

# Georgia International and Maritime Trade Center Authority

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors  
Wednesday, December 12, 2018, 10:00am

Jasper Boardroom, Savannah International Trade & Convention Center

---

**Members present:** Rob Hernandez, Bill Grainger, Martin Miller, Ben Polote Jr., Mark Smith, Joe Marinelli, Ruth Quattlebaum, Anne Scheer, Trip Tollison **Members absent:** Dennis Baxter, Arnold Jackson and Lee Smith **Also present:** Paul Threlkeld, Jody McIntyre, Lee Hughes, Frank Poe, Paul Hansen, Tricia Moore, Paul McKeever, Eugene Maria, SITCC staff: Sherrie Spinks, Ronnie Hickman, Angela Daniels, Gail Terrell, Judy Johnson, Jamie Parks

Chairman Smith convened the meeting at 10:01am.

Mr. Smith asked for approval of the November minutes and treasurer's report. Motion made by Mr. Polote Jr.; seconded by Mr. Miller and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Counsel Report. Mr. Threlkeld commented on the approval of the Hutchinson Island land deeds from the City of Savannah to the State's Department of Economic Development to be completed early 2019

Financial Reports. Mr. Hall reported: an unfavorable variance to Center budget for November, and year-end currently forecasted to be unfavorable to budget; a favorable variance to the Water Transportation budget for November and year-end forecasted to be favorable to budget. Authority financials are unfavorable for November, and year-end currently forecasted to be unfavorable to budget. Hotel/Motel tax revenues are currently favorable to budget. To Mr. Hernandez's question with regards to how the Center will remain competitive in Food Service since the Hotels are increasing their food sales and requests from clients, Mr. Hall replied with pricing and quality. Mr. Marinelli also stated that the Savannah hotel market is growing which provides more choices and negotiations. Mr. Hall stated that the impact on the Center has been a decrease in dinner and breakfast requests and more consistency with luncheons.

Sales and Marketing Report. Ms. Daniels noted 18 definite and 17 tentative bookings in November. Ms. Daniels also reviewed the Center's Room Night Historical through current year via graph presentation.

Operations Report. Mr. Hickman's report included updates on team highlights in addition to a review of capital project updates to include: Dimming System Replacement, Life Safety Fire Alarm, Exhibit Hall Electrical Add, Ballroom Wood Wall Rehab, Tondee's Counter, Kitchen Dishwasher Replacement, Garage Lighting, Exterior Light Poles and Janus Display System (Monitors).

Food and Beverage Report. Mr. Parks reviewed event highlights, new technology upgrades to include a new Point of Sales (POS) system and collaboration with local vendors.

General Manager's Report. Ms. Spinks reviewed the 2018 Annual Report and upcoming board community opportunities to include the SEDA Annual Meeting on January 9, Savannah/Chatham Day – Jan 24, MLK Jr. Community Unity Luncheon – Jan 19. Ms. Spinks also commented on the board meeting schedule for 2019 enclosed in the board packets.

Chairman Smith provided an expansion update and reviewed the Convention Center expansion budget. Discussion ensued. Mr. Hansen cited cost reductions included Value Engineering (VE) items. Motion made by Mr. Polote Jr., to accept the cost of the updated expansion budget; seconded by Ms. Quattlebaum and approved by unanimous voice vote. Chairman also reviewed the ribbon cutting to be

followed by the board meeting. The ribbon cutting is in recognition of each municipality that provides \$.01 of the H/M tax to support the convention center. Each of the 200 meeting rooms is named for one of the municipalities.

Chairman Smith then asked for any other business; hearing none, adjourned the meeting at 10:53am to the 200 Meeting Rooms Ribbon Cutting followed by the annual Holiday Luncheon.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Mr. Martin Miller, Secretary