

**COLLINSVILLE METROPOLITAN EXPOSITION
AUDITORIUM AND OFFICE BUILDING AUTHORITY
GATEWAY CENTER
April 27, 2017
Cahokian Room
Special Board Meeting – 5:15 p.m.**

Call to Order

The April 27, 2017 Special Board Meeting of the Collinsville Metropolitan Exposition Auditorium and Office Building Authority was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by Mark Steyer.

Roll Call

MEMBERS:

Present: John Bitzer, Bob Kinamore, Mark Schusky, Mark Steyer, Ginger Trucano, Kim Thebeau and Kevin Weinacht

Absent: Fontez Mark and Jim Ferris

Also present: Tracy Robinette, Director of Human Resources and Administrative Services

Guests: Charlie Johnson, CEO of Johnson Consulting and Jack Matthews, Project Analyst with Johnson Consulting

Public Input

None

Unfinished Business

Long-range Strategic Plan Focus Group

Johnson briefly updated the board in regards to the Focus Groups that were held with City Officials, local hotel representatives, along with Gateway Center customers and staff.

Steyer asked which representatives of the City of Collinsville participated in the Focus Group meetings.

Johnson stated Mayor Miller, Councilman Jeff Stehman, City Manager Mitch Bair, Councilman Cheryl Brombolich and Councilman David Jerome all attended.

Johnson stated the customers they met with today were very complimentary and very pleased with the Center. They would love to see enhancement done to the building as its showing its age. They are also wondering why there is not an ADA accessible connector between the Doubletree Hotel and the convention center.

Johnson stated they met with the hotels that included Doubletree, Hampton and Days Inn. The Doubletree contributes that about \$350,000 a year business that can be tied directly to Gateway Center. Hampton, Comfort and Days Inn representatives states 10% of the total business they receive is tied directly to Gateway Center.

Johnson stated that they also met with the Gateway Center Staff.

Johnson stated he has been receiving many suggestions for ways to improve Gateway Center. More hotels and retail are needed, and the surrounding area to the convention center needs to be revitalized. The Eastport Plaza area is lacking green space, and ideally there should be more pronounced connection points to the bike trail.

Johnson stated tomorrow they will be meeting with more of Gateway Center's customers and stakeholders.

Thebeau asked if they received any negative feedback.

Matthews stated the only negative feedback that was received was the need for a better walkway to the Doubletree, a connecting hotel and outside wedding space. Participants also questioned why the City of Collinsville is not as progressive as other surrounding cities. Another drawback for Collinsville is not having a dedicated tourism bureau.

Thebeau inquired should we look at having more in- house events.

Johnson stated if we had more self-promoted events we would have to be willing to take risks. He said that finding the right window of opportunity to host an in-house event requires careful evaluation of the booking calendar. The last thing you want to do is negate another event that desires to utilize the facility.

Johnson asked the board how they would like to be kept abreast of any further developments.

After a brief discussion the board reached a consensus to come back for a meeting in approximately 8 weeks.

New Business

None

Executive Session

None

Adjournment

There was no further business to come before the board. A **MOTION** was made by Bitzer and seconded by Weinacht to adjourn the Special Board Meeting. All were in favor. **MOTION** carried. The Special Board Meeting was adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

**The Next Regular Board Meeting
Thursday, May 18, 2017**