

## MINUTES

Grand Forks Events Center Commission

Wednesday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021 | 7:30 am  
Meeting Room 12 & Conference Line

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**Call to Order:** Pat McLean- called the meeting to order at 7:30 am.

### **Roll Call**

**Present:** Pat McLean, Matt Walkowiak, Ken Vein, Clare Albrecht, Russell Kraft, Bill Chaves, Julie Rygg, and Jay Kleven (by phone), Curt Kreun

**City:** Maureen Storstad, Dan Gaustad, Todd Feland

**Alerus Center:** Anna Rosburg, Dan Toop, Derek Hoffert, Jonathan Greene, Brandon Ruege, Toryn Jones, Polina Selinevich, and Anna Heath

**We have a quorum.**

### **Recognition of Promotions and Honors**

Polina, Jonathan and Derek were acknowledged for their recent promotions. Polina is now Director of Events, Jonathan is now the Assistant General Manager and Director of Operations. Derek is now the Regional Director of Partnerships overseeing Brookings, Rio Rancho, Prescott and Casper as well as Grand Forks. Shelby was recognized in the IAVM 30 Under 30 and Anna was recognized as a VenueNow 2021 Impact Next Gen Honoree

### **Consent Agenda**

The minutes from the last Commission Meeting on July 28th, 2021 were reviewed and approved.

***A motion was made by Curt Kruen to approve the minutes; seconded by Ken Vein.***

***Motion passed unanimously.***

### **July 2021 Financials**

We hosted 19 events in July; we had budgeted for 18 originally. Year to date we have hosted 271 events; we had budgeted for 256. Indirect expenses the Alerus Center again saved on. July had a net of (\$111,266) compared to a budgeted net of (\$213,455). Net Operating Income at the end of July for the year was (\$236,128) compared to a budgeted net income of (\$312,023).

***A motion was made by Ken Vein to approve the July Financials; seconded by Curt Kreun. Motion passed unanimously.***

### **2021 Capital Projects**

Jonathan presented a recap of the bid review for the Networking project, and it had been agreed upon to accept the bid from Creek Enterprises for the basic bids and two alternates. It is to update the cabling and upgrade switches to make sure the ports are running at all times and clean up the communications closets. One upgrade is for the updating of the fibers and the other upgrade is for the VOIP phone

system. Questions were raised to see if Marco would hold their bid open until 5pm on August 25<sup>th</sup>. Creek responded late with a complaint that the process was unfair to them and would not hold their bid and follow up with a complaint to the appropriate agency. Still planning to award the bid to Creek but they had not reached back out after we agreed to move forward with them.

***Motion passed unanimously.***

Jonathan then presented the bid reviews for the networking infrastructure. The base bids were for the switches, cabling, documenting, and cleaning up the communication rooms. Alternate upgrades were for Fiber upgrade and for a VOIP phone upgrade. Two bids were submitted: one from Creek Enterprises and one from Marco, Inc subcontracted by Dell Comm. Creek Enterprises totaled out at \$1,003,154.32 for all 3 and Marco, Inc totaled out at \$1,030,252 for all 3 which both exceed the initial budget of \$400,000. Budget Amendment would have to be approved by city council to proceed. Open discussion regarding the fiber upgrade which would increase the speed of internet service. Base bid only covers the switches and cabling but not fiber. Far over budget and unsure where it would be able to be placed in the coming years but is a necessary upgrade. Original budget number came from a Tallahassee project done by Jonathan and Danny in the 5-6years.

***Motion made by Jay Kleven to hold the bids for further evaluation with F&R Commission; seconded by Ken Vein***

Discussion about the timing of the project start and presenting to the city council for the budget increase. Recommended to be tabled for F & R meeting in August and re-present for August Commission.

***Motion passed unanimously***

**FCS Bid Process Presentation**

Bill Chaves presented the process in which venues are selected for playoff games and the bidding process for bringing them to the cities depending on amenities and popularity of the event/team. Hotel availability, boarder opening, and black Friday are all contributing factors for hosting over Thanksgiving weekend.

**Economic Impact Report**

Anna went over a snapshot of the second quarter numbers and the amount that Alerus Center impacts and gives back to the city and region. Emphasizing on the generosity of Visit Greater Grand Forks for assistance with the numbers.

**Management Reports**

- a. Executive Report – Anna talked about her trip to General Manager Regional Conference, biggest takeaway was the company’s diversity inclusion efforts. Lots of shout outs to us and how we utilize resources and how our team has grown. Staffing campaign is going well. Applications are up and promotions within, too. Employee Compensation is being addressed as well. 2022 Bookings are going well as well as Conference Sales. A lot of Spectra resources at play for the fall events, past employees are coming back to lend a hand during the Luke Combs, Eric Church weekends. CPR training is ongoing this week, upcoming staff training for fall.
- b. Finance – Brandon started working on July Financials and processing the applications from the ongoing hiring campaign.
- c. Operations – Jonathan is continuing to manage projects and assure that events are going smoothly and preparing for the fall.
- d. Food and Beverage – Seven weddings in June and eight for July which is good. Very busy past 45days. Cost of goods sold is really good and within budget. New POS system online training to begin next week, hardwiring later this month and rollout by the beginning of September. Staffing for concessions and banquets are going well but could use more cooks.
- e. Partnerships – Collaborative with UND for premium seating on the Bridge and Bridge decks is going well. “New Sponsor” is going to provide 400 barstools and supplier hopes to have in by fall. Name of new sponsor will be revealed when its official. 3 Suites are renewed. Partnerships here in Grand Forks, only 6% of revenue lost over the last year due to Covid, and for 2022 we have 86% already on the books.
- f. Marketing – The hiring campaign is going strong, and applications are up. Half the budget has been utilized and doing extremely well. Events and concerts sales are going well. Still hesitation with purchasing tickets due to Covid.
- g. Conference Sales – Julia is taking over for Shelby. Kaitlyn is helping with training Julia while Shelby is out.
- h. Event Management – Interviews are going strong, at least one a day. Weekly meetings ongoing for Luke Combs, Eric Church, and football. Metal detectors were serviced and ready for the fall. New equipment for the radios is coming. Upcoming All-staff training will provide dinner and prizes to thank all employees. Continuing fall preparations.

### **Committee Reports**

- a) Visit Greater Grand Forks -- Julie presented that the Canadian borders are opening August 9<sup>th</sup> to visitors, but the US has maintained the August 21<sup>st</sup> for opening. Staffing is still an issue for events. Unsure if Delta Variant and mask mandates will deter people. Hotel rooms for the Luke Combs/UND weekend are becoming difficult to find.

### **Other**

REA, Alerus and City of Grand Forks are working on community promotions to invite the public back out to events and use the #Funintheforks

***A motion was made by Matt to adjourn at 8:52am; seconded by Ken  
Motion passed unanimously.***

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 am.

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Respectfully submitted,  
Anna Heath

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Jay Kleven  
GFECC Secretary