

**ALBANY CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY
2021 Q-3 MEETING MINUTES
Albany Capital Center,
October 28, 2021**

The audio of live-stream link is: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= G0kHjiEzmQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0kHjiEzmQ)

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 AM by Michele Vennard, Chair.

Members Present:

Chair Michele Vennard, Treasurer Steven C. Lerner, Sarah Reginelli, John McDonald, Michael Hoffman, & Daniel C. Lynch

Members joining via ZOOM:

Vice Chair Michael Skrebutenas, Secretary Megan Daly,

Others present:

Meredith Brinkman of BST/CFO, Jill Delaney & Jay Cloutier of Discover Albany, Shannon Licygiewicz, Albany Capital Center GM, Duncan Stewart, ACCA Executive Director

Approval of Minutes:

- 9-23-21 ACCA Audit & Finance Committee Meeting
- 9-23-21 ACCA Board Special Meeting Budget:

Ms. Vennard called for a single motion to accept both sets of minutes. A motion was made by Mr. McDonald; seconded by Ms. Reginelli to accept the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Business Reports:

Treasurer's Report:

Mr. Lerner requested that Ms. Brinkman review the Financial Statement of Net Position for September.

Ms. Brinkman presented the September 2021 Financials noting the cash position as strong and consistent, with the receipt of the Shuttered Venue funds contributing to a modest positive balance as we start the final quarter 2021 resulting in a YTD loss of 68.9%.

Mr. Lynch: Since the ACC remained open, what was the eligibility for Shuttered Venue funds based upon?

Mr. Stewart: The program also offered compensation for revenue from cancelled events and for certain capital improvements.

Mr. Lynch: Was the amount received expected?

Mr. Stewart: The funds exceeded the initial projections, nearly reaching the cap for this type of venue, just over \$700K, coming in at just over \$600K

Mr. Stewart: The Q-3 Occupancy Tax distribution was received in October and is not reflected in this report due to the timing. The 2021 Q-3 receipts while greater than budgeted, are approximately 76% of the average receipts in '17, '18, and 2019. The funds have been deposited in the Capital Improvement Account and in checking, in anticipation of the 2022 Q-1 operations funding request that will be due to ASM this coming December.

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Economic Impact Committee Report:

The EI Committee met on 7-20-21 to review the summary of Economic Impacts identified by Discover Albany for 2021 Q-3 and for the life of the facility, 3-1-17 through 9-30-21. Along with the 2021 Q-3 Sales & Marketing updates prepared by ASM.

Discover Albany Reports:

Jay Cloutier of D/A presents the 2021 Q-3 Economic Impact Report, confirming that the information is based upon the event data provided to D/A by SMG with additional information from Hotel Properties, Meeting Planners which is then independently verified, entered into the calculator, and reviewed by D/A staff before issuing.

Mr. Cloutier reviews the impacts noting the importance of return of convention business and a broadening recovery, including meetings and a tradeshow, with modest gains, but still impacted by such factors as lower attendee numbers, shorter stay durations, and lower event frequency. Of the 27 events held at the Albany Capital Center, many were small meetings.

The year over year comparison displays significant improvement, however when compared to 2019 and in consideration of those events contracted and then cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic, the numbers for overall attendance, hotel room nights, and full time equivalent jobs, are well behind those of 2019 and Q-1 of 2020.

Mr. Cloutier presents Occupancy and Rev-Par trending information prepared by Discover Albany as an Outlook, comparing year over year. While both are tracking the pattern established in 2019, that of a very good year, the numbers are however lower, with a significant gap remaining to be closed. The numbers are being supported by leisure and business travel.

Ms. Vennard: Notes the importance of these slides as true indicators.

Mr. Hoffman: Notes that there is more business travel than is identified, because much business is being conducted during leisure

Mr. Cloutier presents a year over year summary of leads, while lead generation is slowly returning, the gap is significant and there is continuing hesitation on the part of planners and clients to commit.

Ms. Reginelli: Is this a regional or national report?

Mr. Cloutier: This is a national based report however it reflects what our local partners have indicated is their experience.

Ms. Delaney: This is supported by discussions with our statewide partners and sitting on not-for-profit boards as we do, have seen the hesitation firsthand.

Mr. Stewart: This is also consistent with the weekly sales data produced by ASM for the ACCA.

Ms. Licygiewicz: many clients are considering dates but cannot commit due to the uncertainties.

Ms. Delaney: While many not for profits have done well virtually, due to lower overhead costs, but clearly the preference of potential attendees is for a return to in-person.

Ms. Vennard: More or less hybrid requests?

Ms. Licygiewicz: ASM is witnessing a shift where clients want either in person or virtual, fewer hybrids except for certain not-for-profits, who will live-stream an event to expand the audience.

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Ms. Delaney: In that the virtual and in-person experience is so different, some organizations are hosting entirely separate events as part of the same program so that one does not limit the other.

Mr. Stewart: The current trends result in lower revenues due in part to lower Food & Beverage sales and fewer, smaller, and shorter events, but critically, this impacts the number of full time equivalent jobs, which is trending much lower than in past years.

ASM Operations Report:

Ms. Licygiewicz confirms that they have booked 12 additional events in this quarter, concert business is increasing, including some that have outgrown other facilities, and the center will be hosting its first cheer competition.

Ms. Vennard: How are concerts defined:

Ms. Licygiewicz: all are general admission, larger than other facilities with 1000 person limit and smaller than those at the Times Union Center, of 5000 or more.

Ms. Vennard: How is the business being recorded, as what type of event and in what category?

Ms. Licygiewicz: Because they are ticketed, ASM presumes "Public"

Mr. Cloutier: Discover Albany will review and provide detail as a post meeting follow-up.

Post Meeting update from Discover Albany: the events will be added to Public Events column as they are ticketed but not related to sports events.

The current and projected events days through the end of 2021 are trending well however 55 events have cancelled, with a majority being meetings and social events along with some public shows, including the ski show, for a total loss of 102 event days.

Ms. Daly: Related to cancellations, how many of the lost event days have been made up?

Ms. Licygiewicz: Many have and ASM continues filling the gap, but the end of year is proving difficult, but importantly, the events are not as profitable as those that cancelled.

For 2022 the calendar is filling well with the return of the Bar Exam, a total of 42 events, 73 event days, 23,680 attendees, 6,187 hotel rooms, 73 event days, are on the books with 27 pending contracts.

Due to the very short booking windows dates are closing fast and the center is turning away some business, and this trend will continue.

Website is active but in review to assure the best experience, access, and appearance, including the ACCA pages, with feed back welcome. ASM can make changes in house, a cost and time saving feature.

ACCA Operations:

Mr. Stewart:

- The final 2022 Meeting Schedule for upload to the website.
- Ionization Test results exceeded design criteria, in many instances significantly, and has been certified to by the Engineer of Record, ASM training complete.

- Market Study: In progress, weekly conf. calls with HVS, good progress, and HVS has stated that the report will be available by the end of the year due in part to the level of cooperation from Board members, and others, including hoteliers, and public officials.

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ACCA Operations (continued):

Ms. Vennard: As part of this past week's review with HVS, the importance of parking was made clear and the development of Liberty Park being a key component, that the market study could benefit were HVS to contact Capitalize Albany as part of its research.

Ms. Reginelli: Agreed, many options are being considered for Liberty Park, including mixed use with parking components and those such as restaurant and retail to accommodate visitors.

- Pre-Audit meeting will be scheduled prior to end of year
- ASM will be preparing draft year end statements for review per contract.
- Healthcare matter: change over complete, saving accumulating.

Ms. Licygiewicz: The impacts from the ionization system and the related upgrades are positive and the investment by the ACCA is appreciated by ASM and by attendees who express that they feel confident coming to the ACC and in the steps being taken.

Other Business:

There was no other business before the ACCA Board

Adjourn:

Ms. Vennard with appreciation to all for attending, in person, and virtually, called for a motion to adjourn. ***A motion was made by Mr. Lynch; seconded by Mr. Hoffman to adjourn the meeting, the motion carried unanimously.*** The meeting adjourned at 9:58 AM

Next Meeting:

Thursday, January 27, 2021 9:00 AM

Albany Capital Center

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