

**COLLINSVILLE METROPOLITAN EXPOSITION  
AUDITORIUM AND OFFICE BUILDING AUTHORITY  
GATEWAY CENTER  
August 28, 2017  
Special Board Meeting – 7:00 p.m.  
Meeting Location: Council Chamber/City Hall  
City of Collinsville, 125 S. Center Street Collinsville, IL 62234**

**Call to Order**

The August 28, 2017 Special Board Meeting of the Collinsville Metropolitan Exposition Auditorium and Office Building Authority was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Mark Steyer.

**Roll Call**

MEMBERS:

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

Absent: None

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

Guests: Charlie Johnson, CEO of Johnson Consulting; Ryan Johnson, Managing Director of Johnson Consulting and all of the City Council members.

**Public Input**

None

**Unfinished Business**

**Gateway Center Long-range Strategic Plan Presentation**

Gateway Center Long-Range Strategic Plan Presentation given by Charlie Johnson and Ryan Johnson of Johnson Consulting. Charlie indicated they have yet issued a report, since economic and fiscal impact analysis information is pending.

Ryan explained the objective of the study was to develop strategic recommendations for the Gateway Center. He further explained the tasks they performed for their study which included touring the site and surrounding area, interviewed staff regarding issues and opportunities, reviewed historical events and attendance, operating revenue and expenses of the Gateway Center, analyzed lost business opportunities, inventory, and relevant developments.

Charlie gave a brief description of existing facility and spoke of the five-phase development plan.

Ryan spoke of data collected from historical events based on demand/type of event and attendance. They also calculated revenue and expenses for Gateway Center.

Charlie gave an overview of their lost business analysis. He indicated the Gateway Center acquires about 1/3 of events solicited. He further indicated that facility improvements could help acquiring more events. A survey was done to determine lost opportunities which included alternative venues, date and/or space issues. He spoke of regional competition sites based on the type of event and mentioned the need to facilitate indoor sporting events.

Charlie and Ryan spoke of a survey poll of event users that was conducted. Survey response indicated the facility is well managed, attentive staff, adequate location and space but area lacked attractions/entertainment opportunities. They spoke of hotel trends and average peak room nights generated by the Center. Currently, there are 9 hotels for a total of 852 rooms. One upscale hotel with 236 rooms available. Ryan showed occupancy rates of hotels in comparison with events at the Center.

Charlie highlighted their recommendations for improving Gateway Center to include aesthetic updates, technology upgrade due to lack of cell reception, clean up lobby area (remove kiosk and add a business center), allow for additional storage space, renovate area into a multipurpose space to allow for sporting events, expand LaSalle room and connect to hotel.

Ryan mentioned the need of additional staff to assist with sales and visitors' bureau to promote area. They also mentioned recommendations to improve the surrounding area (more hotel rooms, additional parking, attractions within walking distance). They displayed a map of available acreage that could be developed for hospitality use.

City Manager Bair spoke of a partnership between the City and Gateway Center to address the hotel demand, facilitate the need for sporting events, and overall destination location by maximizing and developing the surrounding area.

Councilman Brombolich inquired of the zoning for the available acreage as displayed in the map. He indicated the map depicts land use. A discussion was had regarding the need for a convention bureau for marketing purposes.

Councilman Jerome mentioned that one of the main reasons for the study was to address how capital improvements for the convention center will be funded after TIF 1 expires within the next few years.

Charlie advised the report has not been completed yet to address funding.

Mayor Miller spoke of the vision of Gateway Center 25 years ago and mentioned the need to partner with Gateway to develop the area.

City Manager Bair agreed that it would be beneficial for both boards to work together to enhance the area and Gateway Center.

Councilman Jerome spoke of the comprehensive plan showing office space for Eastport area but indicated the need to update the plan to incorporate attractions within walking distance.

Councilman Stehman agreed that the City needs to revisit and update the comprehensive plan for Eastport. He mentioned the impact of sporting events and the need to address park facility issues with C.A.R.D.

Councilman Brombolich agreed and added the need to look outside of the Eastport area as well to include areas for future sporting events/tournaments and hospitality use.

Councilman Jerome inquired as to the type of businesses or entertainment venues as a draw for other convention centers.

Charlie indicated this information is part of the planning study.

Trucano advised she was a previous Councilmember for the City of Collinsville. She indicated that this is the first Council that understands how the City benefits by having the Center and is willing to work with the board.

Schusky agreed with Trucano and indicated his appreciation for a collaborative effort.

Steyer thanked Charlie and Ryan for the presentation, which helped him realize some issues.

A discussion was had regarding the need for an adjacent hotel to the Center and/or a connection to DoubleTree hotel.

### **Adjournment**

There was no further business to come before the board. A **MOTION** was made by Schusky and seconded by Bitzer to adjourn the Special Board Meeting. All were in favor. **MOTION** carried. The Special Board Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

**The Next Regular Board Meeting  
Thursday, September 21, 2017**