

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY HOTEL MOTEL TAX BOARD
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2023
CENTURY CENTER – RECITAL HALL
8:30 A.M.

Members Present

John Anthony	Mark McDonnell	Gary West
Rob DeCleene	Jenny McNeil	Kyle Willis
Becky Fletcher	Paul Phair	Ron Zeltwanger
Micki Kidder	Carmen Piasecki	

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by President Anthony. Mary Ellen Smith conducted roll call of board members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

President John Anthony entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2022, meeting. Greg Downes moved to accept; Gary West seconded; and motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Ron Zeltwanger reviewed the 2022 Q4 Financial Report ending December 31, 2022. The Mishawaka Sports Complex/Fund 9426 had a cash balance of \$2,440,967.76; the Potawatomi Zoo Capital/Fund 4927 - \$789,701.13; Morris PAC Capital/Fund - \$522,531.59; Tourism Capital Investment Fund 7404 – \$1,415,155.50. The Hotel-Motel Tax/Fund 7304 started 2022 with the cash balance of \$4,707,375.73 plus receipts of \$5,510,018.76 less disbursements of \$3,975,189.84 left a cash balance of \$6,242,204.65. Minus Encumbrances of \$309,198.93 leaves a net balance of \$5,933,055.72. The approved 2023 Hotel-Motel Tax Fund Budget is \$5,999,437.00.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Anthony reported that the Tourism Capital Investment Fund Committee has proposed issuing a \$2 million matching grant with a number of contingencies to The Ice Box to operate a new sheet of ice for hockey tournaments. The organization needs to secure \$5 million. The new ice must be open by December 21, 2024. Hockey events would continue to be hosted. Applications are due March 1, 2023. Approximately \$1 million goes into the fund per year. The City of South Bend supplied a letter for a \$2 million matching grant. The Ice Box will give an update report at a future meeting. Motion was made by Jenny McNeil to issue a \$2 million grant to the Ice Box for the new sheet of ice; Gary West seconded; and motion passed.

AGENCY REPORTS

MORRIS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Andrew Schreiber reported that Amber Schisler is the new Director of Ticketing Sales & Strategy. Dr. Marvin V. Curtis has been hired for the new position of Arts Equity & Public Art Coordinator. Staff are working on cross-promotion with the Downtown South Bend Dining Alliance. The expansion timeline for the new building to the north of the Morris is contingent upon funding; however, at best is 2025.

CENTURY CENTER

Schreiber reported that the upstairs restroom renovation is scheduled to finish 5-15-23. Repaving and striping the parking lot will be finished by 5-8-23. Xfinity will have new signage for the Bendix Arena.

The Professional Sports Development Bill 326 would be utilized by the Four Winds Field baseball stadium and Century Center.

POTAWATOMI ZOO

John Anthony reported on behalf of Josh Sisk that the lion and concession project is moving forward as planned.

VISIT SOUTH BEND MISHAWAKA

Jeff Jarnecke distributed the VSBM 2022 annual report to members which showed 2022 year-end hotel data as 53.5% Occupancy with 976,129 Demand in 2022 vs. 952,092 in 2021. Short term rentals (Airbnb and VRBO) had 43% Occupancy vs. 37% in 2021. There were 26 events with 142,498 attendees and \$23.7 million economic impact. Hockey represented 23,000 room nights. There were 15 meeting events with 9,978 attendees, 5,117 room nights and an economic impact of \$4.2 million.

VSBM now has four people selling. The goals are to increase room nights – Leisure by 25%; Sports by 10%; Meetings by 10%; to drive efficiency to reinvest 5% of the budget; and to cultivate Tourism Capital Investment Fund projects. Staff are bidding to bring conventions in 2026 and 2027. Event sponsorships in the amount of \$125,000 have received 33 applications with 29 awards going to Sports – 64%; Arts – 6%; Community Events – 15%; Conventions – 6% and Other – 9%

Discussion followed on how the new Four Winds Hotel will not pay into the Hotel-Motel Tax. The average daily rate on the 316 rooms will be higher than other properties. Half of the rooms will be held for casino guests. The hotel will not be reporting STAR data since they do not collect Hotel-Motel Tax.

MISHAWAKA SPORTS COMPLEX

Billy Bunkowfst of Card & Associates Facilities, LLC, reported than the bond closed 1-26-23. A Groundbreaking ceremony will be held in Spring 2023.

NEW BUSINESS

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Nominating Committee Chair Carmen Piasecki reported that the committee recommends John Anthony for the position of President, Mikki Kidder for the position of Vice President; and Ron Zeltwanger for the position of Treasurer. Gary West moved to accept the slate of officers named; Jenny McNeil seconded; and motion approved.

CIVIC CENTER BOARD OF MANAGERS COUNTY-CITY FINANCE RESOLUTION NO. 23-01

Aaron Perri distributed the County-City Finance Resolution No. 23-01 which provides a change in the internal accounting of Hotel-Motel Tax Board Fund allocations for Century Center capital expenditures. The Resolution created by Aladean DeRose and St. Joseph County Auditor John Murphy would earmark funds for use in the next year. Funds would be disbursed in January and July. Gary West moved to approve the Resolution; Jenny McNeil seconded; and motion approved.

OLD BUSINESS

MORRIS 100 CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Greg and Mary Downs, Co-Chairs of the Morris 100 Committee, have resigned their positions.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business President Anthony entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mark McDonnell moved to adjourn the meeting; Gary West seconded; and the meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.