. Discussions took place with Notre Dame and the Ice Box that have staff who work together on hockey events. A study was completed by the developer which showed that having ice would be complex and expensive to maintain. The committee decided that ice would be too risky an endeavor at this time unless there were two sheets of ice which could be detrimental to the Ice Box. The decision was made to exclude ice for now and probably the outside basketball courts will be expanded. Two sheets of ice could be added in the future. Approximately 50 acres are now available and the size of the facility could be increased in the future. The goal is to be under construction

in Fall 2022 and is expected to take one to two years to build. Discussion followed on how ice would have an impact in the winter. The facility will likely be branded as a field house for tournaments and can accommodate very large gatherings.

POTAWATOMI ZOO

Josh Sisk reported that the new giraffes have arrived at the zoo. Over 1600 people attended the Winter Day event 2-20-22 when this event usually has 300 people attend. The zoo is requesting tax reimbursement of \$427,000. A \$5.5 million tax bond will be used for a 6,000 sq. ft. building for a concession lodge and black bear habitat. A meeting is scheduled today with three contractors, the project will go to bid soon, and ground will be broken the end of summer 2022. New lions will be come to the zoo soon as the previous lion at the zoo was over 20 years old and died. The zoo opens 4-1-22 and Board members will receive invitations to a special event to be held 3-31-22.

VISIT SOUTH BEND MISHAWAKA

Rob DeCleene reported that the 2021 year-end data shows St. Joseph County hotel room occupancy rate of 53.2% compared to 2019 year-end occupancy rate of 53.9%. Hotel inventory is 5,026 rooms with 317 more under construction. The anticipated opening of the Four Winds Hotel is the end of 2022 or early 2023. Half of the rooms are for casino high roller guests and approximately 150-160 rooms will be available for other guests. There were 7 meetings in 2021 with total attendance of 1,820 and 1,952 room nights with an economic impact of \$1.5 million. The SB50 campaign gave popcorn poppers and supplies to meeting planners. The 2022 SB25 campaign will have a travel theme and give 25 rolling travel bags. Sports is recession and pandemic resistant with 72 sports events in 2021 with a total attendance of 103,056 and 24,946 room nights with an economic impact of \$15.7 million. Hockey was the top sport with 13.9k room nights, Diamond sports had 4.6k room nights, and field sports had 4k room nights. Nick Kleva, Sports Tourism Manager, is the first person in Indiana to receive Sports Tourism Strategist certification 1-12-22. The Bendix Arena ranked #2 Esports Facilities: Fan Favorites by SportsEvents. The new website launched 8-26-21 and had 472,309 unique visitors with top referrals from Chicago, South Bend and Indianapolis. Jake Brown, Content and Digital Marketing Strategist, received the eTourism Summit Emerging Tourism Star and the U.S. Travel Association Destinations Council Emerging Leader awards in 2021. Bandwango Passes are a mobile-friendly platform that allows VSBM to create activities by themes to target visitors and locals. There were 904 pass signups and 1,484 check-ins for the Parks Pass, Public Art Pass. The Pizza pass launched 2-9-22 with 525 signups and 78 check-ins. The Burger Pass and Midwest Motor Tour Pass are coming soon. The 2022 Visitor Guide had record ad sales and ad profit will be used for a dedicated campaign in Chicago and other projects. The 2021-22 Visitor Guide was a 50K print run and an outdoors focus. The St. Joseph River pocket map was a 15k print run and highlights paved trails, parks, boat and kayak access, fishing and bridges along the river. The 2022-23 guide will be a 75k print run, have 84 pages and feature Notre Dame on the cover. Five videos were created internally: How to Make an Amazing Charcuterie Board; Explore! Eat. Sleep. Repeat.; Facility Tour: Byers Softball Complex; Facility Tour: Aloft South Bend; and Indiana's Tallest Outdoor Decorated Christmas Tree. J2 Marketing was hired for ongoing video projects and is capturing footage August 2021 – May 2022 of 30 locations/attractions and 7 restaurants to create videos for a new destination showcase, 4 seasonal videos, and 6 Youtube ads which debut Summer 2022. Tourism Capital Investment Fund information sessions with 13 registered attendees were hosted via Zoom 2-21 and 22. Industry Partner Lunches are back with the 3-31-22 luncheon being held at the Embassy Suites from 11:30 am–1:00 pm. Other upcoming events include the Tourism Awards Reception in May DTBD; the Industry Partner Luncheons in July and September DTBD; and the Holiday Luncheon at the Gillespie Conference Center 11-16-22 from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm.)

Discussion followed that the Four Winds Hotel is not subject to the Hotel-Motel Tax because the Pokagon Indian Band is a sovereign nation. There also was discussion on the decision to currently not have ice at the new Mishawaka Sports Complex This creates a lack of opportunity for the sport of hockey to grow in the community. The location is excellent near Exit 83 of the Indiana Toll Road and near Notre Dame. The intention was to enhance the Ice Box and a suggestion was made to have the Ice Box directly involved. Youth sports helps keep restaurants and hotels busy throughout the year. South Bend/ Mishawaka could become known as "Hockey Town."

MORRIS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Jeff Jarnecke reported that in 2021 the Morris had 68 shows and attendance of 60,000+ people, with an economic impact of \$5.5 million and estimated 3,000 room nights. Revenue in 2021 was \$1,736,452 (which included \$992K in federal grants) less expenses of \$1,106,303 with a net income of \$630,149. Income also included \$40,000 of income from the Umphrey's McGee concert on 11-14-21, the first self-promoted show. Expenses remained relatively flat compared to 2020 because, although staff were furloughed from the Morris, they worked in other City of South Bend departments and were paid from the Morris budget. The Morris was awarded the Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC) Star Facility accreditation in 2021 for cleaning, disinfection, and infectious disease prevention for facilities. Michelle DeBeck, Director of Box Office & Event Services, retired in February after 21 years' service.

The Morris 100th year celebration kicked off 1-7-22 during the Downtown South Bend (DTSB) First Friday evening event. The Morris 100 numbers outside the large second floor windows were unveiled with a prior marquee countdown. From 6-27-22 to 9-30-22 \$10 million will be invested in new floor concrete, theater seats, HVAC system, lighting and fixtures. A community event will then be held 9-30-22 to 10-1-22 to celebrate the 100th anniversary with large outside concerts and a ticketed theater event.

The Palais Royale almost broke even in 2021 for probably the first time ever due to the new business model with Navarre Hospitality.2021. Revenue was \$122,575 (which includes the long-term lease with Fatbird, LLC) less expenses of \$149,547 with a net loss of \$26,971. The Palais also receives an additional \$25,000 license fee.

The International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM) SOS Extension Act/S.2889 would extend the timeline from the end of 2021 to Spring of 2023 for using Small Business Administration (SBA) Shuttered Venue Operators Grants, that were created by the bipartisan Save Our Stages Act. The Music Under Severe Income Crisis/Music Act S.3325 would provide assistance to those who were not included in SVOG. Under this bill, two NAICS codes would be added for 561591/Convention and Visitors Bureaus and 711310/promoters of performing arts, sports and similar events with facilities.

CENTURY CENTER

Jeff Jarnecke reported that in 2021 there were 198 events at Century Center with an economic impact of \$8 million and 2,219 room nights. Revenue in 2021 was \$2,511,688 less expenses of \$2,948,381 with a net loss of -\$436,693. The cash position on 1-31-22 of \$2,567,181.98 is stronger than \$2,272,993.88 on 1-31-21. There were 16,000+ lbs of food harvested by Cultivate (since 2017.)

The Bendix Esports Arena will be rebranded the Xfinity Gaming Center. The local McDonalds franchise is looking at sponsoring a gaming team. There were more than 5,000 hours played in 2021. Purdue University held a collegiate invitational event in January with 50 computers and over 1,800 hours of playing time. Upcoming events include the Bethel University invitational in March, the Indiana high school state championships in May and weekly/monthly tournaments. The goals

are room nights, local users/quantity of life and the increased perception of the community with more innovation. On any night there are 30-120 people who are more focused on gaming than the Garage business across the river.

OLD BUSINESS

MORRIS 100 CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Greg Downes thanked Aaron Perri, Jeff Jarnecke and the VPA staff for their assistance with the Morris 100 Campaign. Fundraising is close to \$20 million. A press conference will be held 1-25-22 at 11:00 a.m. at the Morris to announce the Community Foundation of St. Joseph County \$1 million matching grant. An inversive fundraising event will be held 3-23-22 involving the backstage. The Equity in the Arts sub-committee co-chaired by Kareemah Fowler and Marvin Curtis has started a student usher mentor program. The Disney movie "Soul" was held 2-20-22 for Black History month with free tickets given to South Bend community centers. American Theatre Guild, the Broadway show promoter, has agreed to give 60 tickets to children for each show.

HYBRID MEETING FORMAT RESOLUTION

Jeff Jarnecke reviewed the Electronic Participation in Meetings Policy and the Resolution Adopting a Written Policy Establishing the Procedures for Electronic Participation at a Meeting. After discussion, Carmen Piasecki moved to accept; Jenny McNeil seconded; and motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

President Anthony thanked the board, agencies and staff for their hard work. With no further business he entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Carmen Piasecki moved to adjourn the meeting; Greg Downes seconded; and the meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

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