

## **CIVIC CENTER COMMISSION**

Date: Thursday, September 22, 2022 at 9:00am  
DCU Center, 50 Foster Street, Worcester, MA  
2nd Floor conference room  
and virtually via Webex

### **MEETING MINUTES**

#### **Attendees**

##### **Civic Center Commissioners Present**

*Chair Brissette, District 1, Lowell Alexander, Dist. 2 Commissioner Knowlton, Dist. 3, Commissioner Herideen, Dist. 5, and Commissioner Economou, Dist. 1*

##### **Civic Center Commissioner Absent**

None

##### **City Staff**

Julie Lynch, Chief of Public Facilities

##### **ASM Global (SMG):**

Sandy Dunn, Jim Moughan, and Melissa Bishop

#### **1. Call to Order**

Chair Brissette called the meeting to order at 9:03am.

#### **2. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes**

Meeting minutes for the June 23, 2022 virtual meeting will be distributed and voted for acceptance at the October meeting.

#### **3. Project Status Updates – City of Worcester**

- a. Ms. Lynch noted the Vault Project is ongoing with some minor work in the Green Room for HVAC ventilation controls integration. DPF would like to turn the Green Room over to ASM Global as soon as possible, through a contingent permit. Exterior work taking place to 9/26 to 10/5 close up street at door 26. Don't have schedule for pending street work. Ms. Dunn noted DCU has a sponsor for the interior of the Green Room for 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Saving the City \$10 to \$15K in outfitting the space. This is known as the Executive Office to ASM Global.
- b. Ms. Lynch noted DPF is meeting with National Grid and Populous Architects, the new designer, to discuss the future vault design.
- c. Telephone and camera upgrades are substantially complete with 77 of 78 cameras installed and operational. Programming and credentialing has to take place on ASM Global's part. One camera was damaged due to water and this will fall under a repair and not a project cost. The phones we believed would be operational at the end of October, however there is still ongoing infrastructure that has to be coordinated with the City and ASM Global, so DPF does not have an end date at this time.  
The City has provided temporary switches for use in bringing the cameras and phone systems online. The updated date of switch delivery is November, but this is tentative and subject to change. No expected change in performance of the temporary switches.

- d. ASM has received the sample ballroom chair from Shev, which was approved by ASM Global. DPF will inspect it after the meeting, which does meet the spec. DPF expects to approve it. 8-10 week lead time has moved to 12 weeks. The existing chairs will be donated to non-profits. DPF has started a spreadsheet and have been contacted by groups. ASM Global will have a social media or written campaign in the City of Worcester to offer the rest of the chairs. ASM Global will use the time and will look to the Commission to create criteria for non-profit: 501C3, in the City of Worcester. DPF will share list of requestors with ASM Global.
- e. Controls upgrade for HVAC are operational. DPF can include ASM Global in training of staff on the Alerton software.
- f. Mini split at the Glazy Susan is complete. As 2021 and 2022 projects are finished, DPF will move projects to a completed project list, with a running balance of available funding in a separate line item. Chair Brissette noted that everything that is imperative should get onto that new list.
- g. Phase II work with Populous and Arcadis is underway. The fire notification system needs to be upgraded. DPF and ASM Global have been working with Populous Architects who have provided existing conditions reports and will present an estimate. The cost of all improvement is much greater than \$21M. DPF is looking at the \$21M as a deferred maintenance line item. ASM Global has expressed the importance of upgrading the seating in the arena bowl. The project team will be reviewing the scope and associated line item costs with DPF and ASM Global. A schedule will be developed to determine cash flow and borrowing in order to meet the spending requirements and bid schedules. DPF will follow the short term work with a long term plan for substantial building improvements. DPF will be requesting that the City request federal and/or state funding for broader improvements. For greater energy efficiencies, and to attract more shows or events we will be asking Populous to develop a scope of work and associated estimate from Populous for these long term improvements. This will likely be a phased project in order to support ongoing operations. Chair Brissette noted that it was mentioned in another meeting that money was going to Springfield and Boston and that they had forgotten about us. We should and likely will work with our local delegation. Seating is not original, but risers are. Comm. Herideen questioned why Worcester has not received funds. Chair Brissette clarified that Worcester is getting funding, but that there are additional funds that we should be going after. Springfield and Boston and Worcester all receive funding, but we need to request additional and will do so through a proposal.

#### **4. AMS Global Reporting**

##### **a. Monthly Highlights/Financial Statements**

Ms. Dunn presented a new format for the Monthly Highlight Report, including additional handouts. One is a sports journal insert, which went into the popular Sports Business Journal, an example of the corporate products ASM Global is circulating. ASM Global works with the national group for marketing support; an efficient use of funding.

ASM Global visited Fenway Park's MGM Music Hall with 5,000 seat capacity. This is another venue in the Boston Marketplace, and will certainly impact the DCU. Specifically geared to the music industry.

Service Catalog was an additional handout. This comprehensive document is updated daily and is a menu of corporate services including alerts, health care information, Workday, Inform software is for bookings, sales, tracing, and client information capture, Catering Menus, ASM Global Insights uses QR codes for surveys and to improve operations, Microsoft Dynamics 365 transition will occur in the near term, etc.

Ms. Dunn further presented a summary of facility fees. Railers and Pirates are raising facility fees from \$2 to \$2.50/ticket. Family shows are recommended to remain at \$4/ticket. Convention Center TicketMaster events remain at \$3/ticket. Recommended changes include increase of concert and entertainment events from \$4 to \$5/ticket. Additionally \$.50 for a walk up fee will be added to Convention Center events tickets. ASM Global looked to other vendors and believe these additional cost is required to meet recent financial demands including payroll and utility costs. This is one way to raise revenue without raising rents.

Chair Brissette questioned what revenue would be generated through the \$.50 ticket increase for walk up fee to the Convention Center. Mr. Moughan noted for example the Home Show or RV show could be 500 to 2,500 people per day. This is a good time to make this change with a change in the promoter with the former promoter essentially providing free tickets to the public. Comm. Herideen expressed concern in raising the price and questioned how the \$1.00 was arrived at. With the competitor facility fees shown as a mean average and not a median average with Gillette for instance skewing the average because it was an outlier, or were there other sources of information that informed this decision. With inflation and competition of other venues we would like to factor in those other considerations. Ms. Dunn noted that ASM Global considered other similar venues in the area. With \$4 as the minimum nationwide, a New England venue should be higher than other markets. Providence is also intending to raise ticket prices, as other venues will in the near future. This is on the high ticket items, and this will not be applicable for some shows until next year.

Chair Brissette requested a motion to increase pricing, with a motion to keep family shows at the same price. Comm. Herideen abstained and then opposed this motion. All other Commissioners approved this motion. The motion was passed.

Ms. Dunn presented event highlights including All Elite Wrestling. A VIP package is automatically presented to the purchaser with bartender, bathroom, coat room. There is a cap on this VIP seating. F&B per cap is 54% higher than the comparable wrestling event.

Mr. Moughan noted that Gamers Shine 2022 event was well attended. The Northeast Propane Trade Show had strong food and beverage sales. The Women's Leadership Conference, the largest in the region with 650 attendees. It sells out every year.

Upcoming events were presented by Ms. Dunn including WWE on Friday, 10/7 and Railers opening game on 10/22; Walker Hayes country show on Saturday, 10/8; Disney on Ice had over \$1M in ticket sales last week, which is successful with no pushback on ticket sales. Iron Maiden is sold out on 10/17.

Mr. Moughan noted upcoming events including the Jiu Jitsu World League Competition on 9/24 is coming; Boston Got Sole will be back on 10/8; Groove Dance Competition on 10/16, etc.

Massachusetts Pirates Youth Football Camp was summarized by Ms. Dunn with 125 attendees, and coaches from the WPD Gang Unit. Community Initiative were presented by Ms. Dunn including School supply drive.

## **5. Technology Updates**

Ms. Dunn noted the telephones, security cameras and time and attendance tracking were being implemented.

## **6. Finance Update**

Ms. Dunn noted the year end slide for June 30<sup>th</sup> and the Monthly Highlights slide. Ms. Bishop reported that through June 30, 2022 net income at the DCU Center was approximately \$662,224. Compared to the original budget for 2022 of a loss of (\$500,800) resulting in a positive of \$1,163,024. This is due to 35 more event days than budget and new negotiated ASM Global Ticketmaster deal resulting in \$506,987 in additional ticket rebate money. Additionally, a return to live events quicker than anticipated let to the total event income for fiscal year at \$1,039,517.

Total income for July was \$111,052 over budget. July did result in a loss of \$79K, however it is \$169K over budget. This resulted from a live televised AEW Wrestling event that was not budgeted for. Savings from indirect expenses were \$57K.

Chair Brissette questioned whether or not the fixed utility costs were considered in this year's budget. Ms. Dunn answered that ASM Global followed up with the City on the terms of contracts for fixed utility pricing.

The City received FEMA Funding for \$1,615,630 in grant funding to offset 70% of losses in two fiscal years due to Covid. ASM Global will speak to City regarding recognition of these funds in ASM Global's books. Melissa provide comparisons to typical prior years to last year 2021. Convention Center is 74% of the way back to "normal", and the Arena is 88% back.

## **7. Marketing**

Ms. Dunn noted as of 6/16 DCU Center has a total of 39,206 social media followers. Mr. Moughan provided an update on contracts for this year and future events including returning and new clients.

Ms. Dunn noted the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Civic Center and 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Convention Center this year. Ms. Dunn noted the first show on September 2, 1982 with Frank Sinatra. A wall in the arena will be wrapped with a list of all the events, and retro tee shirt noting every artist that has performed.

## **5. Adjourn**

Chair Brissette motioned to adjourn. Motion was accepted at 10:05am.

**Next meeting: October 27, 2022 at 9am**