

# Georgia International and Maritime Trade Center Authority

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors  
**Wednesday, January 8, 2014**

Jasper Boardroom, Savannah International Trade & Convention Center

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**Members present:** Baxter, Center, Cutter, Jackson, McAlister, Marinelli, and Smith. **Members absent:** Bazzard, Green, Monsees, Polote, Quattlebaum **Also present:** Howard Helmken, Mary Carr Mayle (SMN), Michael Owens, Jody McIntyre, Marty Johnston, Bob McClintock (SMG), Allyson Jackson (SMG-Jekyll Island) and SITCC staff Bob Coffey, Ronnie Hickman, Fredia Brady, Stephen Hall, Jamie Parks and Gail Terrell.

Chairman Smith convened the meeting at 11:02am.

Mr. Smith noted a quorum, and asked for approval of December 2013 Minutes and Treasurer's report; moved by Mr. Center; seconded by Ms. Cutter and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Hall reported an unfavorable variance to the Center budget for the month, and a favorable variance for year-end. Mr. Smith questioned if additional short-term bookings are expected in this current fiscal year, to which Mr. Hall and Ms. Brady replied affirmatively. Ms. Brady emphasized the trend to have increased short term bookings during even-numbered years versus odd-numbered. Ms. Brady stated that an additional 1,000 room nights for all future years will become definite within the month. Ms. Brady also stated that recent tentative bookings strong in room nights will also produce food and beverage revenue. Mr. Hall reported that Water Transportation shows an unfavorable variance for December; year-end projected to also be unfavorable. Mr. Hall noted that water transportation invoices for July through December 2013 are expected this week from contractor Chatham Area Transit (CAT). Mr. Hall then turned to the Authority financials, reporting that the Authority showed an unfavorable variance to budget for December. Mr. Hall reported favorable hotel/motel tax receipts year to date. Mr. Smith questioned the Water Transportation report headings which reflected 'forecasted' amounts to which Mr. Hall replied that the forecasted headings will be changed to 'actual' upon receipt of the CAT invoices. Mr. Hall further stated that CAT is resolving a question with regards to water ferry insurance and in an effort to avoid overbilling the Authority the invoice will eventually be sent with actual expenses. Mr. Hall commented that the Authority's year-end forecast is also favorable to budget.

Mr. Smith asked for Counsel's Report. Mr. Gray responded no report at this time.

Mr. Smith asked for the Sales and Marketing Report. Ms. Brady reported 14 bookings in December, including 6 definites. Ms. Brady highlighted recent contracts for SHCC/PIM Conference (June 2014), Morley Companies (General Motors) (Sept 2014), South University (Sept 2014), GA Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association (Jan 2017), and American Council of Life Insurers. Ms. Brady also announced receipt of the contract for the World Soybean Conference (September 2017) which will be reflected in next month's booking report. Ms. Brady stated that the year-over-year report will increase by 12,000 room nights which are currently pending. Mr. Smith questioned if the 1,200 attendees for Gulfstream's Live Well, Be Well conference was noted in the current forecasted budget: Mr. Hall replied affirmatively. Mr. Marinelli commented that the World Soybean conference will draw top Agriculture professionals, scientists and educators worldwide to Savannah; that the conference will generate about 9,700 room nights, and media coverage of the event is forthcoming. Ms. Brady commented that Soybean was years in the making, beginning with a site tour in 2010. Mr. Hewitt commented that about 2 years ago the UGA host committee finally decided that Trade Center had enough space to hold the conference; and that prior conferences were held in South Africa and China. Mr. Smith asked about the length of the conference to which Mr. Hewitt replied 4 days, utilizing 14 hotels. Mr. Smith commented that Savannah's transportation issue must have been resolved; to which Ms. Brady replied that a particular UGA scientist / member of the World Soybean Board had consistently pushed Trade Center and Savannah for the conference. Mr.

Hewitt commented that the UGA procurement department is hesitant to sign the contract so far in advance; and hope to have everything solidified by year end. Mr. Hall commented that the first soybean ever grown was within 20 miles of Savannah.

Mr. Smith asked for the Food and Beverage Report. Mr. Parks reviewed Savor...Savannah's December financials; and the Savor...Customer Feedback Report for November, which had an 88% return rate, and a score of 3.89 of a 4.00 scale. Mr. Parks reviewed the SavorSafe Food Safety Inspection Reports for Concessions and Main Kitchen, with scores of 93% and 94% respectively. Mr. Smith asked who conducts the inspections, to which Mr. Parks replied that the inspection is completed by an independent 3<sup>rd</sup> party hired by Savor. Mr. McAlister asked for clarification of the 'retail' reference in the compliance report to which Mr. Parks replied concessions--food sold to the general public.

Mr. Smith asked for the Operations Report. Mr. Hickman commented on the Capital Project updates such as the Ballroom Lighting Control System Upgrade and the Trade Center - Westin Corridor Project.

Mr. Smith asked for the General Manager's Report. Mr. Coffey stated that Savannah-Chatham Day will be held on Thursday January 30, 2014. Mr. Center commented that the preferred "W" hotel mid-town was sold out. Mr. Coffey reviewed the AT&T Wireless Antenna Proposal with the board, recommending that AT&T be requested to take a multi-provider approach to its preferred antenna locations, stating that allowing one provider to tie up the premium antenna locations on a State-owned building might not be advisable. By consensus, Board endorsed staff's approach to the AT&T proposal.

Mr. Smith requested to adjourn into Executive Session to discuss personnel. Mr. Smith asked Mr. Gray if the Executive Session should be recorded to which Mr. Gray replied affirmatively according to the Open Meetings Act. Motion by Mr. Center to adjourn to Executive Session **to discuss personnel**; seconded by Ms. Cutter and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Smith adjourned the regular meeting at 11:36am to enter Executive Session **to discuss personnel**. The board re-convened in regular session at 12:32, in order to state that no votes had been taken in EXS. Mr. Smith then adjourned the meeting at 12:35.

Respectfully submitted,

  
George Jackson, Secretary