



P.O. Box 837  
Reno, NV 89504 USA  
t: 775.827.7600  
[VisitRenoTahoe.com](http://VisitRenoTahoe.com)

**Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
January 24, 2019**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority met at 9:00 a.m., January 24, 2018, at the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority, 4001 S. Virginia Street, Reno, NV. The meeting was properly noticed and posted in compliance with the Nevada Open Meeting Law.

---

**A. OPENING CEREMONIES**

**Call to Order**

Chairman Bob Lucey called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance led by Vick Wowo**

---

**Board Members Present:**

Nat Carasali  
Lee Dillard  
Councilman Ed Lawson  
Commissioner Bob Lucey  
Rick Murdock  
Mark Sterbens  
Vick Wowo  
Bill Wood

**Board Members Absent:**

Mayor Hillary Schieve

---

**RSCVA Executive Staff Present:**

Phil DeLone, President/Chief Executive Officer  
Jennifer Cunningham, Executive Vice President  
Michael Larragueta, Vice President of Sales  
Art Jimenez, Executive Director of Tourism Sales  
Esther Isaac, Director of Marketing  
Ben Kennedy, Legal Counsel  
Molly Rezac, Legal Counsel

**RSCVA Executive Staff Absent:**

Robert Chisel, Director of Finance  
Sheri Nill, Director of Human Resources

---

**B. COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR BY THE PUBLIC**

**C. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Member Rick Murdock made a motion to approve the January 24, 2019 agenda. Seconded by Member Vick Wowo. **Motion carried unanimously.**

**D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 6, 2018 REGULAR MEETING**

**MOTION:** Member Rick Murdock made a motion to approve the Minutes of December 6, 2018, Regular Meeting. Seconded by Member Bill Wood. **Motion carried unanimously.**

## **E. PRESENTATIONS**

### **E1. RSCVA Staff Update**

Phil DeLone, President/CEO introduced and welcomed Michael Day, General Manager with SMG. Mr. DeLone reported that Travel Nevada has increased funding for the Regional Air Service Corporation (RASC) by an additional \$50,000 per year. This brings the total funding from Travel Nevada to \$100,000. Mr. DeLone thanked Brenda Nebesky and Travel Nevada for their generous contribution. He added that Carl Ribaldo will be the Managing Director of RASC. Mr. DeLone went on to say he has attended two advisory meetings for the Downtown Reno Business Improvement District (BID), also known as Downtown Reno Partnership. He stated that the Downtown Reno Partnership currently has fourteen ambassadors, 13 of which are working directly on the streets downtown. He added that the goal is to increase the number of ambassadors to 30. Mr. DeLone gave the board an update on Incline Village Crystal Bay Visitors Bureau (IVCBVB) lease renewal. He stated that the lease is written to reflect that the IVCBVB is responsible for the maintenance of the building and parking lot, in addition to being responsible for the surrounding park. Mr. DeLone announced that RFP's (Request for Proposal) for the demolition of the Exhibit Hall for Livestock Event Center are out and walkthroughs will take place on site Tuesday, January 29, 2019. He stated that the RSCVA is pleased to announce that the inspection of the Exhibit Hall showed that it does not contain asbestos. Mr. DeLone added that a similar walkthrough for the Indoor Arena Roof will take place tomorrow January 25, 2019. He also stated that the preliminary Armory asbestos report has been completed and the RSCVA is working collaboratively with Washoe County to obtain a written permit for abatement. Mr. DeLone reported that the Board of County Commissioners meeting for Washoe County will be held on Tuesday, February 12, 2019 where the Wildcreek agreement will be reviewed and the and the transfer of property will be voted on.

In addition to the staff update, Mr. DeLone gave the board a brief recap on the RSCVA Board Retreat on December 6, 2018. He stated that the four priorities are as follows: Destination Awareness - Go deeper in core markets (LA Basin and Bay Area) to increase the destination awareness – through increased marketing spend (tradition and digital) and tourism sales efforts. Maintain Seattle presence with a continued focus on increase air service in partnership with RTAA. Group Sales & Tourism Sales - Continue current group sales efforts that have resulted in city-wide conventions and consistent growth in the group business. Maintain current level of effort in Tourism Sales via programs in the US and China. Facilities - Continue to pursue the RSCC Expansion – significant strategic effort for the short and mid-term. Fully leverage the RSCVA/SMG relationship to take advantage of the opportunities and expertise SMG brings to the organization and the four RSCVA facilities. Organizational Sustainability - Maintain the importance of organizational sustainability and continue community engagement.

Ms. Jennifer Cunningham, Executive Vice President, presented an update on the RSCVA Corporate Scorecard. She stated that November was looking good, despite the overall occupancy being slightly down. Ms. Cunningham stated that the Average Daily Rate (ADR) was up almost 13% at \$101.82. She said that translates to an increase in taxable revenue of 5%. Ms. Cunningham went on to say that air passengers were up 8% from last November. She added that the RTAA reported that flights were up 13.6% and the number of seats into the market had a 7.2% increase from last November. Ms. Cunningham stated that the Star Report showed that South Lake Tahoe saw an increase of 30% occupancy from last November leading the RSCVA to believe that travelers were escaping the California fires.

Ben McDonald, Senior Communications Manager, presented a 2018 year-end review from Decker Royal, the RSCVA's public relations firm based out of New York. He stated that one of the functions of bringing Decker Royal on was to increase the number of journalists to the area. The RSCVA brought in 17 writers including freelance journalists, online publications and several FAM trips. A few of the journalists that wrote about their time in the area included stories in Thrillist, Elite Daily, Britain & Co and Hemisphere Magazine. The collaboration with Decker Royal also produced over 128 online articles along with several daytime TV mentions.

Mike Larragueta, Vice President of Sales, brought the board's attention back to the Corporate Scorecard. He stated that the sales team secured 16 groups representing 11,032 Room Nights (RN), against a goal of 18,863 RN for November. He added that December saw 10,265 RN, against a goal of 18,429 RN. Mr. Larragueta went on to say that the RSCVA is sitting at 85% of its goal for the first

six months of the fiscal year. He went to say that January and February look very strong and he feels very confident that the sales team will be back on pace by March 2019. Mr. Larragueta announced that the RSCVA has hired David Diomedes as the Regional Sales Director for the Southwest Region. David comes to us with a background in hotel sales and resides in Rancho Cucamonga, California. Mr. Larragueta added that the RSCVA will open an office in Dallas, Texas. He stated that the position was posted and there are two strong candidates being considered.

Mr. Art Jimenez, Executive Director of Tourism Sales, gave the board an update on tourism sales. He stated that November monthly room nights came in at 53,222, a decrease of 1,500 room nights from last November. He added that tourism sales is at 87% of target at 62,474 room nights. Year-to-date room nights are at 337,795, however we are 13,844 room nights last years. Mr. Jimenez touched on the Partnership Market with Expedia, Priceline and Travelport. He stated that bookings are up an average 9-10% and ADR is also up for the properties that have participated with the RSCVA. He stated that booking windows have been extended to 40-day range. Mr. Jimenez reported on the China front and PHG. He stated that the year-end report shows that PHG made 137 in-face sales calls and 67 one-on-one media calls which resulted in 319 media placements in China.

Chairman Lucey asked Mr. Larragueta if the RSCVA has airlift information on Dallas.

Mr. Larragueta stated that the RSCVA does not have the exact number of seats. However, both American and Southwest airlines have direct flights to Reno.

**E2. EMC Research Update**

Sara LeBatt of EMC Research presented the Summary of Results from the latest Brand Tracking Surveys conducted in the Bay Area, Los Angeles Basin and Seattle markets. Ms. LeBatt covered EMC's findings on Reno Tahoe Brand Rating, Top Brand Attributes, and Past Visitation & Intent to Visit.

Information only. Non-action item.

**E3. Legislative Update**

Jesse Wadhams of Fennemore Craig provided an update and report on the upcoming Legislative Session, issues of interest to the RSCVA and the Legislative reporting process. He stated that working on broadly speaking will be funding mechanisms for a possible convention center expansion and remodel, public records, open meeting law, and employer/employee relationships and localized tax issues that may or may not affect transient room tax. The day-to-day operation, a weekly report on bill and bill drafts to senior management accompanied with a newsletter "This Week in Carson."

**F. MARKETING DIVISION**

**F1. RSCVA Special Events Funding**

Esther Isaac, Director of Marketing, drew the board's attention to the Events and Festivals brochure presented at each seat that showcases over 300 events coming to the area. Ms. Isaac briefly reviewed the process for special event funding and referred to the detailed report presented in the board packet. She stated that 25 organizations applied for funding and the RSCVA team is recommending that 24 of the 25 application receive special funding.

Vice Chair Lawson stated that he is in favor of increasing special event funding from \$500K to \$650K.

**MOTION:** Member Nat Carasali made a motion to approve the Special Events Funding as recommended. Seconded by Member Rick Murdock. **Motion carried unanimously.**

**F. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

None

**G. COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR BY THE PUBLIC**

Member Lee Dillard requested that the Downtown Reno Business Improvement District (BID), also known as Downtown Reno Partnership, present an update at a future board meeting.

**H. ADJOURNMENT**

**Meeting adjourned at 12:07 p.m.**