

*Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau*

# Quarterly Report

**FY17, Q4**  
April – June 2017



**Sports**

**Meetings**

**Bookings**

**News &  
Notes**

**Marketing**

The mission of the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is to drive quality of life and economic growth for our citizens through tourism marketing and destination development.

# RACVB Board of Directors

- David Anderson (Chairman), Anderson Japanese Gardens
- Bill LaFever (Vice Chairman), Bill Doran & Co.
- Tim Meyers (Treasurer/Secretary), WIFR-TV
- Chad Anderson, Anderson Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram
- Marcus Bacon, Radisson Hotel & Conference Center
- Nathan Bryant, Rockford Area Economic Development Council
- Robert Burden, City of Loves Park
- Todd Cagnoni, City of Rockford
- Patrick Curran, Curran's Orchard
- Bryan Davis, SupplyCore
- Patricia Diduch, Village of Rockton
- Einar Forsman, Rockford Chamber of Commerce
- Kevin Frost, City of Rockford
- Jennifer Furst, FurstStaffing
- Amanda Hamaker, Winnebago County
- Ben Holmstrom, William Charles Construction
- Roberta Holzwarth, HolmstromKennedy PC
- Marco Lenis, Vocational Rehabilitation Management
- Ted Rehl, City of South Beloit
- Jay Sandine, Rockford Park District

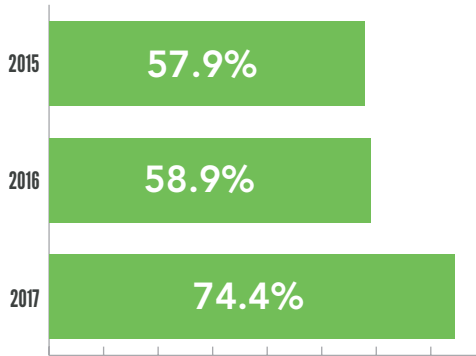
# RACVB Staff

- John Groh, President/CEO
- Josh Albrecht, Director of Marketing & Public Affairs
- Lindsay Arellano, Director of Sales & Service
- Jenny Caiozzo, Destination Development Manager
- Heidi Gee, Office Coordinator/Receptionist
- Jennie Hahn, Group Services Specialist
- Fred Harris, Brochure Distribution Assistant
- Mary Holmes, Group Services Manager
- Janet Jacobs, Marketing Assistant
- Lindsey Kromm, Accounting Assistant
- Andrea Mandala, Marketing & Communications Manager
- Bea Miller, Destination Development Assistant
- Joanne Nold, Director of Finance & Administration
- Kristen Paul, Executive Assistant
- Nick Povalitis, Sports Destination & Sales Manager
- Tana Vettore, Director of Destination Development
- Elizabeth Wood, Creative Services Manager

# Winnebago County Hotel Statistics

(January – June 2017)

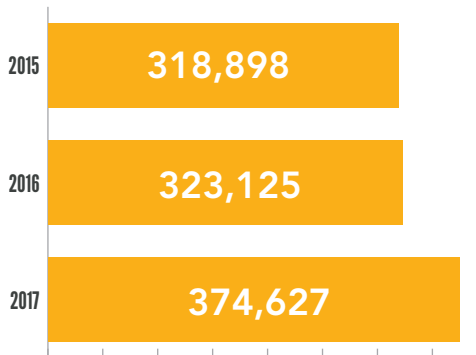
## YTD Hotel Occupancy



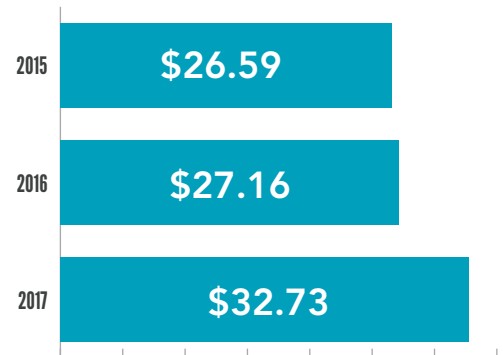
## YTD Average Room Rate



## YTD Hotel Room Demand (rooms sold)



## YTD Revenue (in millions)



# Sister City Reports

**CLUJ-NAPOCA, ROMANIA** — The visit of 18 Romanian dancers in June was a great success! The dancers performed seven times, including a private performance for city officials. The performance at the Peace Plaza was especially notable as they connected with a veteran and were included in an interview.

**LIDKÖPING, SWEDEN** — A group of 10 construction students and two instructors from the De la Gardiegymnasiet's construction program in Lidköping, Sweden, were in Rockford for two weeks in April. The group was giving a helping hand to the renovations of Swedish Historical

Society's Nordic Cultural Center. The opportunity to come to Rockford as part of the Lidköping and Rockford partnership has been a great boost for the vocational programs (construction and nursing) at the De la Gardiegymnasiet.



**BORGHOLM, SWEDEN** — The Midsommar Fest celebration was held June 16-17 and featured a well-known ABBA tribute band as well as Vikings to Volvos car show.

# News & Notes

## Fred VanVleet Summer Camp and Fan Fest

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau and its Brand Ambassador, Toronto Raptors guard Fred VanVleet, teamed up for the first ever **Fred VanVleet Summer Camp and Fan Fest** on June 23-25 at the UW Health Sports Factory.

The basketball camp, designed for boys and girls in kindergarten through high school, had **220 kids** participate. Attendees learned skills, drills and competed in contests during the camp. In addition, the weekend kicked-off with the first ever FVV Fan Fest featuring a night of activities for the whole family,

including YMCA Bouncy Houses, Arachnid Dart Boards, Patriots Gateway Boxing, Rockford Park District programs and the popular Slam Dunk and Three Point Contests. Attendance for the weekend was **more than 2,700 people**.

"Giving back to the community is important to me. I hope through the FVV Summer Camp that we can impart some of the wisdom I have gained to the youth in the Rockford region," said VanVleet. "I'm looking forward to having a lot of fun at this event and sharing some great moments with the community."



Sport Stories, a Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau production as part of the organization's Bring Your Game 2 Rockford (BYG2RKFD) campaign, featured keynote speaker **Corey Anderson**, Rockton native and Ultimate Fighting Championship #6 Light Heavyweight in the World. In addition, a guest panel featuring **Fred VanVleet** (Toronto Raptors and RACVB Sports Tourism Ambassador), **Angel Martinez** (Team USA Boxing and Gold Gloves National Champion) and **Misty Opat** (4-time NJCAA Women's Basketball Champion Head Coach at Rock Valley College) highlighted an evening focused on advancing the positive impact of sports tourism in the Rockford region.



More than 100 guests turned out to hear from our sports stars as they shared stories about growing up in Rockford, what it takes to achieve success, and what they hope to accomplish in the future. For those not able to attend, all four local television news channels broadcasted live from the event to help capture the stories.

"Sport Stories is really about sports tourism as a platform to give back. There are so many people from the community who are making an impact through sports and we want to help move that narrative forward. Corey Anderson is a proud Rockton native and national superstar in the world of mixed martial arts, and we're honored to have him back home as our keynote speaker," said Nick Povalitis, Sports Destination and Sales Manager. "And with our championship guest panel, we're going to look at what success means locally and beyond through the eyes of some of our region's best ambassadors."

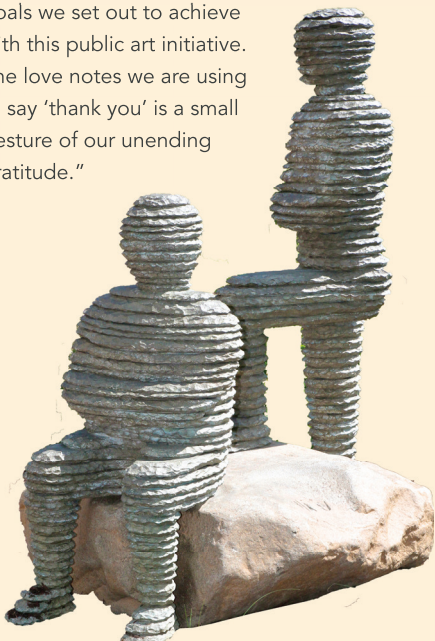
# News & Notes

## Downtown Sculptures Say Goodbye

The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau invited the public to write **love notes** as a farewell and thank you to the world renowned artists, **Boaz Vaadia** and **Hans Van de Bovenkamp**, for their generous loan of sculptures to our community from June 2015 – May 2017. Note-writing stations were set up at select locations in downtown Rockford during the Rockford Area Arts Council's Spring ArtScene.

Originally scheduled to be on display from June 2015 – May 2016, the RACVB worked with the artists to extend the stay because of the overwhelming response from the community.

"It has been an amazing two years getting to know the artists, their stories and displaying their works of art throughout downtown Rockford. Then, to witness the joy they have brought to our residents and visitors is truly incredible, said Tana Vettore, RACVB director of destination development. "The sculptures became part of the fabric of our downtown, enhanced our appreciation for public art and created a sense of community which were goals we set out to achieve with this public art initiative. The love notes we are using to say 'thank you' is a small gesture of our unending gratitude."



## Rockford Region Sites & Attractions See Increase in 2016 Attendance Numbers

**More than 7.6 million guests experienced the Rockford region**

Rockford area sites and attractions saw an upswing in overall guest attendance in 2016. An additional 76,930 guests experienced the region's great museums, sports facilities and entertainment venues for a total of **6,789,077** (up from 6,712,147 in 2015). When combined with event attendance numbers, the region totaled **7,646,375 guests**.

Increases at **Discovery Center Museum** (195,302 visitors), **Nicholas Conservatory & Gardens** (67,561 visitors) and **Anderson Japanese Gardens** (60,922 visitors) are all key indicators of the rise of Rockford as a destination for travelers.



While overall sites and attractions numbers increased, overall event attendance had a slight reduction of 92,760 guests compared to the prior year with the biggest loss being from the discontinuing of Rockford AirFest which alone accounted for 150,000 guests in 2015. Events such as the **Rock River Anything that Floats Race** (20,000 guests), **Rockford Town Fair** (22,000 guests) and **Tough Mudder** (15,000 guests) have helped to sustain the overall events numbers year over year.



# Marketing

## Promoting Rockford to Rockford

RACVB's Marketing & Communications Manager presented on Social Media effectiveness as part of the **Northern Illinois Center for Nonprofit Excellence (NICNE) accreditation course**. Topics focused on content strategies, scheduling and how to turn posts into direct return on investment so nonprofits of all sizes can create their own marketing plans for long-term success.

Winnebago Buy Local, a coalition of local grassroots businesses, organizations and citizens in Rockford, hosted a networking event about **"How to get your press to the local media"** for local area businesses. RACVB's Marketing & Communications Manager participated as a panelist along with local broadcast, radio and print publication media partners. It was a way to engage our local businesses on the best ways to share their content and a great way to connect these partners with the local media helping to spread their messaging.

### Summer Love

There are lots of fun events, activities and things to do in the Rockford region all year long – especially during the summer months – so the RACVB team put together a list of recommended activities, events and places to visit as part of the **Summer Love** calendar of events.

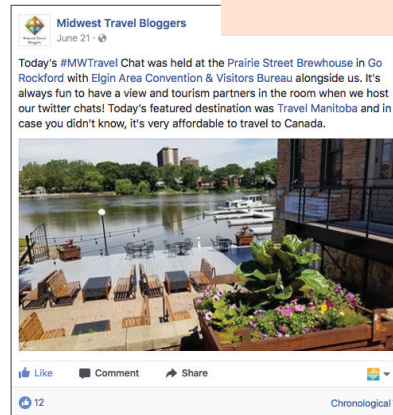
This quarterly themed list was featured on the gorockford.com website, social media sites, blog posts, eblasts and in advertisements locally and regionally.



## New Media Partnerships

In May, RACVB collaborated with guest blogger and local foodie expert, Rachel Cordano from **Rockford Cravings**. Every other week, Rockford Cravings submits a blog about her food and drink adventures throughout the Rockford region. This blog is also shared through our RACVB social media pages.

In June, the RACVB partnered with the Elgin tourism bureau to jointly host the **Midwest Travel Bloggers** on their roadtrip through the Midwest. These two bloggers continuously reach over 9k active users and have over 11k pageviews combined on Facebook. While on their trip in the Rockford region they hosted a TweetReach focused on topics related to Midwest Travel. This generated over **5 million impressions**, reached **264,902 accounts** and 663 overall tweets from 65 contributing influencers.



## Website Statistics

### Website Traffic Sources



### Most Searched Terms

- Things To Do
- Rock Cut State Park
- Magic Waters

### Most Searched Events

- APR** Live Music at Big Al's Bar
- MAY** Young at Heart Festival
- JUNE** Bruce Munro: LIGHT

### Most Searched Attractions/Restaurants

- APR** Anderson Japanese Gardens
- MAY** Discovery Center Museum
- JUNE** Sinnissippi Gardens

# Marketing

## Advertising & Promotions

All print ads (magazine and newspaper) generated **5,138,100 total circulation, impressions and readership**. Eighteen news releases were sent out to our local media partners that helped generate content shared through regular weekly radio spots with Mid-west Family Broadcasting (WXRX, The Bull), radio spots with Townsquare Media (WROK), live mentions with local TV (WIFR, WREX, WQRF, WTVO) and through print publications Rockford Register Star and The Rock River Times. Through our Meltwater media software we tracked **2,085 media mentions** through broadcast, print, online and social media sources. Our messaging reached an estimated **195,419,030 potential viewers** across all major platforms with approximately **\$1.8 million in average ad value**. The top online sources were AssociatedPress.com, RRStar.com, 23 WIFR, WREX.com and MyStateline.com. The top broadcast sources were WTVO (ABC), WREX (NBC), WQRF (Fox), WZZM-GR (ABC) and WTAE-PIT (ABC).

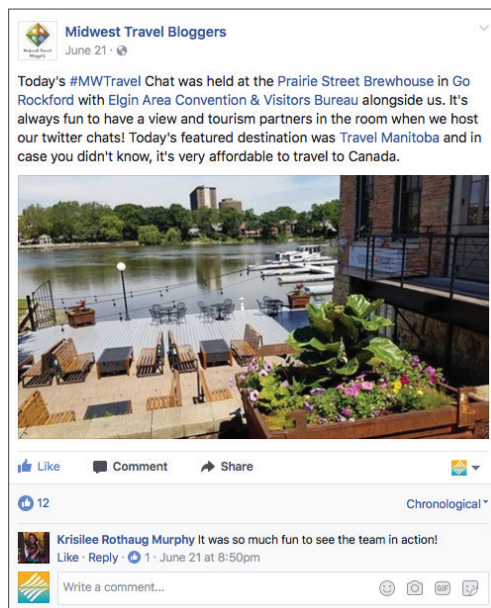
Ads were placed with the following organizations and publications this quarter: The Enjoy Illinois Fall/Winter edition, Rockford Register Star's special issue, American Road's Summer issue, Travel Midwest, Midwest Living, Destinations International (formerly DMAI), Food Traveler and a digital ad on rrstar.com. A retargeting ad was also created for UFC Fight Week and featured Corey Anderson, MMA fighter and Rockton native.

The RACVB worked with three publications to receive the following

earned media mentions this quarter: Chicago Tribune (Rockford Area Arts Council's ArtScene), Emerging Horizons (Laurent House) and Midwest Sports Planner full page Rockford write-up.



Chicago Tribune article mentions Rockford Spring ArtScene



Midwest Travel Bloggers' Facebook post

## Social Media



**Facebook**  
23,768 followers  
(287 increase)



**Instagram**  
7,923 followers  
(289 increase)



**YouTube**  
355,281 video views  
(29,891 increase)



**Twitter**  
6,184 followers  
(95 increase)

## Earned Media

(Jan - March, 2017)

RACVB uses **Meltwater**, a public relations management software, to track and report the effectiveness of media mentions and their ad value through various outlets; e.g., television, online, print, radio and social media.



**195,419,030**

Total impressions

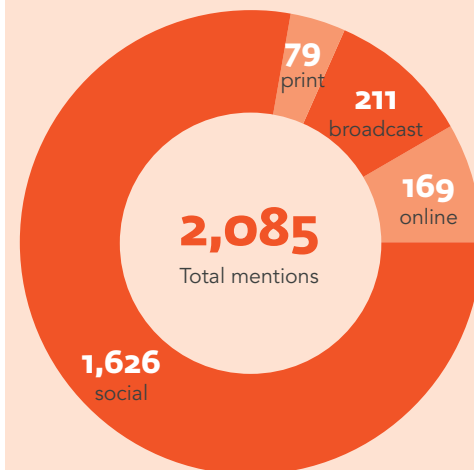


**\$1,800,000**

Average ad value

## Share of Voice

Total mentions by outlet type



# Sports Sales

## Sports Sales Highlights

### April Highlights

GoRockford Sports hit the ground running in April, as the team churned out a trio of bid proposals that included the 2018-22 Illinois High School Association (IHSA) Boys and Girls Lacrosse State Finals, the 2019 U-18 Baseball World Cup USA Baseball Candidate City, and the 2017 American Cornhole Organization (ACO) Regional. RACVB also welcomed Premier SuperCopa representatives back to the region April 6 for a site visit in advance of their June event, followed by GoRockford's trip the next day to Dubuque, IA, for the **2017 Loras College Sports Business Summit**.

On April 14, RACVB hit the road again with a sales trip to Chicago for the **2017 Windy City Qualifier at McCormick Place**,

where the team met with USA Volleyball headquarter and USAV Great Lakes Region staff. Some of the team's highlight bookings in April impacted multiple counties, including the 2017 AAU Track Series (including the Central District Championships, Regional Championships and the Northern National Invitational that were scheduled at Belvidere North High School) and the 2017 Midwest Rugby U-24 All Star Tournament at the Rockton Athletic Fields in Rockton, IL.

### May Highlights

Site visits bookended the month of May, beginning on the first day of the month when Sports Planning Guide (Premier Travel Media) conducted a venues tour throughout town that yielded earned media weeks later. RACVB ventured to the Quad Cities with local hotel partner Rock Hospitality for the **2017 Sports Illinois Huddle**, a trade show May 8-9 that was co-produced by convention and visitors bureaus throughout the state and included more than 15 sports event owners. GoRockford

wrapped up a busy month Memorial Day weekend when it helped launch a multi-sport festival at the UW Health Sports Factory (UWHSF) by partnering with long-standing customer **America's Team Table Tennis Championships** and new-to-market **American Cornhole Organization**. After RACVB met with the ACO in Sacramento in March 2017 at NASC Symposium, GoRockford booked the 2017 ACO Rockford Tournament at the UWHSF to run concurrently with the 2017 America's Team Championships, an Edgeball Table Tennis production. While in town, ACO reps also conducted site visits to multiple venues across the region for future tournament bids.

### June Highlights

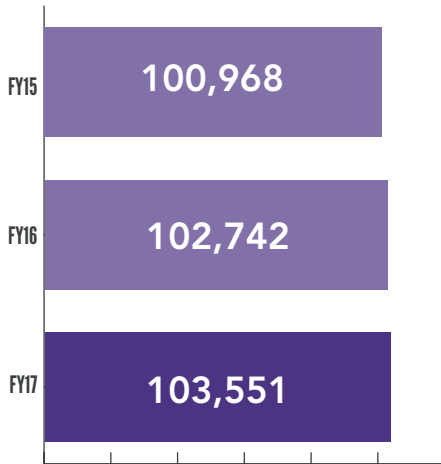
On June 1, site visits continued when JP Sports made another trip to the UW Health Sports Factory and Mercyhealth Sportscore Two's new indoor facility. Tough Mudder representatives made the trek to Rockford on June 6 to conduct some prep work in advance of the 2017 event, while Arizona- and Oregon-based State Basketball Championships (June 19) and our partners from Enjoy Illinois/Sports Illinois (June 22-23) also toured the Forest City's sports venues. GoRockford made its second trip in four months to

Bloomington, IL, to visit with IHSA officials in the middle of the month, right in the midst of a record-breaking soccer tournament servicing run for the region. In partnership with the Rockford Park District, the RACVB welcomed **Premier SuperCopa 2017** from June 8-11, which was supplanted only two weeks later by **Elite Clubs National League (ECNL) National Playoffs** as the largest soccer tournament that the community has ever hosted. Among June's featured bookings, the **2017 USSSA National Fastpitch Championships C 12U-14U** were solidified for Mercyhealth Sportscore One to help put a stamp on FY17.

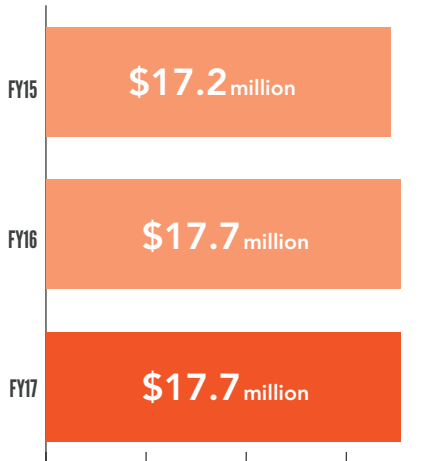


# Meetings, Servicing & Bookings

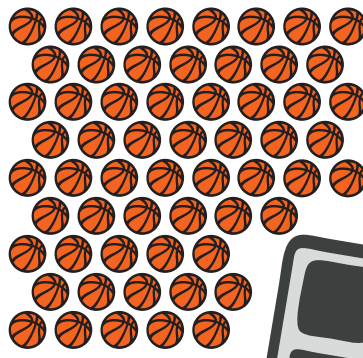
## Future Hotel Room Nights Booked



## Estimated Economic Impact

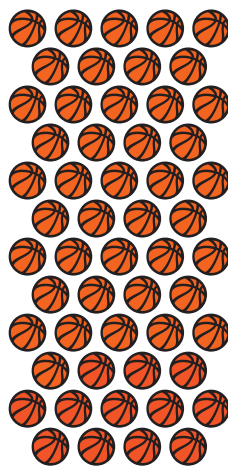


## Fred VanVleet Summer Camp by the Numbers



**220**

kids participated in the FVV camp



**47** kids sponsored by fans and businesses



**1**

Golden Gloves Boxing Champion (Angel Martinez) giving boxing lessons

**180**

FVV t-shirts printed by Rockford Art Deli during the Fan Fest

**2,700**

people came to the UW Health Sports Factory for the FVV Summer Camp & Fan Fest

**156**

stories about the FVV Summer Camp & Fan Fest (with a potential reach of 69 million views!)



3-point shots in 1 minute made by Fred

**FRED**

13

**TIME**

0:60

**MAX POINTS**

15



## Booking Highlights for the Region

### Rock River Off-Season Competition (R2OC)

#### 2017 Rock River Off-Season Competition

July 29, 2017  
300 room nights  
\$54,000 EEI

### Illinois Youth Soccer Association (IYSA)

#### State Cup and Presidents Cup

November 3 - 5, 2017  
1,000 room nights  
\$191,520 EEI

### Illinois Kids Wrestling Federation

#### IKWF 2018 Tournament

March 9 - 11, 2018  
2,000 room nights  
\$513,000 EEI

### 360 Sports and Events

#### 2018 AAU Central District Gymnastics Championships

April 6 - 8, 2018  
575 room nights  
\$103,500 EEI

**Total Q4 Booked Highlights EEI = \$862,020**



# **MEETING MINUTES**

**Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau**

**February 22, 2017**

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

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**Board Present:** Bobbie Holzwarth, John Groh, David Anderson, Marco Lenis, Darrell Snorek, Marcus Bacon, Todd Cagnoni, Tim Dimke, Patrick Curran, Kevin Frost, Bill LaFever, Amanda Hamaker, Bob Burden, Bryan Davis, Nathan Bryant,

**Board Absent:** Ben Holmstrom, Patrick Hoey, Gary Strakeljahn, Tim Myers, Mayor Ted Rehl, Einar Forsman,

**Staff Present:** Tana Vettore, Lindsay Arellano, Joanne Nold, Kristen Paul

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:35 a.m. by Bobbie Holzwarth.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

It was moved and seconded to approve the January 25, 2017 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

**Internal Monitoring Reports:**

- It was moved by Darrell Snorek and seconded by Marcus Bacon to accept Monitoring Report 2.2. Motion carried.

**Governance Process:**

Bobbie Holzwarth issued a reminder that each board member should fill out their 2017 Annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure form and return them to Kristen Paul.

Bobbie Holzwarth noted the appointment of the 2017-2018 Audit Committee:

- Gary Strakeljahn, Chair
- Marco Lenis
- Patrick Curran
- Mark Stefanic
- Steve Addante

**CEO Report:**

- Financial picture is overall looking up. Although, as anticipated, the operating reserve levels remain out of compliance, the gap is closing. Half of the International Grant(\$100,000) was received from the Illinois Office of Tourism in January. December hotel tax receipts were up \$8,000 compared to budget and January projects an increase of 37%. Also, January expenses were about half of what December's expenses were.

- John Groh, Bobbie Holzwarth and David Anderson have been meeting with each of the Rockford mayoral candidates to communicate the value of the travel industry.
- Meeting with Congressman Adam Kinzinger is scheduled at Anderson Japanese Gardens on February 23 to discuss federal policy issues.

**Discussions:**

- Discussion occurred regarding the Amerock Hotel proposal.
- Discussion occurred regarding RRDP indoor market proposal.

**The next meeting is Friday, April 28, 2017, 8 a.m. (during board retreat)**

The board adjourned at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*William D LaFever*

Bill LaFever, Board Secretary

KP

**Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau**

**April 28, 2017**

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

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**Board Present:** Bobbie Holzwarth, John Groh, David Anderson, Marco Lenis, Darrell Snorek, Marcus Bacon, Todd Cagnoni, Patrick Curran, Kevin Frost, Bill LaFever, Bryan Davis, Nathan Bryant, Ben Holmstrom, Tim Myers, Mayor Ted Rehl, Einar Forsman

**Board Absent:** Patrick Hoey, Gary Strakeljahn, Amanda Hamaker, Tim Dimke, Bob Burden

**Guests Present:** Bill Geist, Terri White, Ray Hoyt, Julie Jensen, Linda John, Jennifer Furst, Al Castrogiovanni, Chad Anderson, Geoff Lacher, Ryan Robinson, Jay Sandine

**Staff Present:** Joanne Nold, Kristen Paul

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Bobbie Holzwarth.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

It was moved and seconded to approve the February 22, 2017 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

**Internal Monitoring Reports:**

It was moved and seconded to accept Monitoring Reports 1.2, 2.3 and 2.4. Motion carried.

**Governance Process:**

It was moved and seconded to approve the recommendation of the Board Development Committee to elect as one slate proposed Officers and returning board members as follows. Motion carried.

The following individuals are approved to serve as an officer, each serving a one-year term, beginning at the conclusion of the May 2017 meeting and concluding May 2018.

- Chair: David Anderson
- Vice Chair: Bill LaFever
- Treasurer: Gary Strakeljahn
- Secretary: Tim Myers

The following individuals are approved to serve an additional (2<sup>nd</sup>) three-year term, beginning at the May 2017 meeting and concluding May 2020.

- Tim Myers

The following individuals are approved to serve a three-year term, beginning at the May 2017 meeting and concluding in May 2020.

- Chad Anderson, General Manager, Anderson Automotive
- Jennifer Furst, President, Furst Staffing is recommended to serve as one of the City's three voting representatives on our board.

It was moved and seconded to approve the recommendation of the Board Development Committee to elect as one slate proposed RACVB Foundation board members as follows. Motion carried.

The following individuals are approved to serve a two-year term, beginning at the May 2017 meeting and concluding in May 2019 for the RACVB Charitable Foundation Board.

- Bill LaFever
- Darrell Snorek
- Marco Lenis
- Al Castrogiovanni, owner/chef, Giovanni's/Alchemy/Graystone Grill

Patrick Curran was thanked for his service on the board.

It was moved and seconded to approve the ratification of the 4 year Forrest City Beautiful contract. Motion carried with unanimous approval.

**The next meeting is Friday, May 24, 2017, 8:30 a.m.**

The board adjourned at 8:15 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Bill LaFever, Board Secretary

KP

**Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau**

**May 24, 2017**

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

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**Board Present:** Bobbie Holzwarth, John Groh, David Anderson, Marco Lenis, Darrell Snorek, Marcus Bacon, Todd Cagnoni, Patrick Curran, Kevin Frost, Bryan Davis, Nathan Bryant, Tim Myers, Patrick Hoey, Amanda Hamaker, Tim Dimke, Bob Burden, Chad Anderson, Jennifer Furst

**Board Absent:** Gary Strakeljahn, Bill LaFever, Ben Holmstrom, Mayor Ted Rehl, Einar Forsman

**Staff Present:** Joanne Nold, Josh Albrecht, Kristen Paul

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:35 a.m. by Bobbie Holzwarth.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

It was moved and seconded to approve the April 28, 2017 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

**Internal Monitoring Reports:**

It was moved and seconded to accept Monitoring Reports 2.1 and 2.9. Motion carried.

It was noted during discussion of 2.1 that John Groh will serve as board chair of the Illinois Council of Convention & Visitor Bureaus for 2017/2018.

**Governance Process:**

Discussion occurred regarding the Big Ideas Roundtable and Board Retreat. Comments from board members included:

- The board needs to determine RACVB/Rockford's next Big Idea and how to make it happen.
- Adding private funding to RACVB is key to moving forward with initiatives and tasks.
- RACVB needs to be at the heart of large projects to ensure they are done well and with creativity.
- The downtown core and riverfront remain vital for the region and should continue to be a focus of Rockford & RACVB.
- Presentations from Tulsa and Grand Rapids representatives were standouts in their ability to personalize their mission to what their residents care most about.
- The job of the board is to determine what is next and how do we get there. The time is now.
- Potentially Davis Park is the next "big thing". It will take collaboration, private funding and a lot of effort to make it happen.
- Please continue the dialog and share your ideas. Share what the community is saying.

It was moved and seconded to accept the Mayoral re-appointment of Todd Cagnoni to the board and was confirmed unanimously. He will serve an additional (2<sup>nd</sup>) three-year term, beginning at the May 2017 meeting and concluding May 2020.

Discussion occurred regarding the creation of a task force to determine the support level RACVB should give for community events and development.

- It has become clear that parameters are needed to determine support levels
- The Madison CVB model includes a mix of board, city and community members who meet bimonthly to make suggestions to the board regarding current and upcoming issues.
- Any interest in being part of this taskforce should be shared with John, David or Bobbie.

A board annual work plan is being developed. It will include a schedule of normal governance materials, CEO reviews and other aspects/projects of the board. The goal is to remain on track with mission while freeing up time to focus on the bigger issues.

**CEO Report:**

- Opening celebration for MercyHealth Sportcore Two's Indoor Expansion is June 7. The board is encouraged to attend. The celebration marks the end of an eight year "Reclaiming First" journey.
- Fred VanVleet and RACVB will host a summer basketball camp and fan night. He is continuing to be an advocate for Rockford. A press conference announcing the details is scheduled for 5/24.
- The FY18 State budget is still undetermined. ICCVB is working to ensure that tourism is funded.
- Paint the Town Green annual fundraiser is scheduled for June 16, 2017. The board is strongly encouraged to purchase tickets or sponsor the event. Proceeds go to Forrest City Beautiful.
- Special thanks were given for the service of outgoing board members and officers.
  - Bobbie Holzwarth will remain on the board, however, her term as board chair has ended.
  - Patrick Curran is stepping down after many years of service. He received a standing ovation for his dedication to RACVB.
  - Patrick Hoey did not seek reelection from the Village of Rockton, and thus there will be a new liaison from Rockton.
  - Tim Dimke is retiring from the Rockford Park District effective June 23. He was thanked for his 11 years of service on the board.
  - Darrell Snorek has served six years on the board. He will continue serving on the Foundation board.

**The next meeting is Wednesday, June 28, 7:30 a.m.**

The board adjourned at 8:52 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Bill LaFever, Board Secretary

KP

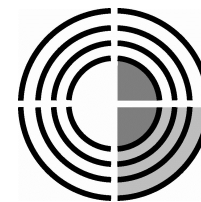


# **MONITORING REPORTS**





**Governing Policy of the  
RACVB Board of Directors**



**Ends Policy Policy 1.2 Enhance Tourism Product**

**Management Limitations**

To: RACVB Board of Directors  
From: John Groh, President/CEO  
RE: Internal Monitoring Report – Ends Policies  
Monitoring on Policy 1.2 – Enhance Tourism Product

I hereby present my monitoring report on your Executive Limitations Policy 1.2, “Enhance Tourism Product,” in accordance with the monitoring schedule set forth in Board policy. I certify that the information contained in this report is true. This report covers the twelve-month period between April 23, 2016 and April 14, 2017.

Signed,

John Groh  
President/CEO

April 15, 2017

**POLICY 1.2 – ENHANCE TOURISM PRODUCT**

**BROADEST POLICY PROVISION:** *“The Rockford Region offers unique and marketable experiences and venues that meet or exceed visitor expectations and enhance quality of life for citizens.”*

1. There is a hospitality culture among tourism workers and residents
2. There are high-quality meeting venues and sports facilities
3. There are a variety of special events and festivals (either owned or supported by RACVB) that encourage repeat and ongoing visitation to the destination
4. There is a suitable range of visitor accommodations for business, leisure and group travelers
5. The Rockford Region offers a safe and beautiful environment
  - Landscaping/beautification of key public spaces
  - Public art enhances civic spaces
6. The Rockford Region’s transportation infrastructure meets tourism needs

**CEO INTERPRETATION:** I interpret successful achievement to be reflected in continually improved quality and diversity of experiences available to visitors and citizens in the Rockford Region.

Involvement in new product development can span a spectrum from providing input during planning phases to investment in research or design and advocacy. The level of RACVB participation will vary from project to project based on need and available resources. Ultimately, RACVB’s efforts should result in a stronger hospitality culture and service levels, high-quality facilities, a suitable range of accommodations and a safe and beautiful environment with adequate transportation infrastructure.

Further, I interpret “unique and marketable” to mean that our product is easily and positively differentiated from other products offered by competitors; as such any product development efforts should be geared toward developing unique (“only-available-in-Rockford Region”) products and experiences that will further enhance and add credibility to our “Real. Original.” brand positioning.

I interpret “meeting or exceeding visitor expectations” to mean our customers consistently provide positive feedback on their experiences while in our destination. I interpret “enhance quality of life for citizens” to mean that citizens of Rockford and Winnebago County are the primary beneficiaries of new products and experiences. Our mindset will be that what is compelling/appealing to residents will have a high likelihood of attracting visitors.

I believe the six subsequent provisions to this policy quite fully interpret what successful achievement would look like. My interpretations and reporting on each appear below.

## CEO REPORT

### 1. There is a hospitality culture among tourism workers and residents.

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (no change)** I interpret “hospitality culture” to mean that our community is welcoming to new visitors, tourism employees provide good or excellent customer service and our hotels, attractions, public gathering places and facilities are clean and inviting.

**CEO REPORT:** RACVB routinely surveys key contacts/account managers for group sales (i.e. meeting planners, tournament organizers), and results show Rockford and RACVB continue to meet, and in most cases exceed, customer expectations. Last year there were 23 total surveys returned so additional emphasis was placed on converting survey response. This year a total of **270 completed surveys by tournament directors, meeting planners and attendees** were collected.

The surveys use a rating scale as follows:

5: Greatly exceeded expectations, 4: Exceeded expectations, 3: Met expectations, 2: Did not meet expectations, 1: Did not meet expectations at all/substandard conditions

Current Reporting Period				Projected Success Metrics for Next 12 Months		
Achievement	Projected Success Factor	2016/17 Actual	Achieved ?	Achievement	2017/18 Projected Success Factor	Rationale
<b>Overall hotel experience</b>	at least 3.5 or better (4 in 2016)	<b>4.15</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>Overall hotel experience</b>	3.5 or better	3.0 = meets expectations, thus anything above indicates a
<b>Overall venue experience</b>	maintain 4.0 or better (5 in 2016)	<b>4</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>Overall venue experience</b>	4.0 or better	

						positive experience
<b>Outlook of Region</b>	at least 4.0 or better (4.2 in 2016)	<b>4.1</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>Outlook of Region</b>	4.0 or better	
<b>Satisfaction with RACVB</b>	maintain rate of 4.0 or better (5 in 2016)	<b>5</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>Satisfaction with RACVB</b>	4.0 or better	

Customer experiences with hotels, the region and RACVB satisfaction were steady year over year, especially with Overall Venue Experience, and Satisfaction with the RACVB scoring 5 out of 5 for the second year in a row. A slight concern is a small dip in Overall Venue Experience, which went from a 5 to a 4 rating. This number was directly affected by the USA Ultimate Championship surveys return as the respondents graded the facilities lower than normal, commenting that the facility was “average.” Their reasons for the “average” grade included:

\*Accessibility is poor – too far from airport. \*Poor location for the time of year that the event was held – bad weather. \*Rockford is not a place for Nationals – very unexciting compared to other cities the event has been held. \*Not enough restrooms and water stations. \*Power lines and construction.

Despite the reviews from this one tournament, overall score was still a 4 out of 5, which meets the projected goal and exceeds the 3.0 that is the baseline for meeting expectations.

### **Trip Advisor**

RACVB also regularly monitors online consumer feedback sites such as TripAdvisor. Monitoring such sites allows consumers to rate and provide feedback.

- The following are the top performers according to Trip Advisor:
  - 29 Rockford Region hotels with 5,447 combined reviews.
    - Top 5 hotels are: Extended Stay America, Hilton Garden Inn, Hampton Inn, Radisson Hotel & Conference Center and Fairfield Inn & Suites.
  - 61 Rockford Region attractions with 1,845 combined reviews.
    - Top 5 attractions: Anderson Japanese Gardens, Discover Center Museum, Nicholas Conservatory, Coronado Performing Arts Center and Midway Village Museum
  - 350 Rockford Region restaurants with 8,520 combined reviews.
    - Top 5 restaurants ranked: Lino’s, Stockholm Inn, Tavern on Clark, Thunder Bay Grille and GreenFire Restaurant Bar & Bakery.

***I am reporting achievement on this sub-end.***

## **2. There are high-quality meeting venues and sports facilities**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (no change)** I interpret it to be the board’s priority to see that the region offers facilities and venues that are of a high quality, but this does not require that ALL facilities meet this standard, as such a standard would likely be unattainable and not within our control. Further, “high-quality” means that meeting venues and sports facilities are respected within the industry and continue to receive

recognition for their excellent standards. Importantly, we will know that this standard is met when customers consistently choose our venues for their events.

**The following demonstrates achievement since the last report:**

- UW Health Sports Factory, a 100,000 square foot multi-sport indoor facility, opened on June 1, 2016.
- Mercy Rockford Sportscore 2 outdoor synthetic turf fields came online in 2016 and successfully hosted events throughout the year. Construction on the indoor Mega Sports Center at the facility began in 2016 and is expected to host its grand opening in June 2017.
- The Standard, a small event space that can accommodate groups up to 260 recently opened in downtown. The venue is unique in that it has a rooftop space overlooking the City Market Pavilion/riverfront. Additionally, the attached Taco Betty's recently opened as well.
- The Rockford City Council approved an agreement with the Rock River Development Partnership for an indoor Rockford City Market in downtown Rockford. While the facility is designed primarily as an extension of the outdoor city market and as an avenue for entrepreneurs, the space could be of interest to small meetings planners and sports tournament guests.
- Gorman & Co continues to advance the development of its planned Embassy Suites and conference center project. A recently approved development agreement with the City of Rockford allows the developer to move on finalizing bank financing for the project. Construction could begin yet in 2017.

The marketplace continues to have a point of weakness particularly in the meetings space market due to deterioration of hotel properties as well as a lack of large conference/convention facilities. The closing of The Clock Tower Resort & Conference Center is a loss to our available hotel rooms and meeting space. The current owners have put the property on the market and appear to have strong interest from a coalition that includes local parties. In addition, Cliffbreakers continues to work on revitalizing its property and is in the final steps of securing financing for renovations. A point to highlight is with the new Mercyhealth Hospital complex under construction, an additional hotel or two is projected for the area around Sportscore 2, although nothing formal has been announced. In addition, the city of Winnebago continues to explore hotel options just off of U.S. 20.

***I am reporting achievement.***

**3. There are a variety of special events and festivals (either owned or supported by RACVB) that encourage repeat and ongoing visitation to the destination**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (no change)** I interpret it to be the board's position that special events and festivals have a key role in defining our region's image and play an important part in attracting visitors to the region, and in providing a high quality of life for citizens. To that end, it is the board's priority that RACVB work collaboratively with other entities in supporting new or existing destination defining events/festivals or in creating and/or owning/operating them.

In determining how RACVB stewards its resources, key considerations include: will the event 1) help foster an image of the community that is consistent with our brand promise, 2) take place at a time that doesn't unnecessarily compete with existing events and when the market has excess capacity (e.g. low hotel occupancy) and 3) create a new or significantly different experience not currently represented in the marketplace?

**The following demonstrates achievement since the last report:**

### **Stroll on State Presented by Illinois Bank & Trust**

RACVB's fourth annual Stroll on State, held on November 26, 2016, had another successful year as a record 75,000 people attended the event. In its fourth year, the event continues to enhance perceptions of downtown and Rockford, expose new consumers to retail and restaurant options, activate downtown during a slower season of activity and move downtown forward economically. Highlights below demonstrate achievement and are taken from a post event survey conducted to gain feedback from festivalgoers:

### **What downtown businesses say about Stroll:**

- "Magic was in the air as the Christmas spirit spread all over Downtown Rockford. Stroll was a huge success, leaving Rockfordians excited to enjoy all of the other awesome shops our city has to offer," said Jennifer Lancaster, owner of Bath and Body Fusion. "This event is the perfect advertisement for small local businesses downtown, giving us new customers throughout the entire year that wouldn't have known about us if it wasn't for Stroll on State."
- "It's incredible to see the crowds of people supporting local businesses during Stroll on State each year. We've participated since year one and have learned how to make the shopping experience that much greater at our bakery," said Pauline Happach, owner of Bella Luna Bakery. "With a more stream-lined approach our sales were up 60% during the event this year. It's amazing to get to do what you love and see the crowds of people really embrace it too."

In a post-event survey, Stroll on State and downtown Rockford have collectively received favorable feedback. An astounding **98 percent** of people said they had a **positive experience** at the event.

When asked what they **liked most about Stroll** some respondents said:

- "I love that it gets so many people downtown. Downtown Rockford is great and getting even better."
- "It was well organized and there were plenty of fun things to do for all ages."
- "Spending time with my family and feeling strongly connected to my community."
- "A great event for families and to showcase the downtown."

### **A few other key takeaways from the survey include:**

- 68 percent of shoppers **spent more than \$25** (an 8 percent increase over last year.)
- 77 percent of people said that Stroll on State **positively changed their perception** of downtown Rockford, specifically noting that downtown Rockford feels **cleaner and safer than expected**.
- 90 percent said they are more likely to come back downtown after experiencing Stroll on State.
- **74 percent** of people that said they experienced Stroll for more than 2 hours.

### **Shop on State**

Held on Dec. 8, this holiday experience featured great local shopping, delicious food, carolers and a visit from Santa at City Hall. The RACVB, the River District Association and local area businesses partnered to create this fun evening where residents and visitors were invited to explore the unique local establishments in downtown Rockford. More than 14 local stores participated by offering specials and free treats throughout the evening. Several hundred consumers/guests attended and nearly 100 guests participated in the giveaway contest held throughout the night.

### **12 Bars of Christmas Pub Crawl**

The 2nd Annual 12 Bars of Christmas Pub Crawl happened on December 17 and included a kick-off party at BMO Harris Bank Center. Each of the participating locations offered a \$5 Holiday Drink and complimentary, non-alcoholic hot cocoa and/or coffee. Entertainment included holiday music, unique giveaways and food specials. In its second year, 12 Bars attracted 175 guests.

### **Rockford River Lights**

The Rockford River Lights light show experience entered its second year. Residents and visitors were invited to walk along the Esplanade on the west bank of the river and the Millennium Fountain path on the east side, between the State and Jefferson Street bridges. Additional hands-on features were added this year, along with additional walkway lighting on the east river bank. Shows were executed on weekends from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day.

### **Fred VanVleet All-Star Party**

In conjunction with our award-winning Bring Your Game 2 Rockford sports brand launch, the RACVB hosted an all-star game watch party with our sports tourism ambassador Fred VanVleet. About 150 guests came to the party at the District Bar & Grill. A donation of \$550 was made to local youth basketball.

### **Rockford City Market**

RACVB continued its partnership with RRDP as the main marketing organization for Rockford City Market. Each week our staff produced vendor view videos, created eblasts and worked with city market staff to produce promotions and flyers to help make the market a success.

### **Community Sponsorships**

In addition to RACVB produced events, we sponsor many events and initiatives throughout the community including: Midtown Ethnic Parade and Festival, Picnic en Plein Air, St. Patrick's Day Parade, Old Settler's Days, Rock River Trail, Rock River Anything that Floats Race, Young at Heart Festival, Fourth of July Fireworks, Rockford Ice Hogs, and numerous community dinners and fundraisers.

*I am reporting achievement.*

## **4. There is a suitable range of visitor accommodations for business, leisure and group travelers.**

I interpret "suitable range" to mean that Rockford has accommodations for both individuals and large groups, including high quality and budget-minded facilities with full and limited service.

**The following demonstrates achievement:**

Visitors to the Rockford Region can choose from a variety of accommodations, including hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts and campgrounds. There are high-quality facilities with full service amenities and more budget-minded, limited service accommodations. RACVB partners with JackRabbit on the new [www.gorockford.com](http://www.gorockford.com) website to provide a convenient booking portal to find current deals and information on local hotels. As noted above, there are gaps in our hotel project when considering growth opportunities. However, currently I view our range of options as suitable to current customers.

*I am reporting achievement.*

## 5. The Rockford Region offers a safe and beautiful environment

- Landscaping/beautification of key public spaces
- Public art enhances civic spaces

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (no change)** I interpret “a safe and beautiful environment” to mean visitors and residents should feel secure and free from danger and that their surroundings are visually pleasing and free of trash/litter, neglect and blight.

I interpret that the inclusion of provisions specific to landscaping and public art indicates the board places a high and strategic value on RACVB developing programs and partnerships that result in improved beautification and vibrancy of key public and civic spaces – i.e. downtown Rockford, around major tourism facilities, key traffic corridors, and gateways in to Rockford and the region

Further, RACVB’s focus in this area should be concentrated in areas of greatest impact related to our ability to grow visitor demand and volume. Consistent with other board priorities, RACVB should seek to collaborate with other entities, taking care not to duplicate efforts or programs.

**The following demonstrates achievement:**

### Forest City Beautiful

- Eight of the nine sculptures installed in downtown Rockford as part of the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau Public Art Initiative in 2015 were renewed for another year. The sculptures, created by artists Hans Van de Bovenkamp ([www.vandebovenkamp.com](http://www.vandebovenkamp.com)) and Boaz Vaadia ([www.vaadia.com](http://www.vaadia.com)), will remain on loan to the community until May 2017.
- RACVB and the River District Association announced that the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois (CFNIL) continued their ongoing support of Forest City Beautiful by contributing \$38,614 from the **Bengt & Mary Kuller Endowment fund**. The grant will help to offset the costs of purchasing and installing 6 benches, 5 bistro tables, 13 chairs as well as installing a way-finding kiosk. In addition to the funding support this year, CFNIL also contributed a total of \$108,000 in grants through a partnership with Rockford Sharefest for FCB projects in previous years.
- An additional 28 planters were purchased in 2016, which allowed the program to extend to several more blocks in the downtown core.

- Rockford Rain Art was the latest public art installation as part of the RACVB's Forest City Beautiful initiative. It was on display at 12 locations throughout the downtown River District and the Midtown District. The art was installed on sidewalks and was only visible when it rained (or if someone used their own water source such as a bottle of water, water balloon, bucket of water, etc.) The paint is environmentally friendly and lasted for several months. Collaborating with Rockford Community Partners, the River District Association and the Midtown District, RACVB worked with Rockford-based OC Creative for the project installation and execution.

### **Streetlight Banner Project**

The RACVB manages the City of Rockford Streetlight Banner program. The banners are featured on the main corridors throughout the city, primarily on West State Street, East State Street – Downtown, East State Street/Bell School, 7<sup>th</sup> Street, South Main (Harrison to Cedar), Kishwaukee Street, North Main Street, Auburn Street Bridge, Auburn Street Roundabout and Charles Street. **Currently there are 544 banner locations (up from the 230 locations in 2015).**

### **Cheap Trick Campaign**

The RACVB celebrated the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame induction of Cheap Trick with several community sign projects to add life to the city streets. Each member's hometown street was renamed and signed in their honor, welcome signs showcasing the band were erected during the celebration, billboards were used to promote the celebration and final, banners were erected in downtown Rockford and along key corridors.

*I am reporting achievement.*

## **6. The Rockford Region's transportation infrastructure meets tourism needs**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (no change)** I interpret it to be the board's priority that there are several modes of transportation into and out of the community and that such systems can handle the passenger/vehicular needs of our visitors. Also, it would mean that there are sufficient transportation options available for visitors during their stay within the community. Further, the RACVB is involved in ensuring transformation infrastructure and systems continue to improve.

**The following demonstrates achievement, although continued progress is needed:**

The RACVB has been a key partner in leading the ongoing community **Wayfinding Signage** planning/implementation efforts. The focus of the committee has been to examine/update the brown/tourist way finding signs that guides visitors and resident through the city as well as signage on I-90 and Bypass 20 that indicate the presence of key attractions/venues. In addition, RACVB staff lead a downtown Rockford Pedestrian Experience working committee that is working toward implementing a wayfinding sign program. The signs would coordinate with the City of Rockford's new parking lot/deck identification signage throughout the downtown. Additional signage is expected to be installed throughout the downtown core in Spring/Summer 2017.

RACVB has attended meetings hosted by RMAP and the City of Rockford to coordinate the installation and use of a **bike share program** throughout the city. No firm plans are in place for implementation; however, if appropriate funding is secured, the project could see life as early as 2018.



The multi-year reconstruction of **South Main Street/Rt.2 from US 20** to downtown Rockford was finally completed this year. This corridor is crucial for enhancing the visitor experience particularly those accessing our downtown venues from the south and attractions such as Klehm Arboretum, Ethnic Heritage Museum and Tinker Swiss Cottage.

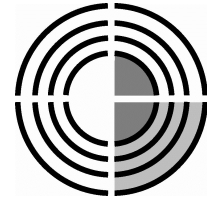
City of Rockford completed the **multi-use path over the Rock River** in the downtown and it was officially opened on September 28, 2016. This project converted a railroad bridge over the river into a multi-use path which connects an existing multi-use path located at Davis Park on the west side of the Rock River to a new path constructed as part of the Morgan Street bridge project on the east side of the river.

***I am reporting achievement.***

*Prepared by: Josh Albrecht/John Groh*



**Governing Policy of the  
RACVB Board of Directors**



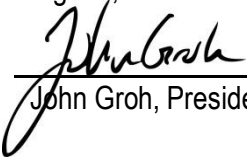
**Executive Limitations Policy 2.1 – Treatment of Customers,  
Partners & Stakeholders**

*Management Limitations*

To: RACVB Board of Directors  
From: John Groh, President/CEO  
RE: Internal Monitoring Report – Ends Policies  
Monitoring on Policy 2.1 – Treatment of Customers, Partners & Stakeholders

I hereby present my annual monitoring report on your Executive Limitations Policy 2.1, Treatment of Customers, Partners & Stakeholders, in accordance with the monitoring schedule set forth in Board policy. I certify that the information contained in this report is true for the period ended May 24, 2017.

Signed,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Groh, President/CEO

\_\_\_\_\_  
May 24, 2017

**POLICY 2.1**

**“With Respect to interactions with customers, stakeholders and/or partners, the President/CEO shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions which are unsafe, undignified, untimely, unnecessarily intrusive, or which fail to provide appropriate confidentiality or privacy.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION** (*No changes since last report*) I interpret “unsafe” conditions as those that would risk jeopardy to the physical safety of customers or others at the Bureau’s office or at our sponsored events and functions. This includes ensuring facility safety such as safe layouts, snow/ice removal, trip hazards, etc.

I interpret “undignified” conditions to be those that would cause embarrassment or are inconsistent with a culture of providing a friendly and respectful customer service experience. All customers are to be treated with respect and in a friendly manner.

I interpret “untimely” as meaning that programs, activities and meetings are to take place as scheduled, and inquiries, applications, registrations, etc., are to be addressed and/or responded to within commonly accepted timeframes, such as one business day for telephone messages and email messages or to acknowledge requests for additional information.

I interpret “unnecessarily intrusive” as actions that infringe on the customers privacy (addressed further, along with confidentiality, under Provision 2.1.1 below) and time such as repeated, unnecessary or overly long phone calls, meetings or communication from RACVB.

**REPORT:** Regarding safety, the Bureau's office space has been maintained in a way to not cause any undue risk of injury. In the past year, there have been no accidents or injuries to customers/visitors at our office. When organizing events, logistical considerations always incorporate safety as a concern. There have been no injuries or accidents involving attendees at Bureau-sponsored events (such as news conferences, industry partner meetings, etc.). Additionally, as RACVB planned for Stroll on State 2014, 2015 and 2016, significant consideration was given to guest safety. RACVB works closely with staff from City of Rockford's Public Works and Police departments to ensure a safe environment. No issues were reported to RACVB or city contacts in 2016.

I'm pleased to report that complaints of disrespectful, undignified, and unnecessarily intrusive treatment by RACVB are so rare that, while we have a documented complaint procedure, we have not had to activate our system of complaint tracking and response in this regards. More than several dozen *compliments* about the way our staff have treated customers/stakeholders have been received (via letter, e-mail and/or telephone). While I've informed the board periodically of such compliments, a file is maintained and available for review upon request.

There have also been no complaints regarding privacy and confidentiality. Our processes in place for assuring confidentiality are outlined in section 2.1.1.

**I am reporting compliance.**

**Accordingly, the President/ CEO shall not:**

**2.1.1 "Use methods of collecting, reviewing, transmitting, or storing client information that fails to protect against improper access to the material elicited."**

**CEO INTERPRETATION** (No changes since last report): I interpret this to mean that the information collected from customers and stakeholders must be available only to appropriate staff as needed, and it is to be stored, shared and, when appropriate, destroyed, in a manner that ensures that documents/data are not accessed by or circulated to any parties other than those with relevant staff duties.

**REPORT:** RACVB has established security systems that meet good business practice standards for our documents, building and equipment.

We have a system for building security; the office building is protected by an alarm system and the office space is locked at the end of each day. All phone mailboxes and computers are password protected. RACVB stores and disposes of paper and electronic documents/files according to a board approved records retention policy, created in compliance with all state, federal and regulatory policies.

All client information stored on the computer system requires a login name and password to gain access, and the files are backed up on a daily basis. Additionally, client and partner records and contact information is stored in an Internet based, industry-specific Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system that is updated and checked for accuracy on a regular basis.

Credit card information is collected for retail sales at the bureau in electronic format to process transactions using Square. Receipts and reports display only the last four digits of the credit card number. All staff members handling the credit card information have undergone background checks. Paper records are kept in locked storage.

Entré Computer Solutions remotely monitors our IT environment on a 24/7 basis with real time data from our network. The NetMonitor program protects our system from data loss and data theft while providing a continuous network. Reports are provided as concerns, if any, arise and bi-annual meetings are held with consultants to review the results. No weaknesses were reported at the most recent meeting in January 2017.

There have been no instances, nor complaints received, regarding improper use of or access to stakeholder or customer information held by the Bureau.

**I am reporting compliance.**

**2.1.2 “Operate without communicating to customers/stakeholders/partners a clear understanding of what may be expected from the service(s) and/or programs offered.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION** (No changes since last report): I interpret this to mean that customers, stakeholders and partners are properly informed about our services, programs and special events using various methods; (i.e., emails, news events, newsletters, blogs, etc.) and that, particularly for those to register for or participate in specific Bureau functions, the information clearly and accurately portrays details to avoid confusion or misunderstandings regarding expectations.

**REPORT:** RACVB communicates information about its special events, services and programs with its customers/partners on a regular basis using various means of communication; i.e., phone, website, e-mail, mailings, and direct contact.

Customers/partners are provided with a list of programs and/or services. Print/non-print materials are updated and include the disclaimer that all “information is subject to change.” For further assistance, our name, address and contact numbers are on print/non-print materials. RACVB updates its customers, partners, stakeholders and community on an ongoing basis through news releases, industry partner newsletters, our website, news events, media appearances, community events, and via social media. Additionally, group clients (i.e., meeting/event planners) receive written confirmation of what services RACVB will provide as part of our servicing commitment for their event.

All news releases, newsletters, advertisements and printed materials are required to be proofread for accuracy and clarity by a minimum of two people, in addition to the writer.

RACVB follows a pre-established written procedure for handling all complaints regarding our programs and services and I am pleased to report there have been no complaints in the past of year of RACVB pertaining to portrayal of programs or services.

**I am reporting compliance.**

### 2.1.3 “Operate without earnest efforts to collaborate with other organizations and entities to achieve RACVB’s Ends.”

**CEO INTERPRETATION** (*No change since last report*): I interpret this to mean we must consistently work in a strategically cooperative and collaborative fashion with appropriate local, regional, state and national organizations, governments and businesses to achieve RACVB ends.

**REPORT:** RACVB staff works with key partners to advance the tourism industry by hosting regular meetings with industry partners, providing consistent communication through a variety of avenues and encouraging participation in RACVB initiatives.

These meetings engage industry partners in the planning and execution of many RACVB programs and services. RACVB solicits input from area hotel and sites/attractions partners through regularly scheduled executive director/CEO meetings, hotel general manager meetings, marketing meetings and periodic meetings with media partners, business leaders, elected officials and other similar stakeholder groups.

The following provides a snapshot of how RACVB has been involved in collaborative efforts, and demonstrates compliance:

- RACVB has partnered with the Rockford Park District and the City of Rockford to create a seamless approach to the marketing, tours, and selling of each sports complex. RACVB is involved with the grand opening of the Sportscore Two expansion and continues to support and book events at the Sports Factory.
- RACVB worked closely with the City of Rockford, Winnebago County, the Rockford Park District, Rockford River District, Rockford Sharefest, and many downtown business owners to plan and implement the 4th Annual **Stroll On State** holiday event in November 2016. Hundreds of volunteers from Rockford Sharefest decorated our streets and gathering spaces. This event brought over 75,000 residents and visitors to our downtown area. The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Stroll on State is being planned for November 25, 2017.
- RACVB’s **Forrest City Beautiful** initiative has received unanimous approval from both the city and board for a new/expanded 4 year contract. The scope of work will be extended throughout the City of Rockford while still maintaining its public/private partnership.
- RACVB continues active involvement with the marketing and promotion of **Rockford City Market and now City Market North End**. The markets are collaborative efforts of several agencies, led by the Rock River Development Partnership.
- RACVB’s CEO **hosts regular (quarterly) TourismTalks meetings** with hotel general managers; site and attraction executive directors; and partner marketing managers to discuss issues important to the tourism industry and our ongoing collaboration.
- RACVB **staff provides leadership and serves on boards and committees** of partner organizations in an effort to increase collaboration toward accomplishing RACVB goals/priorities. In the past year, groups served in this capacity by RACVB include:
  - RAEDC board
  - Rockford Chamber board

- Rockford Sharefest board
- Rockford River District Association board
- Rockford Sister Cities Commission
- Rockford Area Hotel/Motel Association board
- Illinois Council of Convention & Visitors Bureaus (ICCVB) board
- Sports Illinois – a committee of ICCVB
- Destination & Travel Foundation board
- Discovery Center board
- NASC Symposium Planning committee
- MELD 4<sup>th</sup> of Fuly Race committee
- State Street Mile Race committee
- Rockford Community Partners
- Ignite
- US Sports Congress
- Anything that Floats Race committee

***I am reporting compliance.***

Prepared by: John Groh & Kristen Paul 5/24/2017



Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

# MEMO

102 N. Main St.  
Rockford, IL 61101  
Ph 815-963-8111 Fax 815-963-4298

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Date: April 19, 2017  
To: RACVB Board of Directors  
From: John Groh, President & CEO  
Re: Summary of:  
– Internal Monitoring Report on Management Limitations  
Monitoring on Policy 2.3 – Financial Planning / Budget  
– Internal Monitoring Report on Executive Limitations  
Monitoring on Policy 2.4 – Financial Condition and Activities

Monitoring Report 2.3 refers to fiscal financial planning and budget. Monitoring Report 2.4 deals with RACVB's ongoing financial condition and has attached the preliminary Balance Sheet and preliminary Summary Income Statement as of March 31, 2017.

**We are reporting compliance in all matters contained in monitoring reports for the period ended March 31, 2017, with the exception of Policies 2.3.1, 2.3.5, and 2.4.1.**

The above-referenced reports have been e-mailed (in PDF format) to you for your review. If you would prefer hard copies, please contact me at [jgroh@gorockford.com](mailto:jgroh@gorockford.com) or by phoning 815.489.1673. .

Please call me with any questions regarding these reports.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Groh  
President & CEO

**Internal Monitoring Report - Management Limitations  
March 31, 2017**

Monitoring on Policy 2.3 – Financial Planning/Budget  
Monitoring on Policy 2.4 – Financial Conditions and Activities

SUMMARY

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>1. Compliance:</b>                | The President/CEO reports compliance on all 2.3 and 2.4 monitoring reports, with the exception of 2.3.1, 2.3.5, and 2.4.1. |
| <b>2. Line of Credit:</b>            | RACVB ended the month of March with a \$0 balance on its line of credit.   |
| <b>3. Total Current Net Assets:</b>  | \$440,431  |
| <b>4. Total Current Liabilities:</b> | \$207,524  |
| <b>5. Board Governance:</b>          | Budgeted \$35,000 – year to date expenses are \$6,477  |
| <b>6. Total Operating Revenues:</b>  | \$1,796,845 year to date at March 31, 2017 for FY17  |
| <b>7. Total Operating Expenses:</b>  | \$1,943,299 year to date at March 31, 2017 for FY17  |
| <b>8. Trade Acts. Receivable:</b>    | \$25,503 (does not include hotel taxes or grants)  |
| <b>9. Accounts Payable:</b>          | \$69,525   |
| <b>10. Total Cash on Hand:</b>       | \$135,694  |

**SEE MARCH 2017 FINANCIALS**



*Internal Monitoring Report – Management Limitations  
Quarterly Monitoring on Policy 2.3 - Financial Planning/Budget*

To: RACVB Board of Directors  
From: John Groh, President & CEO  
RE: Internal Monitoring Report - Management Limitations  
Monitoring on Policy 2.3 – Financial Planning/Budget

I hereby present my monitoring report on your Management Limitations Policy 2.3, “Financial Planning/Budget”, in accordance with the monitoring schedule set forth in Board policy. I certify that the information contained in this report is true.

Signed,



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John Groh, President & CEO

April 19, 2017  
Date

## **POLICY 2.3 – FINANCIAL PLANNING/BUDGETING**

### **BROADEST POLICY PROVISION:**

**“Financial planning for any fiscal year or the remaining part of any fiscal year shall not deviate materially from the Board’s Ends Priority, risk fiscal jeopardy, or fail to take into consideration a three-year plan.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION:** I interpret this policy to require that we sufficiently address all capital and depreciation needs, as well as the development of financial resources needed to achieve our Board’s Priority End Results. I also interpret this policy to indicate that, as the President & CEO, I have the flexibility to revise budgetary projections throughout the year, but that at all times, I must have a financial plan that meets all of the criteria in this policy.

My interpretations and reporting data are presented below. I will be utilizing the fiscal information provided in the March 31, 2017 preliminary financials.

**REPORT:** Our adherence to a budget, approved by the RACVB Board on June 22, 2016, supports our bottom line.

***I am reporting compliance.***

**Accordingly, the President & CEO, shall not allow budgeting that:**

**2.3.1 “Risks incurring those situations or conditions described as unacceptable in the ‘Financial Conditions and Activities’ Board policy.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION:** I interpret this policy to require that I ensure budgets prepared must avoid the risk situations and conditions described as unacceptable in Board policy 2.4 – Financial Condition and Activities, which include items such as failure to meet operating reserve guidelines, indebting the organization to an amount greater than \$100,000, and obtaining revenues from sources inconsistent with the mission and values of the organization.

**REPORT:** The FY17 Budget - adopted by the board on June 22, 2016 - was approved with a projected deficit spend of up to approximately \$38,000, in part to support the Forest City Beautiful initiative and utilize the Bid Development Fund included in board-designated funds from prior years. We anticipate staying within that total appropriation for the fiscal year.

As of March 31, 2017, we were in compliance with a line of credit balance under \$100,000 and anticipate this to be the case through the end of the fiscal year.

However, during the quarter we did not maintain operating reserves equivalent to three months of operational costs (\$305,000) for payroll, payroll related expenses, technology, utilities, etc. RACVB calculates operating reserves via a simple calculation of Total Current Assets less Total Current Liabilities. The board of directors last affirmed this calculation in 2014.

Cash flow projections for the last quarter of the fiscal year anticipate that cash balances, not including funds held in trust for other organizations, will range between \$75,000 and \$107,000. Further, we anticipate being approximately \$200,000 under the reserve threshold at the end June.

The reasons for this shortfall are several and consistent with reports provided to the board in January 2017, including

- HR and legal costs have been higher this year with the anticipated Department of Labor regulations that were to be imposed on employers earlier in the fiscal year, along with a higher need for HR services due to staff transitions, recruitment, etc.
- Marketing advertising opportunities during the first nine months have exceeded our advertising budget by \$68,000 to date this fiscal year. Some was spent before we knew we were not going to receive the Marketing Partnership grant.

The Governance Committee and our executive staff team are currently reviewing all Executive Limitations and will make recommendations to the board on suggested changes prior to the end of the fiscal year. They will review the reserve policy and with the Audit/Budget Committee, will make recommendations on how to address this going forward.

***I am reporting non-compliance.***

**2.3.2 “Contains too little information to enable credible projection of revenues and expenses, separation of capital and operational items, cash flow, and disclosure of planning assumptions.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (Same as previous report.)** I interpret this policy to mean that the budget prepared, utilized and available for presentation must have adequate data to support the credibility of projections. It must highlight the separation of capital items from operational

expenses, include a presentation of cash flow expectations for the year, and convey the key assumptions used in creating the projections.

**REPORT:** The Director of Finance & Administration provides the president/CEO and staff monthly reports, and quarterly reports to the Governance Committee and Board providing financial analysis and cash flow forecast to highlight variables and note any unanticipated activity. We ended the month of March 2017 with a \$0 balance on our line of credit, demonstrating that our revenue/expense/cash flow projections were reliable.

***I am reporting compliance.***

**2.3.3 “Plans the expenditure in any fiscal year of more funds than are conservatively projected to be received in that period.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (*Same as previous report.*)** This policy requires that a conservative projection of revenues must exceed our most realistic projection of expense for any fiscal year.

**REPORT:** Only revenue that is contracted for or is on hand from the retained earnings of prior years is budgeted.

The FY17 budget was prepared by management and approved by the board on June 22, 2016 to reflect conditions reasonably expected to be the “worst case scenario” for the fiscal year. Under this scenario, the board approved a deficit budget with a projected net loss of approximately \$38,000. This is primarily due to spending \$30,000 of prior year reserved/designated profits for the Forest City Beautiful initiative and \$20,000 for bid fees out of the Bid Development Fund. The budget would show a \$12,000 profit if not for spending these prior year reserve/designated funds.

As of March 31, 2017, the Bureau reported eight months of actual hotel tax revenue with one month accrued.

While we are non-compliant with the policy as stated, as the board- approved this projected deficit spend and we anticipate staying within that total appropriation, we are operationally compliant.

***I am reporting compliance (given the board-approved exception).***

**2.3.4 “Provide less for board prerogatives during the year than is set forth in the Cost of Governance Board policy 4.10”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (*Same as previous report.*)** As the Board establishes its budget for what it believes is important to invest in its own governance, this policy requires that I ensure that the annual budget I prepare for the corporation as a whole, allocates at least as much as is stated in the Cost of Governance policy for board prerogatives and functions.

**REPORT:** The amount set forth in our FY17 budget for the cost of Board prerogatives was \$35,000 and was budgeted for the following: annual meeting, audit and monitoring of organizational performance; surveys and retreats.

***I am reporting compliance.***

**2.3.5 “Fails to maintain operating reserves equivalent to three months of basic operational expense. Operating reserves are defined as available cash on hand in cash or highly liquid assets, and does not include any line of credit or other form of cash flow debt instruments in the calculation thereof.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (*Same as previous report.*)** I interpret this policy regarding liquidity to require that our financial planning must maintain cash or cash equivalents of at least three months of basic operational costs (estimated at approximately \$305,000 for FY17). As outlined in the policy, this includes cash on hand and highly liquid assets, which I interpret to include the calculation of total short-term assets less short-term liabilities. Additionally, the calculation of operating reserves does not include access to any line of credit or other form of cash flow debt instruments and does not include the Board designated funds.

**REPORT:** As of March 31, 2017, total current assets were \$440,431 and total current liabilities were \$207,524. This equates to total current net assets of \$232,907 less \$46,455 of board-designated reserve funds, resulting in a reserve of \$186,452. The reserve policy requires funds be maintained of at least three months of operational expenses, or approximately \$305,000. The reserve balance has been below this threshold since December 2016. See Provision 2.3.1 above for explanation for this shortfall and projection for the remainder of the fiscal year.

***I am reporting non-compliance.***

**2.3.6 “Does not maintain and include a list of unfunded project priorities for board awareness, in the event of an unplanned/unanticipated increase in unrestricted cash.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (*Same as previous report.*)** I interpret this policy regarding unfunded project priorities to require the CEO and staff to maintain a list of projects that would be possible for completion in the event of an unplanned increase in unrestricted cash.

**REPORT: (*Same as previous report.*)** The staff maintains an annual “wish list” of projects that would be completed if funds allowed.

***I am reporting compliance.***

**REFER TO MARCH 2017 FINANCIALS**

***Attachments:***

Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow

Prepared by: John Groh and Joanne Nold 4/19/17

Internal Monitoring Report . Management Limitations  
Quarterly Monitoring on Policy 2.4 . Financial Condition and Activities

To: RACVB Board of Directors  
From: John Groh, President & CEO  
RE: Internal Monitoring Report- Executive Limitations  
Quarterly Monitoring on Policy 2.4 – Financial Condition and Activities

I hereby present my monitoring report on your Management Limitations Policy 2.4, “Financial Condition and Activities”, in accordance with the monitoring schedule set forth in Board policy. I certify that the information contained in this report and the accompanying Income Statement and Balance Sheet (as of March 31, 2017) are accurate in all material respects.

Signed,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Groh, President & CEO

April 19, 2017  
Date

## **POLICY 2.4 – FINANCIAL CONDITION AND ACTIVITIES**

### **BROADEST POLICY PROVISION:**

**“With respect to the actual, ongoing financial condition and activities, the President & CEO shall not cause or allow the development of fiscal jeopardy or a material deviation of actual expenditures from board priorities established in Ends policies.”**

**CEO’s INTERPRETATION:** I submit that the board’s concerns about avoidance of fiscal jeopardy are comprehensively interpreted in this policy’s subsequent provisions. Regarding expenditures, I interpret “material deviation of actual expenditures from board priorities established in Ends policies” to mean avoidance of waste, such that all expenditures are to be viewed as investments towards the achievement of RACVB’s Ends.

My interpretations and reporting data on the fiscal jeopardy provisions are presented with those provisions, below.

**Accordingly, he/she may not:**

**2.4.1 “Expend more funds than have been received in the fiscal year to date unless the operating reserve guidelines are met according to 2.3.5.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (Same as previous report.)** This policy requires that year-to-date expenses be less than corresponding revenues. Any exceptions are subject to the operating reserve guidelines.

**REPORT:** As of March 31, 2017, we have recorded operating revenues of \$1,796,845 and incurred operating expenses of \$1,943,299 (a difference of -\$146,454). Operating revenue includes city and county tax revenue that is accrued at actual amounts to be received.

The reasons expenses have outpaced revenue are as follows:

- Sponsorships for Rockford's River Lights did not materialize. Costs were reduced but not eliminated. The net budget for this initiative was \$10,000 profit but instead we realized a net expense of \$20,000, resulting in a \$30,000 deficit compared to budget.
- Marketing advertising costs have exceeded our budget for that category by approximately \$68,000 to date. Some of this is related to timing, while some ad opportunities were executed in anticipation of adjusting expense budgets through the remainder of the year.
- Prior year board designated funds of \$30,000 for Forest City Beautiful were spent in first six months of this fiscal year. This creates an expense with no revenue offset.

We anticipate being back in compliance by the end of the fiscal year, with the exception of the board-approved deficit due to spending prior year net income for Forest City Beautiful and from the board-designated Bid Development Fund.

***I am reporting non-compliance.***

**2.4.2 “Indebt the organization in an amount greater than \$100,000. The long-term financial goal shall be the development of operating reserves sufficient to maintain normal operations during low revenue periods, and the development of a separate Board designated reserve.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION:** This policy gives the CEO the latitude to approve any draws against the line of credit (currently maintained at \$250,000) up to \$100,000 to cover fluctuating operational cash flow needs. For anything beyond \$100,000, draws against the line of credit require review and approval of the Board Officers. A separate bank account is maintained as a general/reserve account and has been designated to hold accumulated net assets of the Bureau.

**REPORT:** The Bureau entered the quarter with a balance of \$0 on the line of credit. During the quarter, the Bureau made no draws on the line of credit and ended the quarter on March 31, 2017 with a line of credit balance of \$0, demonstrating the achievement of adequate operating reserves for this period. The total cash balance on March 31, 2017 was \$146,021, including board designated reserve funds of \$46,455 and funds held in trust of \$10,458.

***I am reporting compliance.***

**2.4.3 “Operate without settling payroll and debts in a timely manner.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION:** Payroll must be paid as required every other Friday. For other payables, I interpret “timely” to mean by the due date if terms are specifically agreed upon, and otherwise within thirty to sixty days.

**REPORT:** As of March 31, 2017, trade accounts payables totaled \$69,525. Payables continue to be settled within 30 to 45 days, as the Bureau stretches out payables more this fiscal year due to the low cash reserves. Payroll has been paid timely on a bi-weekly basis.

*I am reporting compliance.*

**2.4.4 “Allow tax or other government ordered payments or filings to be overdue or inaccurately filed. Requirements include but are not limited to annual independent audits, audit compliance, annual 990 statements, annual budgets, quarterly activity reports and financial statements; minutes, and agendas from Board meetings.**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (Same as previous report.)** All tax and government required payments or filings must be made in a timely and accurate manner.

**REPORT:** All withholding taxes and other such payments or filings for the period have been made on time and accurately. Federal and state income tax withholdings have been submitted to the proper taxing authorities within 5 business days following the payroll dates. Federal and state unemployment taxes have been paid by the end of the month following the payroll quarter. There are no outstanding filings, and there have been no late penalties. The annual Form 990 was filed by December 31, 2016.

*I am reporting compliance.*

**2.4.5 “Make a single purchase or commitment of greater than \$10,000 unless such purchase was explicitly itemized in monitoring reports previously disclosed to the board. Splitting orders and /or paying from two consecutive fiscal years to avoid this limit is not acceptable.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION:** the Board must specifically approve all single expenditures in excess of \$10,000 that were not previously disclosed as part of budget monitoring data.

Further, I interpret that individual expenditures when paid to a single vendor and in the aggregate meet or exceed \$10,000 do not require board approval as long as within overall projected expense for the fiscal year. As noted in the policy, splitting payments to avoid this limit is not acceptable.

**REPORT: (Same as previous report).** During the quarter, no purchase or commitment in excess of \$10,000 has been made that was not specifically projected in the annual budget or subsequently approved by the board.

*I am reporting compliance.*

**2.4.6 “Solely execute checks in an amount greater than \$2,500, or solely execute any payments to himself / herself. Signatures are to be in the priority order of signing as outlined in Policy 4.8.2.C where signatures on checks are required by Board member.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (Same as previous report.)** No checks or electronic fund transfers (EFT's) can be solely executed in an amount greater than \$2,500, nor solely executed as payments to the President/CEO.

**REPORT: (Same as previous report.)** For this period, no checks in an amount greater than \$2,500 have been executed solely, and no solely executed payments have been made to the President & CEO. Signators were as specified in Policy 4.8.2.C.

*I am reporting compliance.*

**2.4.7 “Acquire, encumber or dispose of real property.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (Same as previous report.)** All decisions regarding the purchase, or sale of land or buildings are considered to be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

**REPORT: (Same as previous report.)** At the end of this period, no real property has been encumbered, acquired, or disposed.

*I am reporting compliance.*

**2.4.8 “Fail to aggressively pursue material receivables in accordance with commonly accepted practices.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION:** I interpret a “reasonable grace period” to be sixty (60) days, and “material” to be receivables that, when collected, are of greater value than the cost of collection (including staff time).

**REPORT: (Same as previous report.)** At the end of this period, no material receivables were outstanding.

*I am reporting compliance.*

**2.4.9 “Obtain revenues from sources that are not, in fact and appearance, legal and consistent with the ends policies, mission and values of the organization.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (Same as previous report.)** I interpret this policy as giving staff the authority to identify and generate new revenue streams and sources without requiring explicit board approval (so long as they would meet the “prudence” test). However, “prudence” in this case is further defined to preclude any revenue sources which conflict with our mission and values, and thus which could provide embarrassment to the organization and its constituents.

**REPORT: (Same as previous report.)** During this period, no revenues have been obtained from sources that are inconsistent with RACVB's mission and values or would provide embarrassment to RACVB or its constituents.

*I am reporting compliance.*



**2.4.10 “Use restricted funds for purposes other than stated by the contributor.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (*Same as previous report.*)** This policy requires that we manage finances consistently with generally accepted accounting principles regarding the segregation and use of restricted funds. “Restricted” contributions are monies directed to the RACVB to be used for a specific purpose.

**REPORT: (*Same as previous report.*)** Finances have been managed in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and any restricted funds would be reported separately in the balance sheet attached to this report.

*I am reporting compliance.*

**2.4.11 “Fail to exercise adequate internal controls over disbursements to avoid unauthorized payments. The organization shall not have secret funds and it shall prohibit any unaudited transactions or loans.”**

**2.4.12**

**CEO INTERPRETATION:** Controls must be in place to ensure all disbursements are appropriately authorized. Further, all payments (checks, EFTs, credit card purchases, petty cash, etc.) must have corresponding documentation sufficient to satisfy the auditor. Finally, we may not make unaudited loans of any type.

**REPORT: (*Same as previous report.*)** Internal controls in place are consistent with Board policy and the generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) prescribed by the Board-appointed auditors. As part of the annual audit, the Independent auditor reviews our internal control procedures in place during the year.

The organization does not have secret funds and does not allow unaudited transactions or loans. The most recent audit reported a clean opinion.

*I am reporting compliance.*

**2.4.13 “Pledge any of the assets of the corporation as security within any contracts.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (*Same as previous report.*)** No assets can be pledged as security within any contracts.

**REPORT:** During this period, no contracts have been signed pledging the assets of the corporation, nor are there any other contracts that have been signed pledging the assets of the corporation.

*I am reporting compliance.*

**2.4.14 “Allow the expenditure of organizational funds for travel purposes which are not specifically related to or consistent with the organization’s purpose and functions.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (Same as previous report.)** Compliance with this policy is achieved when all travel expenses can be justified as reasonable investments towards the achievement of our Priority Results.

**REPORT: (Same as previous report.)** All expenditures for travel during the quarter have been consistent with the organization's purpose and function.

*I am reporting compliance.*

**2.4.14 "Permit use of corporate credit cards or RACVB corporate credit accounts for non-business purchases."**

**CEO INTERPRETATION: (Same as previous report.)** Corporate credit cards and credit accounts can only be used for business-related purchases.

**REPORT:** There has been no violation of board policy in regards to non-business purchases with corporate credit cards or credit accounts during the quarter ended March 31, 2017.

*I am reporting compliance.*

**2.4.15 "Authorize the utilization of funds from the reserve Bid Development & Hosting Fund for events that do not meet the stated purpose of this designated fund or in an amount greater than \$15,000 per event without first consulting with, and obtaining concurrence from, the Board Chairman and Treasurer."**

**CEO INTERPRETATION:** Funds designated for the Bid Reserve Fund cannot be used for events that do not meet qualifying criteria or in an amount greater than \$15,000 without approval from the Board Chairman and Treasurer.

**REPORT:** There were no expenditures from the Bid Reserve Fund during the quarter ended March 31, 2017.

*I am reporting compliance.*

**REFER TO MARCH 2017 FINANCIALS**

**Attachments:**

Income Statement  
Balance Sheet  
Cash Flow

Prepared by: John Groh and Joanne Nold 4/19/17

Rockford Area ConventionisitorsBureau  
Statement of Financial Position  
March 31, 2017  
April 11, 2017

**ASSETS**

**Current Assets**

Petty Cash	\$ 132.00	
Cash - Operating IL B & T	87,922.27	
Cash - Board Designated Funds	46,455.09	
Cash - Funds Held in Trust	10,458.30	
Cash - Capital Planning & Dev	1,185.08	
Accounts Receivable	25,502.77	
Other Grants Receivable	75,000.00	
City/County Gov't Receivable	140,666.29	
International Grant Receivable	3,477.24	
Other Receivables	110.00	
Inventory	4,530.69	
Prepaid Expenses	<u>44,991.51</u>	
 Total Current Assets		 440,431.24

**Property and Equipment**

Furniture & Equipment	487,388.82	
Leasehold Improvements	508,572.98	
Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(619,023.88)</u>	
 Total Property and Equipment		 376,937.92

**Other Assets**

Total Other Assets		<u>0.00</u>
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<b>Total Assets</b>		<b><u><u>\$ 817,369.16</u></u></b>
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**LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL**

**Current Liabilities**

Funds Held in Trust	\$ 10,454.82	
Accounts Payable-Operating	69,525.65	
Accrued Accounts Payable	774.88	
Accrued Payroll	54,661.06	
Accrued Vacation Pay	19,370.68	
Payroll Taxes and Withholding	(2,757.76)	
Unearned Income	<u>55,494.54</u>	
 Total Current Liabilities		 207,523.87

**Long-Term Liabilities**

Total Long-Term Liabilities		<u>0.00</u>
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Total Liabilities		207,523.87
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**Capital**

Net Assets	823,801.12	
Net Income	<u>(213,955.83)</u>	
 Total Capital		 <u>609,845.29</u>

<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Capital</b>		<b><u><u>\$ 817,369.16</u></u></b>
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Rockford Area Conventionists Bureau  
Income Statement  
For the Nine Months Ending March 31, 2017  
April 11, 2017

	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	Year to Date Budget	Variance	Budget
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>					
City/County Gov't Agreements	\$ 120,799	927,453	\$ 908,400	19,053	\$ 1,265,200
County, other city contracts	20,877	152,219	140,200	12,019	185,800
Matching Grants Revenue	0	115,415	116,200	(785)	116,200
International Grant	9,301	103,767	104,000	(233)	200,579
LTCB Grant Revenue	31,779	286,009	286,009	0	381,346
Stroll on State	670	139,444	127,500	11,944	127,500
Forest City Beautiful	0	10,564	10,000	564	50,000
Paint the Town Fundraiser	0	0	0	0	40,000
Rockford River Lights	0	500	40,000	(39,500)	40,000
Other Revenue	0	36,554	30,000	6,554	47,500
Coop Partnership Revenue	0	0	0	0	8,000
Room Rebate Revenue	0	4,156	6,000	(1,844)	8,000
Advertising Revenue	369	5,684	6,500	(816)	10,000
Miscellaneous Income	2,310	14,899	2,250	12,649	3,000
Interest Revenue	3	181	45	136	60
<b>TOTAL OPERATING REVENUES</b>	<b>186,108</b>	<b>1,796,845</b>	<b>1,777,104</b>	<b>19,741</b>	<b>2,483,185</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>					
Total Personnel	78,306	804,483	801,551	2,932	1,052,787
Total Operations	11,958	127,440	128,021	(581)	157,111
Total Activities	116,259	1,011,376	937,030	74,346	1,220,942
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>206,523</b>	<b>1,943,299</b>	<b>1,866,602</b>	<b>76,697</b>	<b>2,430,840</b>
<b>INCOME FROM OPERATIONS</b>	<b>(20,415)</b>	<b>(146,454)</b>	<b>(89,498)</b>	<b>(56,956)</b>	<b>52,345</b>
<b>NON OPERATING REVENUE FROM PARTNERS</b>					
In-Kind Revenue	4,526	47,688	40,761	6,927	54,348
<b>PARTNERSHIP REVENUE</b>	<b>(4,526)</b>	<b>(47,688)</b>	<b>(40,761)</b>	<b>(6,927)</b>	<b>(54,348)</b>
<b>NON OPERATING EXPENSES FROM PARTNERS</b>					
Inkind Expenses	4,526	40,733	40,761	(28)	54,348
Inkind Expenses	0	6,955	0	6,955	0
<b>PARTNERSHIP EXPENSE</b>	<b>4,526</b>	<b>47,688</b>	<b>40,761</b>	<b>6,927</b>	<b>54,348</b>
<b>INCOME FROM PARTNERS</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Depreciation	7,500	67,500	67,500	0	90,000
Loss on Disposal	0	0	0	0	0
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>(\$ 27,915)</b>	<b>(213,954)</b>	<b>(\$ 156,998)</b>	<b>(56,956)</b>	<b>(\$ 37,655)</b>

For Management Purposes Only

Rockford Area Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Cash Flow Summary  
For the Year Ending June 30, 2017

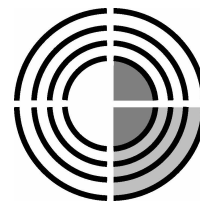
<u>CASH FLOW SUMMARY</u>	Actual July	Actual August	Actual September	Actual October	Actual November	Actual December	Actual January	Actual February	Actual March	Budget April	Budget May	Budget June	TOTALS
<b>Initial Cash Balance (not including funds held in trust)</b>	<b>341,622</b>	<b>211,176</b>	<b>229,357</b>	<b>164,895</b>	<b>132,441</b>	<b>113,607</b>	<b>137,370</b>	<b>192,064</b>	<b>142,500</b>	<b>135,562</b>	<b>85,646</b>	<b>107,830</b>	
<b>Add Cash Receipts:</b>													
City Contract*	103,238	106,238	108,960	110,226	112,999	99,837	83,849	90,131	94,671	120,000	135,400	122,200	1,287,749
County/Loves Park Contracts*	17,196	15,285	16,592	22,874	18,371	15,097	18,231	11,330	14,315	19,000	15,700	19,100	203,091
International Grant**	5,501	7,784						100,289	-		30,000	27,003	170,578
LTCB Grant**						190,673	31,779		63,556	31,778	31,778	31,778	381,342
City of Rockford Challenge Grant		77,721					115,415						193,137
Forest City Beautiful				10,375			10,000				30,000	20,000	70,375
Stroll on State					53,000	62,823	30,070						145,893
Other Revenue		5,000	5,000			3,815							13,815
Coop & Contribution from Partners	5,309	13,066	5,738	3,493	1,862	700	1,030	4,716	580	500	500	500	37,996
Misc Income	2,179	212	848	267	1,873	430	1,190	70	3,477	300	300	600	11,746
<b>Total Cash Receipts</b>	<b>133,424</b>	<b>225,307</b>	<b>137,138</b>	<b>147,235</b>	<b>188,106</b>	<b>373,375</b>	<b>291,565</b>	<b>206,536</b>	<b>176,599</b>	<b>171,578</b>	<b>243,678</b>	<b>221,181</b>	<b>2,515,721</b>
<b>Less Operating Expenses:</b>													
Total Personnel	(99,205)	(84,537)	(86,887)	(80,270)	(78,309)	(127,318)	(83,102)	(86,375)	(78,306)	(78,306)	(78,306)	(108,306)	(1,069,227)
Total Operations	(10,495)	(17,108)	(12,781)	(31,822)	(15,278)	(11,797)	(9,260)	(7,285)	(11,958)	(12,668)	(12,668)	(12,668)	(165,788)
Total Activities	(153,740)	(104,693)	(96,587)	(67,596)	(113,353)	(197,434)	(144,509)	(162,440)	(91,965)	(130,520)	(130,520)	(130,520)	(1,523,877)
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>(263,440)</b>	<b>(206,338)</b>	<b>(196,255)</b>	<b>(179,688)</b>	<b>(206,940)</b>	<b>(336,549)</b>	<b>(236,871)</b>	<b>(256,100)</b>	<b>(182,229)</b>	<b>(221,494)</b>	<b>(221,494)</b>	<b>(251,494)</b>	<b>(2,758,892)</b>
<b>Plus Other Receipts:</b>													-
<b>Less Other Disbursements:</b>													
Payments for Debt Service													-
Payments for Fixed Assets	(430)	(788)	(5,346)	-	-	(13,064)	-		(1,307)			(2,000)	(22,934)
<b>End Cash Balance</b>	<b>211,176</b>	<b>229,357</b>	<b>164,895</b>	<b>132,441</b>	<b>113,607</b>	<b>137,370</b>	<b>192,064</b>	<b>142,500</b>	<b>135,562</b>	<b>85,646</b>	<b>107,830</b>	<b>75,517</b>	
<b>Line of Credit Activity:</b>													
Beginning Balance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
New Borrowings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Payments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Ending Line of Credit Balance</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

\*Hotel tax receipts are one month in arrears.

\*\*Grant program payments represent both prior year receivables and current year grant payments.



Governing Policy of the RACVB Board of Directors



Executive Limitations Policy 2.8 – Communication & Support to the Board

Management Limitations

To: RACVB Board of Directors
From: John Groh, President/CEO
RE: Internal Monitoring Report – Ends Policies
Monitoring on Policy 2.8 – Communication & Support to the Board

I hereby present my monitoring report on your Executive Limitations Policy 2.8 – Communication & Support to the Board, in accordance with the monitoring schedule set forth in board policy. I certify that the information contained in this report is true for the six-month period ending June 21, 2017.

Signed

Handwritten signature of John Groh

John Groh, President/CEO

June 21, 2017

POLICY 2.8 – COMMUNICATION & SUPPORT TO THE BOARD

“The President/CEO shall not permit the board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.”

CEO INTERPRETATION: One of the primary obligations of the CEO is to ensure the board has all necessary facts, evidence, knowledge and resources for the fulfillment of its role, as the board has defined it in its governing policies. I submit that the subsequent provisions comprehensively define this policy. Interpretations and reporting data are presented below.

“Accordingly, he or she may not:”

2.8.1 “Neglect to submit monitoring reports (including CEO interpretations of Board policies being monitored, as well as relevant data) required by the board (see policy 3.4 on Monitoring President/CEO Performance in Board/Staff Linkage) in a timely, accurate and understandable fashion, directly addressing provisions of board policies being monitored.”

CEO INTERPRETATION: (no changes since last report) The CEO shall submit monitoring reports in the month designated in policy 3.4. Each report shall include interpretation of each policy indicating whether that interpretation is new (noting whether any material changes have been made since last report), data that is factually complete, and enough data for the board to make an informed judgment as to whether compliance/achievement is sufficiently substantiated. I interpret “timely” to mean the board receives the report in advance of the scheduled board meeting, during which they will review the report. I interpret “accurate” to mean the information provided is factual. I interpret “understandable” to

mean that the information provided and the logic outlined in the report would make sense to most people.

**REPORT:** All monitoring reports for the period were submitted within the specified month and distributed to the board prior to board meetings in compliance with policy 4.3.3.c.

- January 25, 2017 meeting: 1.0 – Global Ends, 1.3 – Communicate with Constituents 2.3 – Financial Planning/Budgeting, 2.4 – Financial Condition & Activities, 2.8 Communication & Support to Board.
- February 22, 2017: 2.2 – Treatment of Staff.
- April 26, 2017: 1.2 – Enhance Tourism Product, 2.3 – Financial Planning/Budgeting, 2.4 – Financial Condition & Activities.
- May 24, 2017: 2.1 – Treatment of Customers & Partners, 2.9 – Programs/Events/Services/Logistics.
- June 28, 2017: 2.8 – Communication & Support to Board.

The board has not conveyed any concerns about accuracy or ability to comprehend the information and data presented. All reports were approved, and in doing so the board accepted the CEO interpretations as reasonable and that reports demonstrated compliance or achievement.

**I am reporting compliance.**

**2.8.2 “Let the Board be unaware of relevant trends, anticipated adverse media coverage, or material external and internal changes. The Board should be notified in advance of material internal changes, when feasible.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION:** *(no changes since last report)* In addition to formal reporting on board policies, I am to keep the board apprised of material developments. Material external changes such as major developments in our industry sector, issues with major stakeholders, legal challenges, etc., are to be conveyed to the board no later than the next board meeting, but perhaps sooner as dictated by the situation. The criteria for timeliness of board awareness of issues such as negative media coverage or litigation are based on when the material will become public and/or otherwise impact the organization. I interpret material internal changes to be issues such as significant revisions to strategy, to revenues or expenditures (that are compliant with our financial policies) or personnel changes at or above mid-management.

**REPORT:** The board has been informed of material external changes by the next board meeting, or sooner as the situation dictated/allowed. The following demonstrate compliance:

- On January 1, 2017, the board was invited to attend John Peterson’s retirement party from the Rockford Park District.
- On February 14, 2017, prior to public announcement, the board was informed of RACVB’s public support for the Embassy Suites development project.

- On February 27, 2017, the board was invited to attend the Mercyhealth Sportscore Two expansion celebration event.
- On May 5, 2017, the board was informed that the Clock Tower had sold and was back under local ownership.

The board has been notified in a timely manner of material *internal* changes. For example, the board is notified in advance of media coverage regarding the organization (positive or negative), as we are aware of the coverage. The following demonstrates compliance:

- On March 25, 2017, the board was informed of RACVB winning an award for Best Branding Initiative for our Bring Your Game to Rockford brand and Best Tourism Marketing Campaign for our Trickford campaign celebrating Cheap Trick at the Illinois Governor's Conference on Travel & Tourism.
- On March 31, 2017, the board was formally invited to attend the Big Ideas Round Table and Board Retreat which included the announcement of featured speakers.
- On April 7, 2017, the board was informed that Lindsay Arellano, Director of Sales and Servicing, welcomed a baby boy to the world and would be on maternity leave through early June.
- On April 7, 2017, the board was informed that the Forrest City Beautiful contract was going before council.
- On April 7, 2017, the board was informed that John Groh was to speak at the City Council in support of the Gorman hotel project.
- On April 23, 2017, the board received the final agenda for the Big Ideas Round Table and Board Retreat.
- The CEO holds regular meetings with individual board members to discuss organizational, industry and community issues and opportunities.

**I am reporting compliance.**

**2.8.3 “Fail to advise the board if, in the President/CEO’s opinion, the board is not in compliance with its own policies on Governance Process and Board/Staff Linkage, particularly in the case of board behavior that is detrimental to the work relationship between the board and the President/CEO.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION** (*No changes since last report*): I am to notify the board chair if I am aware of any board or board members’ actions that are inconsistent with the board’s own policies, especially if such actions undermine the board/CEO relationship. In the case of perceived non-compliance on



behalf of the chair, I will report non-compliance issues directly to the board if the perceived non-compliance is not resolved after discussing the concern with the chair directly.

**REPORT:** There were no such issues during this reporting period.

**I am reporting compliance.**

**2.8.4 “Fail to marshal for the Board as many staff and external points of view, issues and options as needed for fully informed board choices.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION** (*No changes since last report*): When the board is preparing to make policy decisions, I am to submit background information and/or provide opportunities for dialogue with and/or data from industry experts, as requested by the board, on the pros and cons of the options being considered, and/or those otherwise available and in my estimation viable for board consideration. While some bias as CEO is, in my estimation, inevitable, I am obligated to temper any such bias with the presentation of objective information. Further, I am to keep the board aware of observed industry and/or community trends that may impact favorably or negatively on the organization.

**REPORT:** When apprised by the board chair of action items on upcoming agendas, staff and I regularly prepare background information that is included in the board packets or other communications. We attempt to present logical and reasonable options and recommendations, and the pros and cons of each, and assure all new board members are equipped to govern according to approved policies.

- In April, speakers from Tulsa, Grand Rapids, Rapid City and Eau Claire presented at both the Big Ideas Round Table and Board Retreat.
- In April, Bill Geist presented at and facilitated the Big Ideas Round Table and Board Retreat.
- In April, Geoff Lacher presented on funding opportunities based on the extensive Oxford Economics report.

In all cases, care is taken to provide information that is as complete and unbiased as possible. The board has not conveyed any concerns about a lack of adequate or objective information being presented.

**I am reporting compliance.**

**2.8.5 “Present information in unnecessarily complex or lengthy form or in a form that fails to differentiate among information of three types:**

- a) monitoring**
- b) decision preparation, and**
- c) incidental**

**CEO INTERPRETATION** (*no changes since last report*): Correspondence to the board is to be concise and identified as one of the three types listed in the policy. I interpret “monitoring” to be those

items connected with the designated monitoring reports. I interpret “decision preparation” to be background material necessary or helpful for decision-making and “incidental” to be information/FYI type material.

**REPORT:** Information in all correspondence with and materials provided to the board (especially board meeting packets) has been labeled as either monitoring report-related, informational/FYI, or for preparation to make decisions or take action. If the communication is urgent or requires immediate action, the content is labeled accordingly. Board meeting agendas are clear and indicate where attachments are included or action is required.

**I am reporting compliance.**

**2.8.6 “Allow the Board to be without logistical and administrative support for official Board, officer or committee communications and activities.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION** (*No changes since last report*): As CEO, I am to ensure adequate support for operations of the board, its officers and committees. I interpret “official” to mean those functions dealing with the carrying out of the board’s governing responsibilities, including those of its officers and committees. Examples of support include arranging meeting schedules, meeting space, fulfilling communication needs, copying and distributing correspondence and materials, recording minutes, providing refreshments, etc.

**REPORT:** Staff support for board functions, including production and distribution of board meeting packets, minutes, meeting logistics and refreshments and similar arrangements for the work of the board and official board committees is regularly provided. No concerns to the contrary have been conveyed by the board to the CEO.

**I am reporting compliance.**

**2.8.7 “Fail, when addressing official Board business, to deal with the Board as a whole, except when (a) fulfilling individual requests for information or (b) responding to officers or committees duly charged by the board.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION** (*No changes since last report*): This is interpreted as meaning that I am to view the board, collectively, as my superior and am to provide communications about board issues and policy choices to all board members, rather than just to the chair and/or board members I may view as “sympathetic” to my concerns.

The exceptions are the two circumstances stated above as “a” and “b,” and I also interpret an exception to be when working with individual board members in their occasional capacities as “volunteer staff members.” While I am to pass requests for agenda items to the chair, the background information supporting my request is to be distributed to all board members. I further interpret this is pertinent only to business dealings, not to personal or social relationships.

**REPORT:** Monitoring reports, informational content and background information on action items are distributed to all board members. Significant e-mail exchanges and other conversations have and do

take place with individual board members, either as colleagues or pursuant to exceptions as set forth in the policy, but this correspondence does not limit the awareness or authority of the board as a whole.

**I am reporting compliance.**

**2.8.8 “Fail to report in a timely manner any actual or anticipated non-compliance with any policy of the Board.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION** (*No changes since last report*): The CEO shall notify the board whenever there is an incurred or anticipated violation of Board Ends or Executive Limitations policy. I interpret “in a timely manner” to vary depending on the perceived importance of the non-compliance issue. Where the importance is deemed by me to be serious or potentially damaging to the organization, actual or anticipated non-compliance issues should be reported as soon as they are known. When the importance is deemed to be minor and the period of non-compliance is expected to be brief or related to an ongoing circumstance previously brought to the board’s attention, non-compliance should be at least reported in the regularly (or otherwise) scheduled monitoring report.

- **REPORT:** During the January 25 Board meeting I reported to you non-compliance on policy 2.3.1, 2.3.5, 2.4.1 and 2.4.14 and during the April 26 Board meeting I reported to you non-compliance on policies 2.3.1, 2.3.5 and 2.4.1. After discussing areas of non-compliance related to Reserve Levels, all monitoring reports were approved. During the remaining months of FY17 John Groh, president/CEO, and Joanne Nold, director of finance and administration, reviewed monthly financial statements with the Governance Committee and presented as need to the full board.

There have been no other reports of non-compliance since the last report.

**I am reporting compliance.**

**2.8.9 “Fail to supply for the consent agenda all items delegated to the President/CEO yet required by law or contract to be Board approved, along with the monitoring assurance pertaining thereto.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION** (*No changes since last report*): The CEO will submit for the board’s agenda all items that require board approval when such is mandated by third-party business requirements, the law, or per board policy. When such items are submitted, the background information supporting the action item will include written substantiation of adherence to relevant board policies.

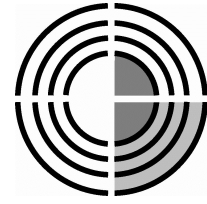
**REPORT:** Staff regularly executes agreements, contracts and reports with government and private entities, and all is done within the executive limitations of approved policy. On April 28, 2017 the four year contract for Forrest City Beautiful was ratified unanimously by the board.

**I am reporting compliance.**

Prepared by: John Groh and Kristen Paul 6/21/17



**Governing Policy of the  
RACVB Board of Directors**



**Executive Limitations Policy 2.9 – Programs/Events/Services/Logistics**

**Management Limitations**

To: RACVB Board of Directors  
From: John Groh, President/CEO  
RE: Internal Monitoring Report – Ends Policies  
Monitoring on Policy 2.9 – Programs/Events/Services/Logistics

I hereby present my monitoring report on your Executive Limitations Policy 2.9 – Programs/Events/Services/Logistics, in accordance with the monitoring schedule set forth in Board policy. I certify that the information contained in this report is true for the annual period through May 24, 2017.

Signed,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Groh, President/CEO

\_\_\_\_\_  
May 24, 2017

**POLICY 2.9**

**“With respect to the programs and events produced or services provided by the organization, the President/CEO shall not fail to ensure these programs, events or services exceed community/industry standards for excellence in programming, safety and audience amenities.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION** (No change since last report): I interpret this to mean RACVB will be informed of and utilize best practices in event planning, regularly evaluate all appropriate programs and events, implement RACVB service standards and ensure that customer concerns and complaints are addressed promptly and appropriately.

**REPORT:** The RACVB utilizes systems for event planning, service standards and appropriate safety guidelines when planning or hosting RACVB events.

RACVB staff continually seeks educational opportunities to ensure knowledge of best practices in the event planning and tourism industry.

- RACVB’s core service values require that we create an atmosphere of customer focus, whereby the needs of the customer are paramount and staff has the flexibility, knowledge and procedures in place to meet those needs. The use of budgets, checklists and policies guide planning efforts for programs/events/services.
- Evaluation forms are distributed at or after selected events, special events, tournaments and conferences hosted or planned by RACVB. The results are compiled and reviewed as a means of guiding our continual improvement efforts.
- RACVB follows a pre-established written procedure for handling customer/visitor complaints and takes appropriate action. First the complaint is documented and categorized as urgent, RACVB

complaint or industry partner complaint. The category determines the degree of RACVB involvement. If needed, as dictated by procedures, a task force is then assembled to handle the complaint.

- RACVB staff has a written crisis communication plan in place that includes avenues of communication with visitors should a large-scale emergency situation arise.
- RACVB staff has undergone Active Shooter Training.
- When necessary, RACVB employees use outside consultants to help examine best practices.

**I am reporting compliance.**

**Accordingly, he or she may not:**

**2.9.1 “Fail to produce and implement an operational plan designed to ensure that the programs, events or services are well organized, are safe for all attendees, and run on schedule.”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION** (No change since last report): I interpret this to mean that when creating and hosting community/stakeholder events, or as related to RACVB’s involvement with events produced by customers/clients, RACVB must have in place and utilize appropriate plans to ensure RACVB and staff are prepared, an event is well-planned and runs on time, and all measures are taken to ensure a safe environment.

**REPORT:** RACVB staff uses an operational plan and checklist for all RACVB hosted programs or events. This ensures the event is well organized, safe and runs on schedule, as evidenced by the responses to follow-up evaluations that demonstrate RACVB standards are met.

When servicing groups and events, staff utilizes an extensive planning process including standards for opening ceremonies, welcome bags, information tables and additional standardized systems and instruments. Post-event evaluations ensure servicing standards are met, as exemplified by the following chart below. These numbers reflect no change year over year. Customer satisfaction remains strong.

**Feedback From Group Customers**

	<b>Overall Satisfaction</b> (Venue Experience) (scale 1/low-5/high)	<b>Satisfaction with RACVB Staff</b> (scale 1/low-5/high)	<b>Intent to Return</b>
<b>Meeting/Event Planner Survey</b> FY 17 YTD	100% ranked 4-5 (actual 5)	100% ranked 4-5 (actual 5)	100%

**I am reporting compliance.**

**2.9.2 “Fail to work actively and cooperatively with venue management, as well as with neighboring property owners/merchants/residents to minimize any inconvenience or other negative impacts caused by the event(s).”**

**CEO INTERPRETATION** (No change since last report): I interpret this to mean that the RACVB should work in a professional manner to partner for success within the business and tourism community, taking measures to ensure a positive public perception of Bureau programs and services, as well as the local visitor industry.

**REPORT:** When working with unique and/or large events, RACVB staff works with venue managers, municipal public works staff, public safety officials, neighborhood representatives and business owners to prepare and proactively plan for event participants. By utilizing checklists, a variety of methods of communication and advanced planning meetings, staff members continue to maintain high service standards and take measures to uphold this policy and maintain a positive perception of these events.

Other services the RACVB provides to ensure a successful event include:

- Convention/tournament calendars are updated/distributed monthly to Hotel Managers, attractions, and various organizations in the Rockford Region to inform them of citywide events. In addition press conferences and press releases offer awareness to the community.
- Notifications are sent to downtown business owners when tournament or conference events are held at the BMO Harris Bank Center or UW Health Sports Factory.
- RACVB notifies local restaurants and businesses of upcoming events by distributing a calendar of events and by posting on gorockford.com.
- Work with meeting/event planners to expedite any conflicting events that may overlap.

There have been no significant concerns raised by venues or neighbors in the past year.

**I am reporting compliance.**

Prepared by: John Groh & Josh Albrecht 5/24/17

**INCIDENTAL  
INFORMATION**

# NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



## **RACVB Wins Best Tourism Marketing and Best Branding Initiative at IL Governor's Conference on Travel & Tourism**

Campaigns highlighting Cheap Trick's Rock & Roll Hall of Fame induction and Bring Your Game 2 Rockford featuring tourism ambassador Fred VanVleet honored

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 24, 2017**

**ROCKFORD, IL** — The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (RACVB) was honored during the Illinois Governor's Conference on Travel & Tourism with two of the top destination marketing awards in the state. Hosted by Enjoy Illinois, the annual conference was held in Springfield, Illinois March 20-22, 2017.

Recognition to the RACVB was given for "**Best Tourism Marketing Campaign**" featuring Cheap Trick's induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. The campaign featured a wide variety of integrated advertising including:

- Creating the website [www.GoTrickford.com](http://www.GoTrickford.com) highlighting all things Cheap Trick and Rockford.
- A video with Chad Smith of the Red Hot Chili Peppers talking about Cheap Trick and their connection to their hometown of Rockford. The video has been viewed more than 120,000 times between Facebook and Youtube and reached more than 260,000 people.
- Each band member's childhood street was renamed in their honor.
- Special "Dream Police" welcome signs were installed at key roads entering the city.
- A mayor proclamation stated: "Rockford (unofficially officially) renamed Trickford."
- Streetlight banners were displayed throughout the community.
- Billboards were erected throughout the community.
- A comprehensive digital advertising campaign received more than 1.4 million impressions.
- Featured on WGN-TV's "Around Town" segment with a live remote from the Coronado Theatre and other downtown Rockford attractions and an on-air interview with Rick Nielsen.

Recognition was also given for "**Best Branding Initiative**" featuring the Bring Your Game 2 Rockford (#BYG2RKFD) sports tourism brand and RACVB sports tourism ambassador Fred VanVleet of the Toronto Raptors. The campaign was launched in November 2016 during a press conference at the UW Health Sports Factory. Other highlights of the campaign include:

- Announcing local basketball favorite Fred VanVleet as the RACVB's first Sports Tourism Ambassador.
- More than 2 million earned media impressions.
- Advertising with industry publications like Sports Planning Guide and Sports Travel.
- Branding at industry trade shows such as US Sports Congress.
- Branded merchandise direct marketed to industry professionals, including shirts, socks, clocks, darts and mini basketball hoops.
- An all-new Bring Your Game 2 Rockford sports tourism showcase video.
- The Fred VanVleet All-Star Party fundraiser at the District Bar & Grill.
- Billboards erected in Rockford featuring Fred VanVleet.

—MORE—



“We think it is very fitting that both of these projects focused on individuals who help to make Rockford a unique and inspired destination,” said John Groh, RACVB president/CEO. “Our staff works hard throughout the year to share the great stories of our people and the community. The awards are a wonderful recognition of the work they do in showcasing our region to the world. We are honored to receive the awards on behalf of a great community.”

In addition to the Governor’s Conference wins, RACVB projects garnered branding and marketing agency GrahamSpencer several American Advertising Federation ADDY awards at the 2017 competition presented by the Northern Illinois Advertising Federation. Winning ADDYs included BYG2RKFD Sports Tourism advertising insert; Trickford USA website ([www.GoTrickford.com](http://www.GoTrickford.com)); Welcome to Trickford advertising campaign; In Good Company video and digital advertising campaign.

*Illinois Governor’s Conference on Travel & Tourism recognizes innovative tourism promotional and marketing initiatives from across the state. Representatives of destination marketing organizations, trade associations, chambers of commerce, convention and visitor bureaus, tourism attractions, museums and cultural institutions, restaurants, hotels, retail and entertainment centers and other travel-related companies who are registered to attend the conference are invited to submit entries.*

**RACVB exists** to drive quality of life and economic growth for the citizens of Rockford and Winnebago County through tourism marketing and destination development. [gorockford.com](http://gorockford.com)

###

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Andrea Mandala, Marketing & Communications Manager: 815.489.1664 or [amandala@gorockford.com](mailto:amandala@gorockford.com)

## Rockford Region Wins Big – Again!

A 15 year tradition continues and other big wins announced

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 6, 2017

**What:** The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau celebrates a 15 year relationship with Illinois Kids Wrestling Federation and announces several brand new big wins in the sports and meetings markets that have been secured for the 2017 and 2018 seasons.

**When:** **Thursday, March 9, 2017**  
**1 p.m.**

**Where:** **RACVB (annex)**  
102 North Main Street  
Rockford, IL 61101

**Why:** **RACVB's sales team** reaches out to local, regional and national tournament directors and meeting planners to highlight the benefits of hosting tournaments and meetings in the Rockford region. These efforts result in booking large-scale and non-traditional tournaments and events that attract visitors, drive economic development and retain relationships for community-wide growth and prosperity.

**Who:** Presenters will speak on behalf of organizations participating in the upcoming tournaments and convention. The big wins for 2017-2018 are:

- **America's Table Tennis Team Championships**
- **Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses Convention**
- **American Amateur Baseball Congress (AABC) World Series**
- **North American Fast Pitch Association (NAFA) Masters East World Series**
- **2018 USA Ultimate College Championships**

**RACVB exists** to drive quality of life and economic growth for the citizens of Rockford and Winnebago County through tourism marketing and destination development. [gorockford.com](http://gorockford.com)

###

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Andrea Mandala, Marketing & Communications Manager: 815.489.1664  
[/amandala@gorockford.com](mailto:amandala@gorockford.com)

# NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



## Jehovah's Witnesses to Bring Regional Convention Back to Rockford

*This multi-weekend event is expected to draw  
15,000 attendees to the region*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 9, 2017**

**Rockford, IL** – The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is thrilled to welcome the annual **Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses** to Rockford. This three-weekend gathering will be held at the **BMO Harris Bank Center** in Rockford, **July 28-30, August 4-6 and August 11-13, 2017.**

This big win for the Rockford region will draw approximately **15,000 attendees** who are expected to visit from Milwaukee, Madison, Dubuque, Davenport, Kenosha, Racine and the Chicagoland area. The estimated economic impact of the convention is nearly \$589,500 and more than 4,500 room nights are anticipated to be filled during the three weekends.

"It's an honor to welcome back thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses to the Rockford region. This will be the eighth year we've hosted the convention and we are working diligently with the convention organizers, staff at the BMO Harris Bank Center and other local area businesses to ensure our guests have a memorable experience while they're here," said Lindsay Arellano, Director of Sales and Servicing.

The event theme this year is "Don't Give Up" and features several talks and videos that teach Scriptural lessons. Interviews and re-enactments show how to apply Bible principles to every day life. The event is open to the public. There is no admission cost and no collections are held. All programs begin at 9:20 a.m. and end at various times in the afternoon. A complete schedule including more information about the Jehovah's Witnesses can be found at [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org).

"Every effort is made to arrange large gatherings like this in peaceful and centralized locations where entire families and the local community in general can concentrate on sound counsel from God's Word the Bible. We feel Rockford, Illinois provides such an environment," said Peter Arthurs, Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses media services overseer and Cherry Valley Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses local elder.

*The Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses has been in existence for 100 years. The "Don't Give Up" annual convention will be held throughout the United States and around the world (481 U.S. conventions and 268 England.) There are currently 8,340,982 Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide, 10,115,264 free home Bible courses conducted, 119,485 congregations in 240 lands and 1,983,763,754 volunteer hours in the ministry. Locally there are: 11 English, 4 Spanish, 1 ASL Congregations.*

*The mission of the RACVB is to drive quality of life and economic growth for our citizens through tourism marketing and destination development. [www.gorockford.com](http://www.gorockford.com)*

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Andrea Mandala, RACVB Marketing & Communications Manager: 815.489.1664 or [amandala@gorockford.com](mailto:amandala@gorockford.com)

# FAST FACTS

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



## U.S. Congressman Adam Kinzinger to Visit with Rockford Area Travel & Tourism Industry Leaders

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 22, 2017

**WHAT:** Congressman Adam Kinzinger will meet with the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, state and local officials and area business leaders for a roundtable event to discuss the economic benefits of travel to Illinois.

**WHEN:** 2 p.m., Thursday, February 23, 2017.

**WHERE:** **Anderson Japanese Gardens**  
318 Spring Creek Road  
Rockford, IL 61107

**WHO:** Congressman Adam Kinzinger along with local and regional travel and tourism leaders. The event is not open to the public, but media is welcome to attend.

**MORE:** The Travel Talks travel and tourism roundtable is an effort to develop and build champions in Congress for the travel industry and its employees in their states and districts. The event will highlight stories of local travel leaders, give an economic update of the tourism industry in Greater Rockford, and offer an opportunity for participants to share their thoughts on sustaining and growing this vital industry for the State of Illinois.

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# FAST FACTS

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



## The Payoff Keeps Getting Better: Multi-Weekend Tournaments Booked in the Rockford Region

*Two tournaments; combined seven weekends with 2.1M EEI*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 29, 2017

**What:** The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is pleased to welcome two multi-weekend tournaments to the Rockford region beginning this weekend. The **Rockford Raptors Soccer Club's Puma Cup** returns to the Rockford region for a 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. The **Illinois United States Bowling Congress Bowling Association (USBC) Men's State Tournament** is back to the Rockford region for the first time since 1973. Both events are expected to generate a combined **11,525 room nights** and an estimated **\$2.1 million in economic impact** that directly supports local area businesses and continued tourism efforts.

**Where/When:** **2017 Puma Cup ([rockfordraptors.org](http://rockfordraptors.org))**

**Date:** The Puma Champions Cup College Showcase will take place Friday, Saturday and Sunday, March 31-April 2. The Puma Champions Cup will take place Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 7-9.

**Location:** Both tournaments will be played at Mercyhealth Sportscore One (Rockford, IL) and Mercyhealth Sportscore Two and Wedgbury Stadium (Loves Park, IL.)

**Economic Impact:** Combined total for both weekends is 10,500 room nights, \$1,875,060 Estimated Economic Impact

**Note:** The Puma Champions Cup College Showcase includes approximately 210 teams representing U12-U19 year old athletes in boys' and girls' divisions. The high level of competition attracts approximately 82 college coaches to scout and recruit players. The Puma Champions Cup is a competition for 539 teams representing mid to lower level boys' and girls' teams in the U8-U19 age range. These combined tournaments include teams traveling from across the Midwest, Colorado and including 20 international teams from Canada. Admission is no cost and spectators are encouraged to attend.

**2017 Illinois United States Bowling Congress Bowling Association (USBC) Men's State Tournament ([ibabowl.com](http://ibabowl.com))**

**Date:** April 1-2, April 8-9, April 22-23, April 29-30, May 6-7

**Location:** Don Carter Lanes, Rockford, IL

**Economic Impact:** 1,025 room nights, \$184,500 Estimated Economic Impact

**Notes:** Admission is no cost and spectators are encouraged to attend.

-MORE-

**Quote:** “We haven’t had the opportunity to host the Men’s State Bowling tournament in many years and are happy to have the chance to host them once again this year. It’s great that our local bowling facilities are contributing to the positive changes happening in this community,” said John Sommer, Don Carter Lanes owner and president. “We are grateful to work with local organizations, like the Rockford Men’s Bowling Association and the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, who are determined to make sure elite bowling groups continue choosing the Rockford region to host their tournaments.”

**Why:** RACVB’s sales team reaches out to tournament directors and meeting planners to highlight the benefits of hosting tournaments and other events in the Rockford region. These events are beneficial as they foster economic development and growth within our community.

“These Big Win tournaments are directly responsible for boosting our local economy in the Rockford region throughout the next few months. We’ve hosted Puma Cup for **many** years now and it runs so smoothly because of the region’s great sports facilities and partnerships we’ve made with the Rockford Raptors and Rockford Park District,” said Lindsay Arellano, RACVB director of sales and servicing. “We’re also thrilled to welcome back the IBA Men’s State Bowling Tournament to the region. The last time Rockford hosted this tournament was in 1973. The USBC and our local bowling organizations work hand-in-hand to host successful tournaments here. It’s an honor to work alongside such dedicated people and we encourage folks to come out and support these events over the next several weekends.”

**RACVB exists** to drive quality of life and economic growth for the citizens of Rockford and Winnebago County through tourism marketing and destination development. [gorockford.com](http://gorockford.com)

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# NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



## Fred VanVleet & RACVB to Host First FVV Summer Camp & Fan Fest, June 23-25

Kids kindergarten – high school are encouraged to take part in basketball camp; Families encouraged to take part in Fan Fest

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 15, 2017**

**ROCKFORD, IL** – Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau and its Brand Ambassador and Toronto Raptors guard Fred VanVleet are teaming up for the first ever Fred VanVleet Summer Camp and Fan Fest on June 23-25 at the UW Health Sports Factory.

“Giving back to the community is important to me. I hope through the FVV Summer Camp that we can impart some of the wisdom I have gained to the youth in the Rockford region,” said VanVleet. “I’m looking forward to having a lot of fun at this event and sharing some great moments with the community.”

The basketball camp runs on Saturday and Sunday, June 24-25, and is designed for boys and girls in kindergarten through high school. Kids can sign up for a one day session or two day session. The camp will run from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. both days and lunch is provided by Owly Oop Sports Pub. Attendees will learn skills, drills and compete in contests during the camp. Registration includes a T-shirt, goodie bag, boxed lunch and free admission to the Fan Fest on Friday, June 23. Registration is \$50 for one day and \$90 for two days.

The Friday Fan Fest kicks off the weekend from 5 p.m. – 9 p.m. on Friday, June 23, and is open to the public to come and explore the UW Health Sports Factory and to take part in a variety of sports related activities and fun games and experiences. There will be a gaming lounge, dunking contests, bouncy houses, agility drills and, of course, Fred VanVleet himself. There will also be a three-point shootout and community dunk contest where people can enter to win a grand prize and trophy! More details to come soon at <https://www.gorockford.com/events/fredvanvleet/>.

Admission to the Fan Fest is \$5 with proceeds going to the RACVB Foundation, a 501(c)3 non-profit focused on improving the quality of life in the Rockford region through destination development projects such as beautification, public art and special events. Tickets can be purchased at the door or in advance at <https://www.gorockford.com/events/fredvanvleet/>.

-MORE-

### **FVV Summer Basketball Camp**

- **When:** Saturday, June 24 - Sunday, June 25
- **Time:** 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. both days with lunch break
- **Where:** UW Health Sports Factory
- **Who:** Boys and Girls ages K-12 grade.
- **Registration Fee:** \$50 one day; \$90 both days
  - Register in person at the RACVB, 102 N. Main, or online at <https://www.gorockford.com/events/fredvanvleet/>
- **Camp Info:** Fred VanVleet returns to Rockford for the first-ever FVV Summer Camp! Boys and Girls ages K-12 are invited to participate. Receive instruction from Fred, local basketball coaches and athletes; a fun experience to learn from an NBA pro! Registration includes a camp T-shirt, goodie bag, boxed lunch, and one free ticket to the Friday Fan Fest at the UW Health Sports Factory.

### **FVV Fan Fest**

- **When:** Friday, June 23
- **Time:** 5 p.m. - 9 p.m.
- **Where:** UW Health Sports Factory
- **Who:** Open to the public -- All ages event (Children 14 and under must be accompanied by an adult)
- **Admission:** \$5 per person. (FVV Camp attendees receive free admission.) Purchase tickets at the door or in advance online at <https://www.gorockford.com/events/fredvanvleet/>
- **Fan Fest Info:** There will be a gaming lounge, dunking contests, bouncy houses agility drills and, of course, Fred VanVleet himself. There will also be a three-point shootout and community dunk contest where people can enter to win a grand prize and trophy! More details to come soon at [www.gorockford.com/fredvanvleet](http://www.gorockford.com/fredvanvleet). Sponsors of the event will have a reception with Fred upstairs at Owly Oop Sports Pub.

The FVV Summer Camp & Fan Fest is supported by the RACVB, Rockford Park District, WREX, Rock River Times and Owly Oop Sports Pub. Call 815.489.1655 for sponsorship information.

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###

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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# SPORT STORIES

ADVANCING THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF SPORTS TOURISM



**THURSDAY, JUNE 22 @ 7 PM**

(doors open 6:30 pm)



**VETERANS MEMORIAL HALL**

(211 N. Main St., Rockford)



**FREE TO THE PUBLIC**

(reserve a seat at [gorockford.com/sportstories](http://gorockford.com/sportstories))



**FEATURING  
KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

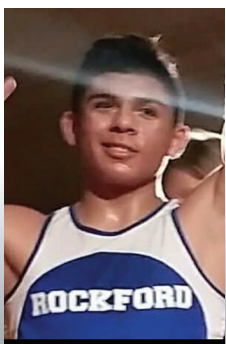
**COREY  
ANDERSON**

**UFC #6 Light Heavyweight  
in the World**

**2014 The Ultimate Fighter  
Season 19 Champion**

**Rockton, IL Native**

## WITH GUEST PANELISTS



**ANGEL  
MARTINEZ**

**Team USA Boxing  
National Champion**

**Golden Gloves  
National Champion**

**Auburn High School  
Senior**



**MISTY  
OPAT**

**4-Time NJCAA  
Women's Basketball  
Champion Head Coach**

**12-time NJCAA  
Champion as Rock  
Valley College's  
Director of Athletics**



**FRED  
VANVLEET**

**Toronto Raptors**

**4 Consecutive NCAA  
Tournaments with  
Wichita State University**

**Auburn High School  
Alum**



A Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau Production

Limited tickets available. Reserve a seat at [gorockford.com/sportstories](http://gorockford.com/sportstories)

