

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

January 26, 2007

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Board Present: Rena Cotsones, David Preece, Cyndie Hall, John Chadwick, Scott Sullivan, Patti Thayer, Jan Herbert, Brent Brodeski, Matthew Provenzano, Bob Burden, Heather Markhardt and Bob Rhea.

Board Absent: Jim Ryan, Patrick Curran, Janyce Fadden, Tim Dimke, Mike Ginter, Patrick Ryan and Judith Barnard.

Staff Present: John Groh, Amy Trimble and Wanda Figueroa

Call to Order:

Chairman Rena Cotsones called the meeting to order.

Governance Process:

- **Minutes:** There was a motion to approve Minutes of December 13, 2006. Motion was seconded and approved.
- **Audit Committee:** Amy presented December 2006 Financials. RACVB received SBA funds in the amount of \$140,000. International Grant funds were also received for the first half of FY07 in the amount of \$221,000. This advance payment of grant funds artificially inflates revenues because related International expenditures have not yet been made to offset the advance. Our current income statement format artificially overstates revenue due to the pass-through nature of grants; therefore, the audit statement and operating statement have been reformatted to better reflect operating revenues.
- **Key Indicators:** Amy noted that sales staff productivity numbers are down due to organizational restructuring and the on-going updates within the Incentive Plan Program. RACVB will begin to track our competitive set and work on a format that will display data in more relevant ways. Hotels with restaurants (full service) and those without will also be tracked.
- **Winteroriginals Promotion Update:** John stated that the RACVB kicked off its annual winter marketing campaign on January 18th. The marketing program has a new look and new features, including weekly podcasts and catchy radio ads. John gave the Board a demonstration of the weekly podcasts and radio ads and logged onto the RACVB website to show our unique and original concepts.
- **CEO Report:**
 - **Organization Update:** David informed the Board that RACVB is fully staffed except for the Sales VP position. Stacy Kiejko was hired as the Communications Specialist and comes to the RACVB with great customer service skills. Stacy will be focusing on E-marketing.

Laura Schade was hired as Customer Service Assistant and will focus on group accounts. Laura will start on Monday, February 5th. Interviews are still in process for the VP of Sales position. David and the Executive Team interviewed some good candidates but will continue their search to make sure the right person is hired.

- **Lobbying Efforts:** City of Rockford has proposed creating a lobbying coalition, the Rockford Global Alliance; RACVB is supporting it pending more details. John Holub is still contracted by RACVB as our lobbyist through the legislative session. The Board had an open discussion about lobbying efforts; thoughts and opinions were shared. **Action:** A report on Government Affairs will be presented to the Board at the next meeting.
- **Regional Brand Project:** David shared a Power Point presentation with the Board on the Results and Recommendations of the Regional Branding Project, which was initiated in 2006. The branding will help define the Rockford Region, encourage cross-community collaboration and refine its marketing position. The branding will allow flexibility to each entity; research indicated a clear preference for the recommended brand identity. **Action:** David and John will meet with Mayor Morrissey and Mayors of Cherry Valley, Loves Park, Rockton and Machesney Park to present the recommendations.
- **2007-2008 Strategic Plan:** David presented the Board with an 18 month strategic plan for the RACVB. He gave an overview of our priority results and how each department is to implement it. The strategic plan provides a comprehensive and innovative road map for future success. Its fulfillment will contribute to the economic well-being of the Rockford Region and the quality of life of its residents. **Action:** Due to lack of time, the board was not able to have an open discussion or Q & A's regarding the CEO's report. Therefore, Rena suggested the presentation be mailed to each board member to review and perhaps have an open discussion at the next meeting.

Other Topics:

- Rena reminded the Board about attending the Rebecca Ryan event, "Attracting and Retaining Talent to the Rockford Area", hosted by RAEDC, Next Rockford and the RACVB. The event will take place on Wednesday, February 21st, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at Giovanni's Restaurant.
- Cyndie invited the Board to attend the Downtown Arts group meeting and hear an update regarding the NAT. The Arts Council and City are putting a

group together to discuss these issues at the Coronado on Wednesday,
February 14th, at 3:30pm.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Scott Sullivan, Board Secretary
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Next Board Meeting:
Wed, February 28, 2007
7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
RACVB – Board Room
102 N. Main Street
Rockford, IL 61101