

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
OF WORLD TRADE CENTER SAN DIEGO, INC.**

**Minutes**

Monday, July 13, 2020

**9:00 A.M.**

SDCRAA Administration Building - Third Floor  
3225 N. Harbor Drive  
San Diego, CA 92101

***Board of Directors***

Robert H. Gleason, Chair (SDCRAA)  
Erik Caldwell, Secretary (City of San Diego)  
Marshall Merrifield, Treasurer (SDUPD)

---

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Gleason called the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the World Trade Center San Diego, Inc. to order electronically and via teleconference, pursuant to Executive Order N-29-20, at 9:05 p.m., on Monday, July 13, 2020, at the San Diego International Airport, Administration Building, 3225 N. Harbor Drive, San Diego, CA 92101.

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Board Members: Erik Caldwell, Robert H. Gleason, Marshall Merrifield  
Absent: Board Members: None

**NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS**

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the Minutes of the May 13, 2020 Special Board meeting.

**ACTION: Moved by Board Member Merrifield and seconded by Board Member Caldwell to approve staff's recommendation. Motion carried unanimously.**

**2. STATUS UPDATE ON LICENSEHOLDER DELIVERABLES:**

Mark Cafferty, President&CEO, San Diego Regional EDC and Jesse Gipe, Director, World Trade Center San Diego reported that MetroConnect has been successful. They reported that the April MetroConnect onboarding event with Mayor Faulkner was canceled due to the shutdown and went virtual for onboarding the new members. They reported that MetroConnects funding has changed dramatically since JP Morgans funding decreased. They reported that they have built a suite of corporate funders to backfill to allow for the continued operations of the program at a high level. They also reported that they will be doing a virtual launch of the 15 cohorts with Mayor Faulkner. They stated that MetroConnects has become a model for how they do their work and it also helps the team engages and works with businesses during this time. They also reported that they anticipate ending the year with memberships down by 30 percent.

Mr. Cafferty reported that Kimberly Becker, President/CEO, San Diego International Airport reported has provided updates on air travel at EDC board meetings. He reported that at the last meeting it was reported that air travel is still off by 87 percent. He stated that she is in constant contact with the EDC team. He stated that his team is conducting ongoing surveys to try to get information from their businesses on their travel needs. He reported that the EDC hosted a webinar that included Alaska Airlines, the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority, Southwest Airlines and the Tourism Authority talking about the current conditions of air travel. He stated that they learned on that call was that three weeks prior that tourism travel was picking up and business travel was virtually nothing, however, in a Board call several weeks later it was reported that tourism travel had drifted down and that there was an uptick in business travel.

Chair Gleason also reported that Visit California has been doing a weekly consumer sentiment check in and that the information is on their website and it gives pretty good real time data that shows up clearly in air travel statistics.

In response to Board Member Merrifield regarding whether business travel will continue to increase, Kimberly Becker, President/CEO, San Diego County Regional Airport Authority stated that it's very difficult to tell from week to week. She stated that many states have individual restrictions and travelers may have quarantine for 14 days when they get to their destination. She stated that our August travel numbers are fairly reflective of scheduled flights for July. She stated that the Authority is proceeding cautiously and that ever projection has indicated a late 2022 and early 2023 full recovery.

Chair Gleason stated that his concern is that it's going to be a very deep, long and dark fall in regards to tourism and that there will be a lot of shaking out of business through this period of time.

Ms. Becker reported that she have a meeting with meeting planners from across the country and that the Authority, Convention Center, hotels and tourism will be talking with them about what to expect when you travel into San Diego. She stated that the next two meetings will be focused on safety protocols and the calendar for next year to try get people back into San Diego and welcome them back when it's safe.

Board Member Merrifield reported that the working waterfront is doing pretty well and it's pretty stable. He reported that a lot of the restaurants have adapted to the outdoor dining pretty effectively. He reported that the Brigantine is still planning to open in the next two months.

Mr. Cafferty also reported that they received an update from the Port that no cruise ships are coming into Port which has a measured economic impact to the community. He stated that they are trying to focus on the businesses, which are not that noticeable, that supports the cruise ships when the ships dock. He stated they are the back end engine of the economic tied to tourism. He reported their team's focus will be working with business that won't make it and to assist with the retraining of employees for other employment.

Board Member Caldwell commended the World Trade Center of San Diego and the Regional EDC on how quickly they have pivoted and taken on the role to support small businesses. He reported that since the principal source of funding for advertising efforts for San Diego comes from hotel revenue, we will have to get creative as to how to fund the advertising efforts.

**3. STRATEGIC THINKING DISCUSSION:**

Discussions on this item were included under Items 2 and 4.

**4. UPDATE ON THE GLOBAL COMPETITIVE COUNCIL'S 2<sup>ND</sup> QUARTER MEETING:**

Mark Cafferty, President & CEO, San Diego Regional EDC and Jesse Gipe, Director, World Trade Center San Diego, provided an update on the Global Competitive Council's 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter meeting that included discussions regarding pressures on the localized supply chain, foreign direct investments in San Diego in Biotech and life sciences, the impacts of the pandemic two to five years out in the US and in other countries and trade missions. They also reported that the discussions included risk mitigations for operations.

Hampton Brown, Interim Vice President Marketing & Innovation reported that the WTC has been instrumental with assisting with completing the business travel survey which form the basis for a webinar with travel planners which will be critical when the Authority discuss the resumption of international service.

Board Member Merrifield reported that the Port laid out a new optimization plan for the Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal as part of their Go Global Plan.

Joel Valenzuela, Director, Maritime Business Line at Port of San Diego reported that the Port's Tiger Project was completed at the end of June. He stated that it is foundational project for the Tenth Avenue Marine Cargo Terminal modernizations creating more open flexible space. He also reported that they have completed the Porsche processing facility in National City that is connected to the Global Competitive Council which was one of the key projects that was under discussion during the WTC delegation to Stuttgart last year. He also reported that the Port is using this pause to evaluate and look what the new normal will look like for cruise operations in San Diego.

**BOARD COMMENTS:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 10:03 a.m.

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE WORLD TRADE CENTER SAN DIEGO, INC. BOARD

THIS 24<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2020.



---

ROBERT H. GLEASON  
CHAIR  
WORLD TRADE CENTER SAN DIEGO, INC.  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ATTEST:



---

TONY R. RUSSELL, DIRECTOR  
BOARD SERVICES/AUTHORITY CLERK