

OWENSBORO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Work Session

September 13, 2022 12:00 PM

Owensboro City Hall
101 E. 4th Street
Owensboro, Kentucky

1. CALL TO ORDER - Mayor Tom Watson

Present: Mayor Tom Watson, Commissioners Larry Maglinger, Mark Castlen, Bob Glenn and Jeff Sanford.

2. OWENSBORO CONVENTION CENTER ANNUAL REPORT – Jeff Esposito, OVG360 General Manager, presented an update for the Owensboro Convention Center and Sportscenter (presentation attached). Mr. Esposito reviewed the fiscal year 2021-2022 including: beating the budget at both the Convention Center (\$357,210) and Sportscenter (\$128,684); hosting multiple conventions, sporting events and concerts. The Center's self-created events netting \$215,000 helped them survive the pandemic and beat budget. The Center was ranked by *Exhibitor Magazine* as Top 30 in North America, Reader's Choice Award (6th time) by *Convention South* and Prime Site Award (9th time) by *Facilities and Destinations*. Mayor Watson asked what could be done to the Sportscenter to modernize it. Mr. Esposito responded that short of upgrading the seats (very costly), the retractable risers that are being installed will be significant, and tweaks to the ticketing and concession areas could be helpful. The consistent capital that has been invested in the building over the years has helped keep it in good condition. City Manager Pagan added that fiscal year 2021-2022 is the first year the Center has had an operating profit.

3. OWENSBORO CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU ANNUAL UPDATE – Mark Calitri, President & CEO, presented the annual update. An all-time record of room nights was seen in 2022 and the two upcoming years look to follow the same path. The Center's strong team helps with the numbers. The success of the riverfront and downtown investments are paying off. Mr. Pagan acknowledged Claude Bacon (Lingate Hospitality), Chairman of Visit Owensboro, in the audience.

4. HYDROFAIR AFTER-ACTION REPORT – Public Events Director Tim Ross presented an after-action report (presentation attached). Mr. Ross explained that although the sponsorships grew by \$10,000 and the weather and river were cooperative; attendance was less than anticipated and hotel occupancy and Convention Center revenues were down from 2021. The estimated net operating cost was approximately (\$175,000). The Air Show is scheduled in September 2023, so at this point the City is not planning a Hydrofair next year. Commissioner Castlen said he was disappointed with the lack of attendees. He also asked how the Hydrofair financially compares to the Airshow. Mr. Ross explained the Airshow has a longer history, a larger financial impact and much larger crowd. The last Airshow had a net operating cost of (\$185,000), the Convention Center had a net revenue profit of \$70,000 (compared to

the Hydrofair net revenue profit of \$13,000). Mayor Pro Tem Maglinger stated the live stream had a large presence with Owensboro mentioned many times. He said racing teams come from all over using 1,700 hotel rooms and would like to look at the marketing in the future. He supports hosting again. Commissioner Glenn added that if the crowd could be educated on the sport, it may draw more people. City Manager Pagan mentioned the back-to-back weekends of the Hydrofair and Airshow in 2021 and said it was incredibly difficult on city staff members. Mayor Watson said he was disappointed with the attendance and that the City should look at how to host without spending so much money.

5. ECU CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION – Jim Parham, Supervising Officer of OPD's Evidence Crimes Unit, gave a presentation the unit (presentation attached). The unit is made up of four (4) experienced retired officers with specialized training and education and one (1) secretary. There are three (3) primary responsibilities of the unit: investigate major crime scenes, property and evidence custodians and latent print laboratory. The lab is one (1) of four (4) in Kentucky; Officer Parham and Officer Roby are board certified latent print examiners; there are only three (3) in the state and 1,000 in the world. The lab originated due to the State having such a back-log. A local retired secret service agent (Sam Durrett) volunteered to train the staff for the lab in the beginning. The lab has had huge success and received an \$80,000 Homeland Security Grant to purchase an AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System) which allows them to take a latent (hidden) print and search it against known prints in the system. The lab performs body identification and they are the only full lab in this part of Kentucky. OPD assists the Western Kentucky Medical Examiner and the local coroner's office.

6. CITY PROJECT LIST – Project list attached. Amanda Rogers said Cravens Pool received two (2) submissions for the repairs.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Mayor Watson made a motion to adjourn, motion was seconded by Commissioner Castlen and passed unanimously at 12:53 p.m.

Thomas H. Watson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Beth Davis, City Clerk