

**CIVIC CENTER BOARD OF MANAGERS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2025
CENTURY CENTER – RECITAL HALL
8:30 AM**

Members Present

Aaron Perri
Heather Goralski
Matt Kahn (remote)

Randy Kelly
Canneth Lee
Jill Scicchitano

Members Absent

Austin Gammage
Judd McNally
A.J. Patel

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by President Aaron Perri.

Consent Agenda

President Perri stated that the approval of the 2nd quarter claims from Century Center would not be considered as this meeting as the backup did not match. Perri entertained a motion to approve the Minutes of the 8/27/25 meeting Randy Kelly motioned to approve, Canneth Lee seconded, and motion carried.

President's Report

Perri gave a brief President's report. The Christian Educators Conference held at Center Center had 7,500 attendees staying in hotels and eating in downtown South Bend.

Venues Report

Morris Performing Arts Center

Dezha Moore, General Manager of Venues, reported, summarized below:

1. Financial Overview

- **YTD Revenue:** \$1,723,998
- **YTD Expenses:** \$1,238,441
- **TOTAL Profit:** \$485,556
- **Year-End Forecast:** Projected at \$1.7 million
- **YTD Ticket Fee Revenue:** \$3,22,703 (Lower because of dark period for construction)

2. Event Activity

- Whispers of the Past Ghost Tours – All nine tours December – October sold out. Amber Schisler, Director of Ticketing Sales & Strategy, incorporated the local ghost stories into the history of the Morris. This will continue to be held annually in the Fall season as a new experience for the community.
- Shows after the dark construction period:
- The Music in Common: The Black Legacy Project was held at Century Center on 10/10/25
- Beatles vs. Stones “A Musical Showdown” on 10/16/25
- The Vampire Circus “The Scariest Side of Cirque” 10/21/25
- South Bend Symphony Orchestra Pops “Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban 10/25-26/25 with attendance of over 2,700
- Upcoming shows: Swan Lake 11/13/25; Comedian Mojo Brookzz 11/23/25
The Bergamot “A South Shore Christmas” 11/28/25
Straight No Chaser “Holiday Road Tour” 12/17/25; October London 1/24/2

3. Board Discussion on Expenses Increases and Feedback

- There were unexpected expenses with licenses and permits which had been annual renewals which went to five-year renewals which were not budgeted.
- Some security doors and walls needed unexpected repairs.
- Dezha will send board members a list of unexpected repair costs.

- Scott Herczeg, Director of Operations – Venues, stated that the South Bend Fire Department wanted to have unexpected five-year inspections of the fire alarm systems this year which were more expensive than anticipated. The natural gas bill has increased this year by 10% and it has been colder this season. Two heat pumps (\$30,000 cost each) were replaced in Fat Bird and in the Morris Grand Lobby. The new equipment also uses more gas.

Raclin Murphy Encore Center

Dezha Moore, General Manager of Venues, reported, summarized below:

1. Logo

- The VPA marketing team is developing the Equity in the Arts logo and branding.
- The Raclin Murphy Encore Center logo and branding are being developed.

2. Operational Notes

- An update on the food and beverage space rental fees will be given at the next meeting.
- Grand Opening plans and the plan for Navarre Hospitality will be operating the lounge are being developed.
- The goal is to enhance the patron experience and community engagement experience.
- The majority of the bars/concessions will be in the Encore Center to ensure that the Morris Grand Lobby is less congested. This will be in addition to the lounge.
- Equity in the Arts will host art exhibits every month which will be open during Morris shows through intermission.
- The lounge will be open prior to shows and during intermission.
- A new seat service will be offered starting in January 2026 for Royal Box, Side Box and Loge Box patrons. A QR code will be used to order and drinks will be brought to the patrons. The goal is to enhance the patron experience, decrease bar/concession lines and increase concession sales.
- The new self-service ticket kiosk in the vestibule will start in January 2026. A new sensory room will be available for patrons who are sensitive to sound. A breastfeeding chair will be available. A screen will be there to watch the show.

3. Event Calendar

- Dr. Marvin Curtis, Arts Equity & Public Arts Coordinator, is planning the event schedule including monthly art exhibits, improv/open mic and poetry slams, networking events, and humanities events.

Palais Royale

Dezha Moore, General Manager of Venues, reported, summarized below:

1. Financial Overview

- **YTD Room Rental:** \$27,006
- **TD Total Revenue:** \$92,862
- **YTD Expenses:** \$129,776
- **TOTAL Loss:** - \$36,914
- A number of unexpected repairs were needed and in the Fat Bird space as well.
- There was an increase in the natural gas expenses.
- Thought is being given on how to increase Palais revenue. **General Fund:** The Palais operates under the city's general fund (Fund 101), which provides a financial safety net compared to other venues like the Morris or Century Center.

Century Center

Dezha Moore, General Manager of Venues, reported, summarized below:

1. Capital & Maintenance

- **YTD Revenue:** \$543,021
- **YTD Expense:** \$50,626
- **TOTAL Profit:** \$492,394
- \$500,000 received from the Hotel Motel Tax Board for capital projects, plus \$100,000 from the city.
- Maintenance team has been busy with getting quotes for repairs and upgrades.

Rebekah Love, General Manager reported, summarized below:

2. Event Highlights

- Recent Events: South Bend Hall of Fame, Ramencon, Bethel Esports playoffs, Indiana Latino Institute, Texas A&M Yell Practice, Halloween parties
- Upcoming Events: Barletta University is a reoccurring annual event with 600 attendees and approximately 700 hotel room nights. The Notre Dame College of Science Christmas Lecture with a world-renowned speaker is a reoccurring annual event open to the public with approximately 500 attendees and is televised on PBS. The American Cornhole Tournament is a reoccurring annual event with 400 attendees with approximately 200 hotel room nights.
- Proposals: ATA Martial Arts in June 2026 with 800-1,000 attendees and 200 hotel room nights and would be held twice per year; Historic First Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of Indiana in July 2026 with 500 worshipers with international attendees.

3. Financials

- Financial Numbers are down. Event number of attendees has decreased from the expected number this year. The Notre Dame Taxes & Estate event usually has 300 attendees, but was held virtually this year; however, the decision was made to hold the event next year at Century Center. Grand Design did not host their usual training this year due to having trouble getting materials for trailers.
- EBIT: Earnings Before Interest, Taxes and Amortization
YTD 25% and 2025 projected to be 30%.
- Hotel Room Nights: 15,484 actualized YTD; projected 17,296 for 2025, 16,136 tentative for 2026, and 12,055 tentative for 2027

4. Client and Guest Feedback

- Net Promoter Score is 82% which increased from 62% last year. Clients have been trained to respond to emails for feedback for an over 50% return rate.
- "In the Moment" 2,012 YTD guest surveys are mostly positive.
- FeedbackLeighton cleaning

Parking Garages

Dezha Moore, General Manager of Venues, reported, summarized below:

1. Upgrades

- Lighting is being replaced with LED bulbs for brightness and safety.
- EV charging stations
- Leighton cleaning

Raclin Murphy Encore Center and MPAC Parking Garage/Phase III Updates

Patrick Sherman, Director of Project Management – City of South Bend Engineering Department, gave an update on the Raclin Murphy Encore Center construction and Phase III.

Raclin Murphy Encore Center

- The front façade terracotta glazing is mostly complete. The granite base is to start next week. Next is the awning.

- The previous Morris exterior north brick wall is the final large structural item. Numerous unforeseen structural issues were overcome to break through the thick wall. The first floor should be open later this week.
- The second floor entrance is now open and being used for emergency egress for shows. There is a seamless transition between the old Morris finishes and the new Encore Center finishes.
- The railing is to be started next week on the stairs. Production of treads is nearly complete.
- The custom acoustic panels are complete.
- Light fixtures are being installed.
- The First Floor tray ceiling is installed.
- Custom bathroom tiles are installed.
- Finishes are being installed
- MEP systems are nearly complete.
- I&T and A/V infrastructure is ongoing.
- Signage and art are being finalized
- Glazing is nearing completion.
- The theater was dark during the punch through from the Morris into new building.
- Completion is on track for December pending tile delivery.
- Furniture will be delivered and Arts Equity will move in January 2026.

MPAC Parking Garage Development/Phase III

- The survey has been completed.
- The developer agreement is being negotiated.
- The garage design process has been initiated with the design consultant.
- The plan is to start construction in 2026 and, hopefully, complete in 2027.

Raclin Murphy Encore Center Naming Rights Updates

Amy Roush, Chief Development Officer, South Bend Venues, Parks & Arts, reviewed the naming rights agreements that have been signed from 2019 – 2022. There have been no new agreements that have been finalized and signed. Roush met with Greg and Mary Downes, and Brad and Regina Emberton and did a walk thru of the Raclin Murphy Encore Center. The committee is working closely with them to ensure that the donor intent is realized and the very important people who made the Encore Center a possibility are acknowledged in a way that represents the donor intent and what the City of South Bend and Morris staff want to have in place. The Downes and Embertons will be meeting with Hayes Design Company regarding creating donor recognition. Donor plaques will be elegant and understated similar to existing donor plaques in the Morris to have continuity between the two spaces. The Policy of the Civic Center Board of Managers for Naming Rights of Venues within the Scope of Its Supervision and Management which was approved by the City of South Bend on 5/5/22 was distributed to board members.

A motion to create a Naming Rights Committee was made by Matt Kahn; seconded by Canneth Lee; motion carried. Canneth Lee and Randy Kelly volunteered to be members of the committee with the Downes and the Embertons. The Naming Rights Committee will update the board at meetings.

Century Center Management Contract Approval

Vice President Jill Scicchitano, subcommittee chair, reviewed The current Century Center management contract with ASM Global expires 12/31/25. The subcommittee was established with board members Aaron Perri, Jill Scicchitano, Judd McNally, and Heather Goralski and met six times. The subcommittee did a thorough review of management models used in other cities. They met with community stakeholders -- City of South Bend, City of Mishawaka, St. Joseph

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County Board of Managers for Hotel-Motel Tax, Visit South Bend Mishawaka (VSBM), Century Center staff. During this process a model emerged with the strategy of local control, operating efficiencies, and alignment with tourism efforts. At the 8/27/25 meeting the board unanimously approved to allow the subcommittee to continue negotiations and bring back a proposal for consideration. VSBM created a Management Agreement which outlined the operating model to manage Century Center. The City of South Bend Legal Department has reviewed Management Agreement. the Management Agreement Between the Civic Center Board of Managers and VSBM dated 11/4/25 which would be effective 1/1/26.

Jenna Throw, City of South Bend Attorney, reviewed the key terms of the Management Agreement which would be effective 1/1/26 with the opportunity in 2028 to evaluate the effectiveness of the agreement. The initial term would be for five years with the opportunity for a five-year renewal. VSBM would assume responsibility for sales, marketing and strategic oversight and would maintain partnerships with food and beverage providers and facility management functions. The current vendor would continue to handle day-to-day operations through a separate contract with VSBM for a smooth transition into 2026.

The City of South Bend is asking Board members to approve the Employee Services Agreement that serves as an exhibit to the Agreement with VSBM. This Agreement would guide the transition of City of South Bend staff currently working at Century Center who are close to vesting in their City of South Bend pension. Funding would be through Hotel-Motel Tax subsidies or capital subsidies through the City of South Bend.

Capital expenses would continue to run through the City of South Bend. The majority of profits received through Century Center would either be reinvested in the VSBM Operating account or the Century Center Capital account and directed to ensure that the Capital fund remains above \$1 million pursuant to the policy of the board. Twenty percent (20%) of the profit would be designated for VSBM to use to enhance the facility. Performance metrics would be developed between the board and VSBM for financial results, stakeholder feedback, and room night generation that would guide annual review of the Agreement. There are protections for any potential termination of the Agreement for cause or convenience with defined notice periods.

The Agreement distributed to Board members is the most recent circulated and mostly final except for some details pertaining to insurance limits. The Employee Services Agreement distributed to Board members is the final language except for the finalization of exhibits. We ask that the Board approve both Agreements subject to finalization with VSBM and the City of South Bend.

President Perri introduced Jeff Jarnecke, Executive Director of VSBM. Jarnecke stated that the innovative plan will serve the Century Center market in the near term and long term. He thanked Board members for their trust in the concept that can better deliver for Century Center, South Bend, and St. Joseph County. Special thanks to City of South Bend Mayor Mueller for his support, Jenna Throw and Michael Schmidt. He also thanked the current Century Center staff who make the venue a better place and is optimistic that staff will remain. VSBM envisions Century Center as an economic driver for downtown South Bend. In the recent past it has contributed \$13.5 million of economic impact. VSBM is committed to bringing more to South Bend. VSBM envisions a beautiful building that will create experiences and memories – meetings, proms, luncheons, breakfasts, not-for-profit gatherings and community events. Century Center is a 50-year-old venue and there is a chance to update within a budget and be relevant to the marketplace. VSBM appreciates the Board support.

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President Perrie requested a motion to approve both the Management Agreement Between the Civic Center Board of Managers and Visit South Bend Mishawaka and the Employee Services Agreement; motion made by Matt Kahn; seconded by Canneth Lee; motion carried.

Adjournment

With no further business, President Perri adjourned the meeting at 9:40 a.m.

The next board meeting is scheduled for February 19, 2026, at 8:30 AM at Century Center.

AP: MES