



CONVENTION CENTER ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

March 12, 2024 – 9:30 AM

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to order

Chairwoman Robin Jacobs called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

2. Welcome new and reappointed members

Chairwoman Jacobs called the meeting to order and welcomed Terra Group, who attended via Zoom. She then introduced the new and returning board members:

- **Marc Gidney:** Marc introduced himself as a long-time resident of Miami Beach with extensive involvement in the community. He expressed excitement about joining the board.
- **Chris Rollins:** Chris expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve on the board, appointed by Commissioner Magazine. He highlighted his experience and commitment to furthering the city's interests. Heather mentioned his previous role as a board member of the Miami Beach Visitor and Convention Authority, emphasizing the importance of collaboration. Chairwoman Robin noted his current position as a board member of the Chamber of Commerce, highlighting the interconnectedness of various organizations in the city.
- **Lee Zimmerman:** Lee, a long-time resident of Miami Beach, expressed his continued dedication to the board after serving three terms. He welcomed the new members and looked forward to working together.

3. Review & approve January 9, 2024 & February 13, 2024 meeting minutes (Action Item)

Chairwoman Jacobs requested the review of the meeting minutes from January 9, 2024, and February 13, 2024. Vice Chair Tony Hernandez suggested regarding the voting process, noting that only attendees from the respective meetings should vote on the minutes. Chairwoman Jacobs agreed with the suggestion and decided to split the voting accordingly.

1. January 9 Minutes:

- Any additions, deletions, or suggestions were requested. No changes were proposed.
- The minutes were passed by affirmation.

2. February 13 Minutes:

- Similar to the January 9th, 2024 meeting minutes, any additions, deletions, or suggestions were requested. No changes were proposed.
- The minutes were also passed by affirmation.

The January 9th and February 13th minutes were approved.

4. Old Business

a. Status Reports:

i. City of Miami Beach

1. Presentation on Convention Center Hotel – Terra Group – Ivette Batista & Hash Alyawer

Chairwoman Jacobs acknowledged the presence of the Terra Group and invited them to introduce themselves. Hash, representing the team, stated that he, Yvette, and Danny Golden were present. Yvette provided a brief update on the project, mentioning their excitement about an upcoming RDA meeting.

Hash Alyawer further elaborated on the positive market traction and engagement with new brokers and lenders, expressing optimism about future financing activities. Ivette mentioned challenges faced in the field but indicated progress toward project completion by the end of April regarding the early works.

Chairwoman Jacobs opened the floor for questions from the board members. Member Carl Linder inquired about the possession of the site and the timeframe for the extension. Yvette clarified the maximum extension period is 12 months from the April post date for possession, but they anticipate completing the project within the specified timeframe. Member Linder further questioned the financing aspect asking about the financing institutions involved and the percentage of equity sought. Hash elaborated on the capital structure, indicating involvement of senior and junior lenders and a mix of equity sources, estimating the equity percentage to range from 20% to 40%.

When asked about the estimated opening date, Hash mentioned it was contingent on finalizing financing, and Ivette added providing a tentative schedule for Q4 of 2026 and suggested an updated schedule would be provided at the next meeting. Member Linder posed a final question regarding the timeline for finalizing financing. Hash explained the progress made with existing lenders and anticipated a faster turnaround in the coming months. Vice Chair Hernandez inquired about the main challenges in securing financing. Hash replied discussing broader market conditions affecting financing availability but expressed optimism about the project's prospects. The Vice Chair sought clarification on Terra Group's commitment to funding the project to where Hash affirmed their commitment to self-fund the project, emphasizing their dedication to its completion.

Chairwoman Jacobs thanked the Terra Group team and expressed anticipation for the next meeting's update.

2. Legislative Update – Heather Shaw

Heather Shaw explained that the RDA, similar to a CRA, focuses on the civic center area, including the Miami Beach Convention Center. Commissioner Tanya Bhatt has submitted a memo to discuss the convention center hotel status and financing at the upcoming RDA meeting. Chairwoman Jacobs anticipated a significant discussion at the RDA meeting and emphasized the importance of supporting the hotel project's progress. Member Marc Gidney raised concerns about RDA funding and potential future implications. Vice Chair Hernandez emphasized the need for a positive, supportive motion, allowing the RDA flexibility in decision-making. Chairwoman Jacobs and Vice Chair Hernandez suggest a motion to allow the RDA to use all legal means to expedite the project. Committee member Gidney proposed exploring alternative financing options to which Member Linder replied preferring the developer find their own funding instead of possibly taking resources from the city. Chairwoman Jacobs followed by stating they may be taking the onus off the developer by suggesting other funding avenues and that is not a feasible route. She recommended keeping the motion broad and positive, avoiding specific recommendations.

Motion #1 - The CCAB recommends and supports the efforts of the members of the Redevelopment Agency efforts to expedite the delivery of the Convention Center hotel. The completion of the Convention Center hotel is essential to the Miami Beach Convention Center competitive status and overall economic impact on our community.

Vice Chair Hernandez – made the motion.

Member Gidney seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Heather addressed issues surrounding Pride Park's utilization. The Public Safety Neighborhood and Quality of Life Committee has recommended reducing the number of days the park could be utilized for events from 120 to 75 days. This recommendation is set to be discussed at the April 3, 2024 Commission meeting. Furthermore, there was a discussion item on the commission agenda regarding potentially transferring the management of Pride Park from OVG360 to the Parks and Recreation Department. Additionally, there was a referral to the Land Use and Sustainability Committee regarding the map classification of Pride Park, aiming to ensure its designation as a park by the county. In addition, Heather then shared that a hotel and short-term rental study had been commissioned and the study indicated the city could manage additional hotels while maintaining a balance between hotels and short-term rentals.

It was mentioned that Miami Beach High School had opted not to hold its 2024 graduation at the Miami Beach Convention Center due to time constraints, but expressed interest in 2025. Fienberg Fisher K-8 Center and South Pointe Elementary will hold their promotions at the Miami Beach Convention Center on May 30 and 31, 2024, respectively. The city is sponsoring some of the costs for these events.

At the March 22, 2024 Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee meeting the utilization of the ballrooms at the convention center will be addressed. Mayor Meiner and Commissioner Magazine aim to discuss the availability and utilization of ballrooms for community events, inspired by the desire to host more local events at the convention center.

Freddie Peterson chimed in emphasizing the importance of striking a balance in utilizing the convention center. He highlighted the significant investment in the asset and the need to work closely with the conventions, trade shows, and meetings team. While the convention center hosts various events, including weddings and galas, caution is exercised regarding pricing and competition with other venues. Chairwoman Jacobs added the need to educate the community about convention center operations and dynamics, especially regarding event bookings and revenue generation. She highlighted the impact of reserving space for smaller events on attracting larger conventions. Freddie circled back discussing the need for event space allocation, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a balance between meeting rooms, ballrooms, and exhibition hall floors. He noted that once space is reserved, it becomes challenging to accommodate future bookings.

Chairwoman Robin underscored the importance of community engagement and education regarding the convention center is key to driving economic impact. She suggested sending a letter to the Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee to provide input and educate on convention center operations.

The committee discussed the reclassification of Pride Park and its implications. Concerns were raised about potential unintended consequences, including changes in park usage and impact on convention center operations. The committee recommended that any reclassification decision be reviewed and approved by the Convention Center Advisory Board (CCAB) to ensure it aligns with the facility's mission and interests.

Motion # 2: The CCAB recommends the Mayor and Commission and Land Use and Sustainability Committee allow the CCAB an opportunity to make recommendation(s), prior to any map classification change(s) to Pride Park, to ensure the Commission has substantive feedback regarding any potential impact on the MBCC campus.

Member Gidney made a motion.

Vice Chair Hernandez seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Chairwoman Jacobs addressed the issue of management between OVG360 and the Parks and Recreation Department, emphasizing the need to keep it separate from the discussion on the Pride Park reclassification. Heather provided clarity on OVG360's role in managing Pride Park, highlighting their responsibility for hiring vendors approved by the Parks and Recreation Department for park maintenance. Freddie Peterson elaborated on OVG360's role in managing various park spaces, including Pride Park, and highlighted their comprehensive approach, involving multiple city departments to ensure proper maintenance. He furthermore emphasized the seamless coordination between OVG360 and event organizers, ensuring smooth operations for events held at the convention center and Pride Park.

Member Chris Rollins expressed concerns about the focus of Pride Park on convention center activities and suggested that Parks & Recreation Department management might prioritize residents' needs better. Freddie reiterated OVG360's commitment to working with the city, emphasizing their adherence to city directives and willingness to collaborate with the Parks & Recreation Department if required.

Vice Chair Hernandez recommended directing the recommendation towards supporting the

existing management arrangement while emphasizing OVG360's pivotal role in ensuring seamless event booking processes. Chairwoman Robin proposed expressing commendation for OVG360's effective management in the letter to the Commission and advocating for ongoing communication between the city and OVG360 to maintain operational smoothness.

Motion #3: The CCAB recommends that the City maintain the status quo regarding management of Pride Park, because the current arrangement facilitates streamlined and seamless bookings and event management.

Chair Jacobs made a motion.

Vice Chair Hernandez seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Vice Chair Hernandez made a motion to endorse the current management setup, highlighting OVG360's contributions to facilitating efficient event bookings and management. Chairwoman Jacobs suggested incorporating a provision for sustained seamless communication between the city and OVG360, regardless of any management alterations.

Chairwoman Jacobs inquired about the discrepancy between the 85 and 120 days regarding Pride Park activation days. Heather clarified that the correct number is 75 days, and this matter is scheduled to be discussed at the April 3, 2024 Commission Meeting. Robin sought clarification on whether the 120 days include move-in and move-out days for events. Freddie explained that the 120 days encompass move-in, event days, and move-out for any activities held in Pride Park, whether organized by the convention center or the city.

Further discussion ensued regarding the actual show days and the duration of move-in and move-out periods. Freddie specified that for events like Design Miami, the setup and breakdown period typically span about five days, while for the Miami Boat Show, it extends to approximately seven days. Heather intervened to clarify the recommendation made by the Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life committee, stating that they proposed reducing the activation days to 75, specifically for ticketed events. However, community events and free public events would not be included in this count, allowing for flexibility beyond the 75 days.

Motion #4: The CCAB recommends the Mayor and Commission maintain the current 120 days of activation in Pride Park, including ticketed activations and free community events. We recommend the Administration continue to oversee, and work closely with OVG360 to review, and approve (or disapprove) park activations and ensure community and MBCC opportunities are executed in the best interest of the city, do not impede the quality of life of the residents abutting the MBCC campus, and are optimized to enhance the potential economic impact that is at the root of the MBCC operation.

Chair Jacobs made a motion.

Vice Chair Hernandez seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

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

David Whitaker commenced the session by welcoming Lee back and acknowledging the members of the Board of Directors, including Member Gidney, and looking forward to working alongside him. He emphasized the collaborative partnership between the Greater Miami Convention and Visitor's Bureau (GMCVB) and the city, highlighting their shared goal of

attracting conventions to fill hotel rooms and stimulate the local economy. David outlined the role of GMCVB in securing major citywide conventions, highlighting their focus on new business acquisitions. He praised the efforts of Carol Motley, the Senior Vice President of Sales, in generating leads and bids for future events.

Carol Motley stepped in provided an update on the recent successes in booking major conventions, including Adobe, AUVSI, Connect, iConnections, and Swift Sibos. She emphasized the significant economic impact of these events on the local economy, with Adobe alone projected to bring \$43 million. Chairwoman Jacobs underscored the importance of retaining room availability for large conventions, citing the substantial economic benefits compared to smaller events. Carol continued to discuss the ongoing efforts to secure future contracts, including the Fraternal Order of Police and other potential clients.

David clarified that while some contracts may extend beyond the current fiscal year, the goal is to secure a certain number of contracts within a 12 month period.

Chairwoman Hernandez sought clarification from Carol regarding the mentioned 14-day conference to which Carol elaborated on the significance of Swift Sibos as an international banking conference with 8,000 attendees and 21,000 room nights.

Member Rollins commended the significance of the Adobe MAX conference and highlighted its global recognition among creators and advertising agencies. He expressed hope for collaboration with the Miami Design Preservation League (MDPL) to leverage the unique appeal of South Beach architecture for future events.

iii. Operations – OVG360 – Freddie Peterson

Freddie Peterson provided an overview of the recent events held at the Miami Beach Convention Center, highlighting a busy month of February with a total of 14 events, including nine organized by the Miami Boat Show and five city of Miami Beach events. He emphasized the success of the annual events, particularly those organized in partnership with Informa Markets and Connect, which are set to increase in the current fiscal year.

New events were mentioned as being hosted in February, such as the Home Deco Expo, demonstrating the effectiveness of the sales and marketing efforts. Moving into March, the convention center is scheduled to host approximately 19 events, including five annuals and several city Miami Beach events, showcasing the versatility of the venue. He highlighted the importance of managing multiple events simultaneously, noting the recent week where five different types of events were held, underscoring the hustle and bustle of the convention center. Freddie expressed gratitude to Lee for assistance with the Miami Beach Alliance Basketball tournament and praised the city's efforts in facilitating events during spring break.

Insights were provided into upcoming events for March and April, including the Seatrade Cruise Global, Axon Accelerate, and the City of Miami Beach Seniors Prom. He commended the city's support and collaboration in managing events and addressing safety and security concerns.

Regarding capital projects, Freddie acknowledged the city investment of \$10 million and expressed appreciation for the collaborative efforts in completing 34 smaller projects. He mentioned the ongoing booking of events through September, expecting to reach approximately 74 events by the end of the year.

Chairwoman Jacobs shared her positive impressions of the Aspen Institute attendees and expressed anticipation for the completion of the renovated city chambers by mid-April. Heather confirmed that the last commission meeting in the current building is scheduled for the first week of April, thanking Freddie's team for their assistance in accommodating events during the transition period.

iv. Food & Beverage - Sodexo Live! Danny Medina

Danny Medina provided a brief overview of the catering services offered at the Miami Beach Convention Center, emphasizing the importance of keeping attendees hydrated and well-fed. He highlighted the significant volume of drinks and meals served in February, with over 80,000 drinks and 45,000 meals provided throughout the month. Danny expressed appreciation for the strong partnership with the city and Pepsi, which contributes to the success of their offerings.

He also commended Chef Ismael LaSalle and the culinary team for their efforts in providing quality food, noting that Chinese cuisine surpassed the traditional top seller, the Cuban sandwich, in February. Danny highlighted the distinction between retail and catering services, with catering comprising 60% of their business in February.

Gratitude was expressed for the opportunity to serve the Miami Beach Police during spring break, accommodating approximately 1,500 officers over the weekend and planning to continue support during Memorial Day. He invited attendees to visit the Rum Room Miami Beach, a converted event space, and shared details of recent events and upcoming specials, including St. Patrick's Day offerings to which the Chamber of Commerce will attend.

Additionally, Danny discussed the convention center's sustainability efforts, including composting food waste, donating excess food to those in need, and recycling aluminum cans and bottles. He emphasized the center's commitment to reducing environmental impact and promoting sustainability.

Chairwoman Jacobs thanked Danny for his presentation and praised the convention center's support during spring break, particularly the provision of a centralized command center for the police and high-quality food. She also expressed gratitude to Heather for her contributions to the committee.

5. New Business

No new business

6. Good and Welfare

7. Adjournment - Chairwoman adjourned the meeting at 11:20am. Next meeting is Tuesday April 9th, 2024, at 9:30 a.m.

8. Attendance: Gidney, Zimmerman, Hernandez, Kumar, Jacobs, Gloede, Linder and Rollins.