

**CIVIC CENTER BOARD OF MANAGERS
THURSDAY, February 22, 2024
CENTURY CENTER – RECITAL HALL
8:30 A.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Linda Doshi Randy Kelly
Greg Downes Canneth Lee
Heather Goralski Jill Scicchitano

MEMBERS ABSENT

A. J. Patel

MEMBER PRESENT VIA INTERNET

Aaron Perri

NEW MEMBER TO BE SWORN IN PRESENT

Austin Gammage

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. and facilitated by Randy Kelly as President Aaron Perri attended the meeting by telephone conference. Kelly welcomed new board member Austin Gammage who will not be voting at this meeting and will soon be officially sworn in soon to represent the South Bend Common Council. Gammage introduced himself as Regional Director of Development at the University of Notre Dame. He has partnered with Century Center and the Morris Performing Arts Center.

CONSENT AGENDA

Randy Kelly entertained a motion to approve the Minutes of the 11/2/23 meeting. Jenna Throw, City of South Bend Attorney, explained that because a member is attending the meeting via the internet, the vote must be taken by roll call. Aaron Perri, Heather Goralski, Greg Downes, Linda Doshi, Jill Scicchitano, Randy Kelly and Canneth Lee voted with a verbal “aye.”

Randy Kelly asked if there were comments on financial reports. Greg Downes requested that board members receive financial reports sooner prior to meetings so that there is time to review the reports prior to meetings. Andrew Schreiber, General Manager of Venues, explained that he has been working with Matthew Pedro, Director of City Finance; Laura Althoff, Director of Department Finance; and Michelle Shaw, Senior Financial Specialist, have been working on completing financial reports in a timely manner and will have the next report completely ahead of the next meeting. Schreiber stated that the Morris, Palais Royale, Fatbird and capital accounts were being reviewed and how revenue from the Box Office is being transferred to the General Operating Account will be corrected. Matthew Pedro explained the City finance team is working diligently to capture the revenue and expense bookkeeping entries and bring the reports up to standard.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Aaron Perri reported that in today’s South Bend Tribune there is an article by Ed Semmler about the St. Joseph County Board of Managers for Hotel-Motel Tax and the Visit South Bend Mishawaka organization and a county-wide study by CSL International on the use of Hotel-Motel Tax funds and a ten-year vision of how those funds should be disseminated. He expects that this board and the management team will be involved with that process.

Perri welcomed Austin Gammage to the board and explained that Gammage hosts events at the venues and it is good to have that perspective at the table. Perri extended his condolences to Canneth Lee on the fire at Kingdom Closet.

Perri highlighted capital projects of the Morris stage floor and Palais Royale ballroom floor restoration completed in January. He is excited about the Arts Equity and Inclusion initiatives organized by Dr. Marvin Curtis. Disney’s Aladdin Broadway national tour will be at the Morris 3/19-24/24. Century Center staff are excited about the Lego Brick Fest 5/25-26/24 which will bring people into South Bend. Century Center is now at full staff for the first time since before the pandemic.

VENUES REPORT

Morris Performing Arts Center

Andrew Schreiber reported that the Morris hosted 103 events in 2023 and there are currently 86 events booked for 2024. The Box Office sold 74,193 tickets in 2023 with \$3,770,09 in Revenue. A list of 2023 shows with number of tickets sold and gross dollar amount for each show was distributed. Ticket sales were down a bit; however, ticket revenue was up. Valet parking has been added for South Bend Symphony concerts. Prepaid parking at the garage is now being offered for all shows to improve the experience. The Morris had five sold out shows in 2023. The Morris was voted "Best Live Music/Concert Venue" and "Best Live Theater" in the South Bend Tribune "Community's Choice Awards." The Palais was voted "Best Wedding Venue." The Placer A.I heat map showing one, two and three visits for guests in 2023 shows that people are coming to the Morris from all neighborhoods and a wide area. The Etix report of ticket sales by event indicates that the best-selling events are comedy shows and rock concerts. The goal is to book more of those shows and potentially on Notre Dame home football weekends. Comedian Shane Gillis was a sold-out show on Friday night 9/22/23 of the game against Ohio State University. There was a beer garden and DJ Austin Gammage entertained on the Jon R. Hunt Plaza prior to the show. A Party on the Plaza was also held prior to the John Mellencamp sold-out concerts 6/23-24. A list of 2024 shows booked was distributed.

The actual 2023 revenue was \$1,811,826 less expenses of \$1,596,824 with a net profit of \$215,001. The revenue includes Box Office revenue, Fatbird lease, Navarre Hospitality for food and beverage. The 2024 budget has lower revenue and expenses due to the Morris 100 project. The most recent update from Patrick Sherman and Ratio has bidding planned in Fall 2024. Parking garage options are under discussion.

The Palais Royale floor (\$88,000) and ceiling (\$46,000) were renovated in January. Other capital Projects include a projector and large screen for community movie events (\$118,000); Palais ceiling (\$46,000); bathroom fixtures and repairs (\$40,000); awning replacement (\$25,000); and external digital screens under the marquee (\$100,000).

Century Center

Schreiber reported that Century Center Actual 2023 revenue was \$4,462,846 less expenses of \$4,128,822 with a net profit of \$334,023. There were 16,897 room nights in 2023 which was an increase from the 14,865 in 2022.

Capital projects completed in 2023 include the skyway/Art Museum restroom upgrade (\$167,046); catering and kitchen equipment (\$72,442); reconstruct chiller systems (\$112,153,00); repaired Island Park pavers (\$6,000); water softener and filtration system replacement (\$69,000); and parking lot seal and stripe (\$49,124). The event tables and chairs along with parking entrance gate automation originally planned for 2023 were delayed until 2024.

Capital projects in 2024 include security cameras on the City network (\$100,000); Convention Hall floor refinish (\$100,000); cleaning equipment (\$25,000); A/V equipment replacements (\$50,000); event furnishings (\$50,000); Great Hall lighting (\$31,000); ice machines (\$32,000); and Bendix peripherals (\$5,000). Discovery Ballroom carpet (\$100,000) and the back entrance gate have been delayed for HVS. The Ratio study is currently in the fact-finding stage of the most efficient way to utilize the Professional Sports District money.

Greg Downes reported that there had been some complaints about the parking lot lighting. He thanked Scott Herczeg, Director of Operations – Venues, for adjusting the lighting downward.

Arts Equity and Inclusion Initiatives

Dr. Marvin Curtis, Coordinator, gave an update on Arts Equity and Inclusion. Partnerships have been established with WUBS Radio and Radio Sabaro Latino.

Brian Bennett, the only African American dancer in the Joffrey Ballet in Chicago, led a day-long workshop of African dance and ballet classes for the community on 7/8/23 which had 85 people attend.

The 10/29/23 Dia de los Muertos/Day of the Dead free concert was in partnership with the South Bend Symphony Orchestra. Over 1,200 people attended with many coming for the first time with the help of \$50,000 in grant money. Dr. Curtis partnered with a new WNDU anchorwoman who spoke Spanish to emcee the event. This event will be held again this year on Saturday 11/22/24.

The 4/1/-24 South Bend Schools Music Festival will showcase choirs, bands and orchestras from the four South Bend high schools. Ensembles will have a chance to rehearse and perform at the Morris, "the Carnegie Hall of South Bend." The concert is in conjunction with the Fine Arts Division of the South Bend School Corporation. The design for the poster to promote the event and the program cover will be chosen from a student design contest.

Discussion followed on the equity issue of no public transportation in the City of South Bend for Sunday events when there is no public bus service. Andrew Schreiber added that the Morris is partnering with VPA Community Centers to have their buses transport people to the Movies at the Morris. Canneth Lee suggested partnering with local churches for van services for community events held at the Morris. He offered to work with Dr. Curtis on transportation.

ASM Global/Century Center

Rebekah Love, General Manager, reported that the \$250,000 loss was due to five banquets (such as 100 Black Men, Little Black Dress and Ronald McDonald's House – Kilts for Kids) moving to the Four Winds Casino in South Bend which just opened.

Century Center is now fully staffed. Brandy Charles was promoted to Director of Sales. Amanda Parker returned from VPA to Catering Sales Manager/Wedding Specialist. Sarah Kurbonov was promoted to Event Manager. Josh Zachary started as Event Coordinator.

The International Jugglers Association July 2023 event was a highlight of last year and was featured on "Sunday Morning" with Jane Pauley. The Valley RV & Camping Show was held 1/9-12/24. Brew Fest at Century Center 1/20/24 was not as busy as normally because of the extremely cold weather. The Michiana Boat Show was 1/26-28/24. Popicon tabletop board game convention 2-3-24 had a successful first year with 900+ attendees and are looking at 2025 dates for a larger event. The For the Love of Art event was held 2/17-18/24. The VPA Daddy-Daughter Dance was held 2-20-24. Upcoming events include the Amps International Convention 4/11-13/24, Lego Brick Fest 5/25-26/24 with 30,000+ attendees. The AMPS military model convention will be held 4/11-13/24. Century Center partnered with VSBM for the Heartland Travel Showcase to bring 250 regional meeting planners 3/1-3/24. IDEA Week features dynamic speakers 4/24-25/24. Jurassic Quest from 2023 will return in the future. Brandy went to Midwest Connect in Grand Rapids, MI; met with the Black American Cheer & Dance Association; and have bid on hosting their event with 700 room nights in 2024. If the bid is successful, the event would also be held in 2025 and 2026. Bids have been placed for some presidential visits as that was done eight years ago for two days with over \$50,000 in revenue. ASM is working with Fanatics on different trade show sizes being put together for different venue sizes. Fanatics has exclusive rights with trading card companies.

The new Insights surveys started 1-1-24 using the same questions and scoring. It surveys exhibitors, event planners and attendees in real time. Survey QR codes will be posted around Century Center and people can comment on their experience at the moment. Staff will receive instant notifications and can address needs such as spills, toilet paper, jammed paper towels, etc. The goal is to strengthen customer perception.

Aaron Perri spoke with Rebecca Love and Craig Liston, Regional Vice President, ASM Global, about metrics on room nights, customer survey scores and the bottom line numbers regarding the ASM Global contractual bonus. The audited information has not been received to make that decision and so that will be approved at the next board meeting. Rebecca Love commented that she just received the information the prior day and she will forward the information to Perri. The vote to approve the ASM Global bonus will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Safety and Security

Andrew Schreiber reported on the improved security. The Palais Royale (in addition to one security person at the front door) has added more security staff on the second floor at the entrance into the Morris by the Morris elevator so that there is no cross traffic between the Palais and Morris events. Two security staff can better handle any type of altercation. Invictus Security is now handling security at Century Center, handled security at the VPA Fusion Fest in 2023 and will be at the 2024 event. Invictus has had much better staff turn out rate than CSC previously.

OLD BUSINESS

Bylaw Revisions

Aaron Perri distributed the Board Bylaws. Perri would like the Executive Committee to review the Bylaws to downsize the many committees to two or three committees.

NEW BUSINESS

Nominating Committee

Randy Kelly reported that Aaron Perri has agreed to continue as President of the Board; Jill Scicchitano has agreed to serve as Vice President; A.J. Patel as Treasurer; and Randy Kelly as Secretary. Greg Downes motioned to approve the slate of officers; Linda Doshi seconded; and Aaron Perri, Heather Goralski, Greg Downes, Linda Doshi, Jill Scicchitano, Randy Kelly and Canneth Lee voted with a verbal "aye." Perri thanked everyone for being willing to continue to serve.

Morris 100 Update

Andrew Schreiber reported that he met with Kurt Janowsky of Navarre Hospitality to review the VIP area floor plan design. It is now slated as a future option for the new building. The first floor has 800 square feet of space which will be used for show concessions; merchandise; and Diversity, Arts, and Inclusion. The Ratio designs are complete except for a question about the curvature of the North stairs. The bid process is ready to begin once everything is in place. The bid process for the parking garage is on hold. Discussion followed that the groundbreaking on the Raclin Murphy Encore Center would be adjusted to Spring 2025. Morris 2024 budget numbers and capital projects will be adjusted due to the construction timeline being moved back. Aaron Perri stated that it is important to keep the donors advised on the project. Schreiber has spoken with Amy Roush, VPA Interim Chief Development Officer, about creating a monthly donor newsletter to keep people updated. Linda Doshi commented that it is important to use the word "when" the parking garage is built and not "if" the parking garage will be built.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Roland Kelly entertained a motion to adjourn. Greg Downes moved, Canneth Lee seconded, motion carried; and the meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.