

This summary of actions is provided prior to the WCRTFB Board approval of the official Board meeting minutes at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting



City of Loves Park, City of Rockford, City of South Beloit, County of Winnebago,
Village of Cherry Valley, Village of Machesney Park, Village of Rockton, Village of Roscoe;
Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, Rockford Park District

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 19, 2022

2:00 p.m.

Webbs Norman Center
401 South Main Street, Rockford, IL

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Winnebago County Tourism Facility Board was called to order by Scott Olson, Rockford Park District Board Representative at 2:05 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Mayor Greg Jury, Mayor Tom McNamara, Winnebago County Chairman (Proxy Jas Bilich), John Groh President & CEO Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, Jay Sandine Executive Director Rockford Park District, and Scott Olson, Rockford Park District Board Representative.

(79.5% representation)

Absent: Mayor Tom Fitzgerald, Mayor Steve Johnson, Mayor John Peterson, Mayor David Schroeder, Mayor Mark Szula, and RACVB Board Representative and Board Vice-Chair Bobbie Holzwarth.

Public Comment

There were no members of the public present who wished to address the Board.

Consent Agenda

Motion by Mr. Jury, seconded by Mr. McNamara, that the Board **approve** the following items on the Consent Agenda:

A. February 10, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Approved 3(ayes) 0 (nays) 0 (abstain) 5(absent) (79.5%) by voice vote.

Bi-Annual Board Officer Elections

Mr. Jury nominated Scott Olson, designated representative of the RPD Board, as Co-Chairperson. Nominations were closed.

Mr. Olson was **named** Board Co-Chairperson 3(ayes) 0 (nays) 0 (abstain) 5 (absent) (79.5%) by roll call vote.

Mr. McNamara nominated Ms. Bobbie Holzwarth, designated representative of the RACVB Board, as Board Co-Chairperson. Nominations were closed.

Ms. Holzwarth was **named** Board Co-Chairperson 3(ayes) 0 (nays) 0 (abstain) 5 (absent) (79.5%) by roll call vote.

Financial Update: Hotel Tax Receipts

RPD Chief Financial Officer Penny Christians reviewed hotel tax revenues received through July 2022, saying that they are recovering nicely year to date. She noted the reserve balance with costs completed for Mercyhealth Sportscore 2 Mega Center roof repairs, and the additional principal payment of \$301,979.73 made on outstanding bonds. The results of the 2021 annual audit of the WCRTFB accounts were also provided to the Board. There was a brief discussion of the hotel receipts and occupancy trends for our region in 2022 as compared to 2019.

Updates from RACVB and RPD

Mr. Groh shared an update on hotel occupancy saying year-to-date county-wide occupancy and demand is up 14%, and revenue is up 35% over the same period over last year, with weekend hotel stays bringing in highly valued business to our community. Mr. Groh announced that RACVB has hired Ms. Jacqui Corsi as their new Vice President of Marketing, and confirmed they have received an EDA grant to develop a Destination Master Plan. He invited anyone interested in assisting with the project to join the working group that will develop the Master Plan to grow the tourism and hospitality industry in our region over the next 10-15 years.

RACVB Vice President of Sales & Service Lindsay Arellano, RPD Superintendent Danielle Potter, and RPD Program Supervisor Derek Papich reviewed a list of the RACVB and RPD joint efforts for tournaments and events over the past quarter. The team also provided an overview of upcoming events and tournaments, including the Mission of Mercy dental clinic in July, the NAFA Master World Series in September, and the America Team Challenge for a three-year contract in 2023-25. Ms. Arellano also reviewed a list of prospective leads developed from attendance at the Connect Sports trade show in Puerto Rico in May 2022.

Mr. Sandine commented that based on his personal experiences with traveling for sports events, our facilities are the best around, and he congratulated the Board members on their ongoing work in the development of our outstanding sports venues. He also asked that the Board continue to be aware of the need for operational funds for sales, marketing, staffing and operations of the facilities. He thanked everyone for their past and continued support.

Other Board Discussion

Mayor McNamara requested information on hotel revenues and occupancy figures from 2019 through 2022 to date.

RPD Superintendent Dan Jacobson shared that repairs on the Mega Center roof are complete, and we are seeking an extension of the manufacturer’s warranty given the re-enforcement that is now in place. Mr. Jacobson shared that the deed for the UW Health Sports Factory has been transferred from the City of Rockford to the Park District, and we are in the process of finalizing that transfer.

Adjournment

Motion by Mr. McNamara, seconded by Mr. Jury that the Board **adjourn** the meeting at 3:03 p.m.

Approved 3(ayes) 0 (nays) 0 (abstain) 5 (absent) (79.5%) by voice vote.

Board Co-Chair, Bobbie Holzwarth

Attest:

Board Assistant Secretary, Jennifer Peterson

BOARD APPROVED: