

# CIVIC CENTER COMMISSION

## MEETING MINUTES

6-24-2021

**Attendees:**

**CCC Members Present:** Chairman John Harrity, Vice Chairman Jim Knowlton, Commissioner John Brissette and Commissioner Penelope Herideen

**Remote:** Commissioner Lowell Alexander

**City:** John Odell, Candee Raphaelson

**ASM:** Sandy Dunn, Jim Moughan, Melissa Bishop

**Call to Order:** Chairman Harrity brought the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m. John Odell took the roll call. All Commissioners present. Commissioner Brissette made a motion to accept the minutes, Commissioner Herideen second. All in favor.

**Project Status Update:** Chairman Harrity then asked John Odell for the Project status update. John reported that the Vault design was finalized but National Grid had additional work they wanted added in to the process. One piece can be accommodated into the existing design and two others will be included if able or added later with an upgrade and change order if needed. Commissioner Harrity then asked about the ARP Stimulus money and John confirmed that due to the field hospital being in the convention center and the possibility of if needed used again; the DCU is eligible for the funds and will be able to save the Capital monies that would have been expended for other things. Chairman Harrity asked if the entire amount and John confirmed yes, \$950,000.00. He then asked about the window pane and John said it was done with the correct glass and looked great. Commissioner Brissette then asked if the money would revert back to the Special District and John confirmed that it would.

Next update was on the telephone and security cameras. John relayed that it was out to bid and AuCoin will do-it would be scheduled as soon as possible-perhaps even next week and then two other vendors will come in-Siemens for the security cameras and Presidio for the phones. Only wrinkle is the circuitry is back-ordered so there will be a delay. The cameras will be done in two phases – the 60 percent in stock first and then when the rest after the items become available. The telephones should all be shipped and available by the time the work is completed. Chairman Harrity then asked about the signage. John said it was being done as we speak and should be completed by next week. Chairman Harrity stated the invoice came in less than expected and John said yes and they added extra work when it was discovered that one sign was damaged. He stated it came in on time and on budget.

Ice Plant control system was next. Honeywell was already upgrading the ESCo control system so it was determined instead of another company to roll all the controls together since they are similar systems and extensive throughout the entire building. They will come back and do a practice run at the end of the summer before the Rainers start to insure all is working and that the operators of the different controls have the proper training. Chairman Harrity asked if it would be ready by the Rainers opening game on October 23<sup>rd</sup> and John said yes.

John then explained that the expected architectural design from Populous was delayed so that there may be a need for a summer meeting to execute the contract. The design estimate came in at 1.2 million and the available funding issue should not be a problem. Commissioner Brissette asked about the ballroom chairs funding and John said he expected there to be money available and would be in Phase II. Sandy Dunn reminded the Commission that her staff would go through all the old chairs and contact purchasing to see if any of them could be put to reuse. Chairman Harrity expressed how wonderful the Cousy statue event was and thanked both Sandy and her staff and John and his staff for all the hard work. He said they did our city proud. He said the Cousy family and Bob Cousy were ecstatic and reminded the Commission there was one more event naming Crompton Park. John Odell in turn congratulated Sandy on a magical, challenging job that went very well. Sandy said it was a great day and the coverage was terrific. Chairman Harrity then commented on the wonderful speakers and what a pleasure it was. Commissioner Brissette thanked Chairman Harrity for spearheading the event. Chairman Harrity remarked on all the wonderful speakers including Mr. Cousy who will turn 93 in August.

**ASM:** Sandy said hopefully last Covid update. She is hopeful that the restrictions will be discontinued. The box office is at full capacity which is helpful for the Pirates tickets and people able to sit where they want to. They are hoping for 100 percent mobile ticketing in the future. At this time if someone wants a paper ticket it is still available. Chairman Harrity asked about the food sales. Sandy explained that one stand still accepts cash and the rest are credit cards and the goal is for cash to go away. Commissioner Brissette asked about someone standing in line and then discovering this and inquired about signage so as not to have frustration for customers. Sandy explained that there are signs but every stand can accept cash if necessary-it is just not advertised. Commissioner Herideen thanked Chairman Harrity for bringing it up and spoke to the fact that many elderly still rely on cash. Sandy discussed the idea of a gift card that could be purchased with cash and then if money left on it use somewhere other than the Civic Center. The idea is being explored as an alternative. Sandy then discussed the Human Resources challenges to find people to work. They are all set for the Pirates games but come October with more events it will be challenging. A new HR person will be starting on July 7<sup>th</sup> and work heavily on recruitment in August and September so as to have the people when the hours become available. A restart plan has been put into place starting this week so that those that have been furloughed for 15 months know the process. Some people are responding that they are not coming back and others depending on if full or part time are being phased in with the new CDC guidelines.

Melissa reported a net loss of \$883,533 July through March. The original budget July through March was a net income of \$108,915 leaving the center \$992,768 below budget. Year to date savings on indirect expenses as compared to budget total \$2,631,393 due to continued mitigated measures. The forecast for FY21 has been updated with four graduations and three Pirates games. This brings the projected loss down from \$560,545 to \$477,192. Additional graduations are being discussed that would occur before June 30<sup>th</sup> providing an additional positive impact. These results would be before the re-opening

expenses of \$748,923. The final bill for the UMass field hospital will be generated after the final demobilization. Sandy reported that ASM has been working with Ticketmaster on ticket sales for a year and a half and since the merger they are responsible for 12 million tickets a year and were able to get a much better deal with Ticketmaster. More than 10 percent increase. Sandy reported for Marketing that the Pirates home opener was terrific and NESN covered it. They are seeing about a thousand people a game and would love to raise those numbers. Flags were put out for Memorial Day and kept up through the statue dedication and plans are to use them on every national holiday in the future. The marketing director attended an important conference that was virtual this year. Networking with others in the ASM Global family is a very important tool to build connections and know what is going on in other buildings as well as the industry itself. There will also be a monthly addition that is in this packet- "Keeping' it Social" where ASM can see what is trending on social media.

Operations: The security has been extremely helpful with the graduations and helping people find their way. After the City Manager expressed that landscaping "up their game", this has been done and it is looking great. The Pirates requested a larger field suite and it has been enlarged and new furniture and will also be available for other events. Sandy thanked Rick Trifero and his contractors for all the help before and after the arrival of the Cousy statue. Chairman Harrity then asked about what was put inside the statue and Sandy informed all that since one side opened they put a time capsule in which included the invitation from the dedication ceremony as well as an autographed photo of the picture of the conception of the statue.

Sales: Jim Moughan is out so Sandy reported on the graduations that were successful as the restrictions were lifted and the protocols were in place. Chairman Harrity asked about the concessions and Sandy reported they did well. Becker was water only and courtesy water was available. The sales manager has returned and it is great to have her back and Betty will be back part time twice a week to help with administrative work. They have had site inspections for various commercials and movies and Sandy gave a shout out to Edgar Luna from Economic Development as the people she spoke with all said he did a tremendous job helping with permits etc. and since Worcester was less expensive than Boston it helped a great deal.

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9 a.m.

Chairman Harrity asked for a motion to adjourn-Commissioner Brunette made the motion, Commissioner Knowlton seconded. Meeting ended at 9:45.

