



## CONVENTION CENTER ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

October 10, 2023 – 9:30 AM

### AGENDA

#### 1. Call to order

Chair Laurence Herrup called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.

#### 2. Approval of Minutes from the September 12, 2023 Meeting (Action Item)

Minutes unanimously approved.

Chair Herrup began the meeting by advising the committee that he will be conducting the meeting a bit out of order. He announced that there were two important matters to discuss during the meeting. The first item of discussion was the hotel development project, and the second is the succession plan for the committee. He expressed frustration over the lack of progress in the hotel development project, which has been ongoing for approximately five and a half years since the project was awarded. The impact of COVID was acknowledged and the force majeure provision in the contract but emphasized that the lack of movement was unacceptable. He furthermore proposed a motion to send a letter to the City Manager expressing the committee's disappointment in the lack of progress in the hotel development project. The letter would urge the City Manager to take all necessary steps to determine whether the developer intends to fulfill their contractual obligations and complete the project. The motion was discussed and put to a vote. Committee members engaged in a discussion regarding the proposed motion. Commissioner John Aleman expressed concerns about the strong language and suggested that they should hear from the developer before considering such a dramatic step. Others stressed the importance of addressing the issue and acting. Vice-Chair Peter Matos suggested scheduling a special meeting with key stakeholders, including the developer and the City Manager, to discuss the project's critical path and the financing. The aim was to better understand the project's timeline, potential delays, and the consequences of not meeting the 10-year deadline. The committee reached a consensus to request a special meeting in two weeks to discuss the critical path for the project, financing progress, and the manager's perspective. The City Manager was invited to participate, and Maria Cerna, Division Director, Capital Improvement Projects would provide insights into the project's timeline. Chair Herrup thanked everyone for their input in this urgent matter.

Onto item number two, Chair Herrup explained that at the previous month's meeting they had inquired about individuals interested in taking over the positions currently held by Peter Matos (Vice-Chair) and themselves. Heather Shaw shared two individuals

expressed their interest in taking on leadership roles within the committee: Robin Jacobs expressed her interest in becoming the Chair, and Antonio Hernandez, who was interested in becoming the Vice Chair. This announcement was confirmed with their agreement. Chair Herrup acknowledged the changes in the commission and the likelihood of run-offs, which could potentially delay the appointments of new leaders until the first quarter of 2024. In light of these circumstances, the Chairperson requested Heather Shaw to inquire with the clerk about the possibility of the board selecting a Chair and Vice Chair at the December meeting. This would ensure that, even without a quorum, the committee could continue its work with a designated Chair and Vice Chair. He emphasized the importance of the committee's ongoing efforts and extended an invitation to members who may no longer be part of the committee to attend future meetings as members of the general public. Lastly, he expressed gratitude for the support provided by committee members, the Convention Center team, and particularly Heather Shaw in her role as the lead person in the city. Chair Herrup commended Heather's communication and organizational skills, highlighting her dedication to the committee.

### **3. Old Business**

#### **a. Status Reports:**

##### **i. City of Miami Beach - Heather Shaw**

Heather mentioned that discussion about bringing the matter of Pride Park to the Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee discussion regarding the utilization of Pride Park. However, the meeting was canceled. She shared that the discussion on Pride Park is now scheduled for the upcoming Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee meeting, which is set to take place later this month on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The motion made during the previous meeting regarding Pride Park was sent as a Letter to Commission (LTC). The status remains unchanged.

The MBCC continues to host City Commission meetings and Commission committee meetings. The City Commission Chamber is expected to be completed by the end of the year. However, there is a possibility that the completion may be extended.

##### **ii. Marketing & Sales – GMCVB – David Whitaker & Carol Motley**

David and Carol highlighted the potential of the destination, the partnership with the team at the Convention Center, and the value of storytelling to promote the location. Carol presented details regarding booking efforts and announced that it appeared that the GMCVB exceeded its goal by securing 14 events for the fiscal year. These events consist of seven (7) P1s and seven (7) P2s, with a notable focus on short-term bookings. Carol discussed room nights and cautious clients were the challenge. Committee member Peter Matos, inquired about the rates for room nights, leading to a discussion about the importance of meeting the revenue goals and the challenges posed by attrition penalties and dealing with the need for multiple hotels. Carol reported efforts to achieve 98% of the booking goal for in-hotel bookings, representing over 109,000 room nights. P1/P2 tentative bookings include EXP Realty and Water Quality. The focus remained on closing deals. The shift in booking trends suggest an increased focus on short-term bookings and the challenges securing long-term commitments.

David discussed the changing role of transportation, the rise of shared ridership and the walkability of Miami Beach. The topic of the Freebee service came up, but Committee member Gloede shared that he thought the company would not service south of the

MBCC. The potential for dedicated trolleys as an interim solution was also discussed. David concluded sharing that there is positive progress underway with secured bookings and remaining focused on the future.

**iii. Operations – OVG360 - Freddie Peterson, Christian Jaramillo, & Ariane Hildebrand**

Freddie noted that sustainability and public transit are increasingly becoming essential aspects of event planning, and the need for better understanding of public transportation in the Miami Beach area is important. Freddie expressed interest in exploring this topic further offline with David Whitaker and Carol Motley.

Christian shared highlights including surpassing MBCC P3 sales goal for FY 23, which was projected to be \$1.2 million and finishing at \$1.4 million, with approximately 75 events. Discussions of the ongoing efforts to secure events for FY 24 were highlighted for the coming months, including the LGBTQ Taskforce Gala, Baptist Health Gala, Cisco, and Art Basel/Design Miami.

Ariane informing the committee of the impressive awards and recognitions received by the MBCC, which includes the Distinctive Achievement Award from Association Conventions and Facilities Magazine, and recognition as one of the 30 best convention centers in the US by The Wall Street Journal.

The MBCC team is focusing on technology enhancements, such as new interactive wayfinding. In addition, the team is working on sustainability initiatives. For example, the team is responding to Cisco's needs for waste diversion and zero waste goals. Furthermore, the team is getting great insight from clients, such as the Independent Hotel Show which emphasized the potential of boutique hotels development.

With respect to marketing and communications, the team has been working on MBCC campus advertising and creating a video highlighting the campus amenities and proximity to citywide amenities. Heather Shaw added the Filmore Theater would be hosting its first event after remodeling the following weekend and its return is a benefit to the campus.

Lastly, plans are ongoing for future digital enhancements to the building, including digital boards, walls, and columns. Freddie shared the importance of leveraging neighboring partners and potential collaborations, with the Lincoln Road Business Improvement District (LRBID) and the Filmore Theater are part of the strategy to connect and activate the MBCC campus. A recent meeting with Amy Rosenberg, the new CEO of the Botanical garden, highlighted ongoing efforts to collaborate with local organizations and businesses.

**iv. Food & Beverage – Sodexo Live! – Danny Medina**

An update on the Rum Room and Venue was provided. The teams have been busy hosting several events over the past weeks. The Hispanic Affairs Committee event was highlighted as a successful gathering with excellent attendance and a great audience. A beautiful reception for 100 people. Building brand awareness and momentum is essential and the event venues will host the Miami Beach Chamber in November.

The Rum Room team will participate in the South Beach Seafood Festival next week, featuring a sampling event and a competition on the 21<sup>st</sup> to add to the marketing and

promotion of the restaurant.

The Sodexo team recently served over 4,000 meals in two (2) days at the Burger King Owners' Franchise Conference and is preparing for the Cisco Partner Summit, where over 2,000 meals will be served daily in seven (7) different service styles throughout the building in early November. Sustainability efforts were discussed, particularly the composting program. Food scraps from events continue to be collected Compost For Life, and turned into usable compost, diverting 79,800 pounds of waste since May 2022.

Notable statistics, to date, from the composting efforts include:

- 11 tons of waste saved from landfills
- 3,594 gallons of gas offset
- 79,231 miles offset
- 527 seedlings planted
- 3,881,602 smartphone charge cycles saved

Chair Herrup expressed thoughts about future considerations for the committee participants. It was noted that in the past, the committee has demonstrated strong commitment and support for enhanced capex for the MBCC. The importance of ongoing support and collaboration between the committee members, the city and the MBCC teams is critical.

Reference was made to the financial data presented by the GMCVB and OVG360, suggesting that investment in capex ensures continued sustainability. The Chair praised the expertise and professionalism of the MBCC teams specifically acknowledging Sodexo Live!, OVG360, and the GMCVB leadership for their fieldwork and dedication to enhancing the MBCC operations and reputation. The need for consistent pressure and advocacy on behalf of the city, as the entity responsible for capex funding, was emphasized.

#### **4. New Business**

#### **5. Good and Welfare**

Mr. Whitaker began by drawing attention to Freddie's comment about the upcoming GMCVB annual meeting, scheduled for Thursday, October 26, 2023. He encouraged everyone to attend. It was noted that there is a nominal \$10 registration fee for the event, which includes a drink ticket valued at more than \$10. Attendees were extended a warm invitation to the annual meeting, where they would have an opportunity to hear the complete story of the organization. Several distinguished speakers were set to address the audience. Special recognition was planned for Mayor Gelber, focusing on his years of leadership and his contributions that have benefited the organization. He was lauded for his commitment to culture and the positive impact this would have on the destination.

Furthermore, gratitude to Chair Herrup was expressed, highlighting his dedicated involvement in the organization and consistent attendance at events. David recognized Chair Herrup as a valuable champion and expressed gratitude for his remarkable support, partnership, and outstanding leadership.

Committee member Gloede posed a question regarding the development on 21<sup>st</sup> and Washington Ave development. Heather replied he may be referring to the Collins Park Workforce Housing Project and that it is proceeds as scheduled.

Committee member Robin Jacobs applauded the MBCC team for their outstanding work during the recent Miami Beach Hall of Fame event. She expressed her admiration for the seamless execution of the event, emphasizing that it highlighted the exceptional event planning team as well as the production team. She informed the committee of the Miami Beach Chamber upcoming Chairman Circle Event at the Rum Room, - a Chamber's signature event.

6. **Adjournment** - Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:53am. Next meeting is November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 9:30 a.m.
7. **Attendance** - Laurence Herrup, Peter Matos, John Aleman, Lee Zimmerman, Antonio Hernandez, Prakash, Robin Jacob, and Chris Gloede.