

**CIVIC CENTER BOARD OF MANAGERS
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2023
CENTURY CENTER – RECITAL HALL
8:30 A.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Linda Doshi	Michael Neises
Greg Downes	Aaron Perri
Randy Kelly	Jill Scicchitano
Canneth Lee	

MEMBERS ABSENT

Heather Goralski
A. J. Patel

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by President Perri.

CONSENT AGENDA

President Perri entertained a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the Minutes of the 8/10/23 meeting. The board did not receive timely financial reports for the meeting material packets so the board will not be able to approve financial reports. He just talked with staff from the City of South Bend Controller office about receiving timely financial reports. Greg Downes motioned to approve the Minutes of the 8/10/23 meeting; Linda Doshi seconded; and motion carried.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Perri again congratulated Jenna Throw, on her new assignment as City Attorney, replacing long time City Attorney Aladean DeRose. Michael Neises has resigned his position as a member of the board appointed by the South Bend Common Council effective after today’s meeting. Perri thanked Neises for his years of service and noted that the South Bend Common Council will name a new appointee.

Perri reported that Rebekah Love has been appointed General Manager of the Century Center. He congratulated Rebekah on her promotion after many years of service at Century Center.

The Century Center parking lot has been recently repaved and restriped. The Morris Equity and Arts initiative continues to advance. A free community “Dia de los Muertos” concert by the /South Bend Symphony “Orchestra was held 10/29/23 Jerry Seinfeld was a near sold-out show 10/29/23 at the Morris. Efforts continue on the Morris 100 Phase 2 project.

Scheduled 2024 Thursday meeting dates include 2/22, 5/9, 8/15 and 11/21 at 8:30 a.m. in Recital Hall.

VENUES REPORT

Morris Performing Arts Center

Andrew Schreiber reported that the Morris has self-promoted shows: Ben Harper & The Innocent Criminals 10/13; Rocky Horror Picture Show with Barry Bostwick 10/27; HipHop Nutcracker 11/27; and comedian Michael Palascak at the Palais Royale 12/29. The Morris has booked 105 events in 2023 and 63 events in 2024. There are 6 free community movies in 2024 as part of the community engagement initiative to engage a younger audience. The Morris is up from 2022 at the same time with more guests at the same amount of events with more money collected from each guest. YTD 2023 attendance for 54 events is 50,251 guests and \$2,641,182 revenue vs YTD 2023 attendance for 55 events of 48,294 guests and \$2,213,071 revenue. Actual YTD 2023 revenue is \$1,193,354 less expenses of \$1,189,957 with a net profit of \$3,397. Fatbird will be signing a 3-year lease for an expansion of the restaurant into the basement.

Capital projects in 2024 include a projector and large screen for community movie events (\$118,000 paid with Hotel-Motel tax money); Palais floor (\$88,000); Palais ceiling (\$100,000); Box Office renovation (\$40,000); awning replacement (\$25,000); and external digital screens under the marquee (\$100,000). The estimated number of hotel rooms in 2023 is 16,300 which is up from the previous report of 14,991.

Discussion followed on the Morris Center 2024 budget. Schreiber explained that the 2024 Revenue budget of \$1,535,803 is lower than the 2023 Revenue budget of \$1,939,546 because of the Palais Royale being closed in January for the floor renovation. Also, it is anticipated that the Morris may not be able to book some show dates due to construction of the new Raclin Murphy Encore Center. Likewise, the 2024 Expense budget was decreased to \$1,435,803 from the 2023 Expense budget of \$1,838,777.

Century Center

Schreiber reported that Century Center Actual 2023 YTD to 8/31/23 revenue is \$3,037,754 less expenses of \$2,961,186 with a net profit of \$76,568.

Century Center 2023 Q4 events include Indiana Latino Education Summit; Jurassic Quest Dinosaur Show; Notre Dame Tax & Estate Planning Institute; Ramencon 2023; Indiana Criminal Justice Association; Notre Dame Orthopedic Society Annual Symposium; Christian Educators Association; Grand Design RV University; MCDA Cheer & Dance Competition; Star Spirit Cheer & Dance Competition; American Cornhole Tournament; Barletta Boats University and AmeriCheer Indiana Championship. 2024 Q1 include 39th Annual Bridal Spectacular; Valley RV & Camping Show; MLK Breakfast & Celebration; 2024 Brewfest; Michiana Boat & Sports Show; PopiCon 2024; Maple Hill Golf Show; 2024 Heartland Travel Showcase; Michiana Home Show; and South Bend Auto Show.

Capital projects finishing in 2023 include the skyway/Art Museum restroom upgrade (\$167,046); catering and kitchen equipment (\$72,442); event tables and chairs (\$100,000); reconstruct chiller systems (\$112,153,00); repair Island Park pavers (\$15,000); replace Century Center bridge decking (\$30,000); water softener and filtration system replacement (\$100,000); parking lot seal and stripe (\$49,124); entrance gate automation (\$15,000); and Great Hall lighting feature (\$40,000).

Capital projects in 2024 include security cameras on the City Network (\$100,000); carpet Discovery Ballroom (\$100,000); refinish Convention Hall floor (\$100,000); back entrance gate (\$150,000); cleaning equipment (\$25,000); A/V equipment replacements (\$50,000); event furnishings (\$50,000); lighting Great Hall (\$31,000); ice machines (\$15,000); and Bendix peripherals (\$5,000). The capital projects will be on hold until Ratio Design completes a proposal for Century Center long-term future improvements. There is new money for the capital improvements from the Hotel-Motel Tax as well as operating money. Schreiber and Scott Herczeg, Director of Operations, will be talking with the Hotel-Motel Tax Board to access up to an additional \$400,000 for projects which fit within the 30 year plan.

Discussion followed on how the Ratio study will work with the previous Ratio studies that have been completed. Schreiber explained that the Hotel-Motel Tax Board is paying \$30,000 towards the Ratio study (one-third of the \$90,000 cost.) The remaining \$60,000 cost would be paid from the Century Center operating budget. Eric Horvath, City of South /Bend Director of Public Works, is contemplating using Sports District money as well to see how Century Center and Football Hall of Fame building could be best utilized.

ASM Global Century Center Report

Rebekah Love, General Manager, introduced herself as having worked at Century Center for ten years and started as an Event Coordinator. The Patel wedding over the 8-5-23 weekend was one of the largest events coordinated at Century Center with over 800 people and 16 different events over 4 days. The Artisan Market recently held had over 200 vendors and 3,000 guests. The 2024 Scrabble Players Championship in July (which was held in Las Vegas this year) has 1160 Room Nights. The Indiana League of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers 87th Annual Conference in June is (last at Century Center in 2017) has 730 Room Nights. Brewfest this year has a Simpsons theme on 1-20-24. The National Esports National Convention will be held in May with 440 room nights.

Anticipated 2024 Room Nights is 15,000. Because of chillers being repaired, there are two rebate checks expected (\$6,000 for each chiller) for energy savings.

Discussion followed on customer service scores at 84%. A new survey provider will be used starting 1-1-24 using the same questions and scoring. It will survey exhibitors, event planners and attendees in real time.

Combatting Morris Fraudulent Tickets

Amber Schisler, Morris Director of Ticketing Sales and Strategy, reported that ever since ticket sales were driven to online, the number of ticket sales sold online has increased. Ticket fraud is driven by online ticketing and there were not measures in place to prevent fraud. Box Office hours have been expanded for more availability for people to purchase tickets in person. People do have the right by law to purchase tickets from the Morris and resell them. The number of online third party websites that look like the Morris website have increased and people purchasing tickets from them pay much higher prices. An informational third party ticketing brochure created by the Morris was distributed. Schisler developed relationships with people at StubHub and others to have them take down Morris events listed on their websites.

The Morris website now has a BOT stopper (click on pictures) to purchase tickets during the first three hours of sales to help prevent fraud. The ticket vendor sends suspicious activity alerts such as three transactions paid with the same credit card within a certain amount of time; tickets purchased online from outside the geographic area; or multiple purchases made by different people from the same address. Schisler and staff personally call people with suspicious ticket purchases to confirm that they purchased the tickets. Fraudulent phone number transactions are held and cancelled.

Chargebacks from people contacting their banks to report that they did not purchase tickets is the best way to measure progress in preventing fraud. In 2022 there were over \$10,000 in chargebacks from fraudulent ticket purchases. In 2023 YTD there were \$3,000 in only 6 chargebacks which is huge progress.

Discussion followed on what happens to consumers if they purchase fraudulent duplicate tickets and come to the Morris to see the show. Schisler explained that staff do everything possible to reseat that person somewhere in the theater to see the show. The person is also given the third party ticketing brochure and instructed to call the point of purchase.

Aaron Perri stated that Dr. Marvin V. Curtis, Arts Equity & Public Art Coordinator, will be asked to report at the next meeting on the arts equity initiatives.

NEW BUSINESS

Morris Design and Renderings Update

Patrick Sherman, Project Manager with the City of South Bend Public Works Department, works closely with Scott Herceg and dedicated VPA team on Century Center and Morris projects. Sherman reported that Phase I of the Morris renovation is complete with new floor, carpeting, seats, HVAC, and spotlights. The new Raclin Murphy Encore Center design is being finalized. Ratio is the primary consultant for the project. Sherman reviewed the architectural floor plans and visual renderings. The City of South Bend will be accepting bids in January. Groundbreaking is planned for April 2024. Construction would start April – June 2025 with the grand opening in July 2025. Estimated total cost is \$19,195,000 (\$13,800,000/building addition and \$3,900,000/plaza.)

Discussion followed on the lack of funding for a new parking garage. The project is planned so that a parking garage could be added in the future. Existing lease agreements with the LaSalle and Hoffman Hotel buildings for parking space will be adjusted for space for the new project. Both are supportive of the project.

Sherman added that the Century Center Ratio contract is to do study for a Century Center master plan. They have planners who are consultants in convention centers and museums. The study will help with the design process. There was some conceptual design work done in the past and this study will help finesse that.

Lauren of LaSalle Grille commented that their staff have noticed that with increased events there is a need for more dumpster space and asked if there is a plan for additional trash. Andrew Schreiber responded that the current trash contract is through April 2025. He and Scott Herczeg will sever the contract with the current trash vendor and will be reviewing a company that Mark McDonnell of the LaSalle Grill has recommended.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Officer Nominating Committee

President Perri reported that the board has not had an election and committee structure since 2017. He has reviewed the board Bylaws which state that elections are to be held and people are to be nominated to various committees the first meeting of every year. The Bylaws include five committees: Executive, Finance & Personnel, Marketing & Sales, Building & Grounds, and Nominating Committee. He wants to start by putting together the Nominating Committee to help put the committee officers in place. Randy Kelly and Canneth Lee have volunteered to be on the Nominating Committee and President Perri asked for a motion to appoint them to the Nominating Committee. Greg Downes motioned to appoint Randy Kelly and Canneth Lee to the Nominating Committee; Linda Dosh seconded; and motion carried. Perri will work with Randy Kelly and Canneth Lee before the 2-22-24 meeting to have a slate of officers and committees to present to the board. A request was made to send the Bylaws to all board members.

ADJOURNMENT

President Perri announced that the next meeting is Thursday, 2/22/24. With no further business, Perri adjourned the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

AP: mes