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NO. LTC # 308-2008

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor Matti Herrera Bower and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager

DATE: November 26, 2008

SUBJECT: Miami Beach Convention Center General Manager

This Letter to Commission (LTC) is to inform you that Global Spectrum named Robert Balsam, Jr., as the General Manager of the Miami Beach Convention Center. Mr. Balsam is a highly respected and well-known, 30-year veteran of the public assembly facility management industry. He most recently served Global Spectrum as Assistant General Manager at the Duke Energy (Convention) Center in Cincinnati, OH, and brings proven and successful experience in administration, operations and the booking and implementation of events at convention centers throughout the United States, to Miami Beach. He joined Global Spectrum in 2007 in Cincinnati as Director of Sales, working with the Cincinnati Convention & Visitors Bureau in developing and implementing numerous successful sales strategies for long-term convention, corporate and tradeshow business.

Prior to joining Global Spectrum, Balsam was Director of Sales at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston, TX, from 2004 until 2007. He also served as Senior Event Manager and Guest Services Manager for the San Diego Convention Center in San Diego, CA, from 2001 until 2004; Convention Manager at the Freeman Companies/Sullivan Transfer Company in Dallas, TX, from 1992 until 2001; Assistant Manager of Operations for the Albert Thomas Convention Center in Houston, TX, from 1983 until 1999; and Event Coordinator at the Astrodome in Houston, TX from 1978 until 1983. Attached is a copy of his resume for your reference.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions.

c: Hilda Fernandez, Assistant City Manager
Max Sklar, Tourism and Cultural Development Director
Tom Mobley, Interim General Manager, Miami Beach Convention Center
Eric Bayne, General Manager, Centerplate

Robert L. Balsam Jr.

[redacted]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A talented, highly motivated leader, manager, and visionary with the demonstrated ability to direct a variety of complex tasks simultaneously. Consistently able to recognize opportunities and transform apparent challenges into productive results. Interacts effectively with staff at all levels, and maintains a professional appearance, attitude, and commitment. Recognized as decisive, persistent, competitive, and positive with a high degree of integrity, attention to detail, and loyalty. Inspires confidence, trust, and rapport.

AREAS OF PROFICIENCY

- Sales and Marketing
- Customer Service
- Team Motivation/Development
- Problem Analysis/Resolution
- Labor Negotiations
- Training and Development
- Networking
- Budgets

Duke Energy Convention Center/Cincinnati, Ohio **2007-Present**

Assistant General Manager

- Evaluate and revise existing Policies and Procedures, rental contract and, in conjunction with the Cincinnati CVB, Booking Guidelines.
- Supervise and provide guidance to the Operations, Maintenance, Housekeeping/Set-up, Sales/Marketing and Event Management staffs.
- Assist General Manager in conducting a bi-weekly staff meeting to include, Director of Finance, Director of Operations, F&B Director, F&B Asst. Director, F&B Director of Sales, Security Manager and Housekeeping/Set-up Manager.
- Assist Director of Sales/Marketing, Housekeeping/Set-up Manager and Event Managers with the preparation and implementation of departmental budgets.
- Hiring of staff for Event Management, Sales/Marketing and Housekeeping/Set-up departments. Assist the General Manager and Director of Finance with the hiring of Operations, Security and Accounting staff. Work with the General Manager and Director of Finance in the preparation of budget and capital project reports generated monthly and reviewed with the City Contract Administrator and City Finance Department.
- Review all final event invoices to insure contract compliance and proper ancillary and equipment charges are included.
- Continue developing positive working relationships with City officials, City departments, Cincinnati CVB, Cincinnati Restaurant Association, Cincinnati Reds and Cincinnati companies headquartered in Cincinnati, i.e. P&G, Cincinnati Insurance, Western & Southern Insurance, Kroger, Macy's.
- Promote Cincinnati and the Duke Energy Convention Center with memberships and attending industry tradeshows.

Director of Sales

- Work with the Cincinnati CVB to develop and implement sales strategies for new long-term convention, corporate and tradeshow business.
- Work with the DECC sales staff to develop new short-term business strategies.
- Supervise the Marketing Manager with the development of marketing collateral, sales information, press releases, webpage updates
- Develop travel for industry trade shows, sales missions for four (4) Sales Managers and one (1) Marketing Manager in conjunction with Cincinnati CVB and hotel partners.
- Prepare and maintain all sales pace reports, budget reports, lost business reports and monitor TAP reports and PWC industry comparisons.
- Utilized Ungerboeck Events Booking Management System.

George R. Brown Convention Center/Houston, Texas **2004-2007**

Director of Sales

- Develop and supervise a Sales team consisting of four (4) Sales Managers, Contract Administrator, Booking Supervisor, two (2) Sales Assistants and Administrative Assistant.
- Work with the Director of Marketing to develop collateral for industry trade publications and sales kits.
- Work with the Houston CVB VP of Sales to develop strategies for new convention, corporate and tradeshow business.
- Assist the General Manager with the development and implementation of the contract between the City and the CVB.

San Diego Convention Center/San Diego, California **2001-2004**

Senior Event Manager

- Act as liaison between clients and the San Diego Convention Center in regards to logistics for events.
- Worked with the exclusive F&B, data/telecommunications and preferred A/V providers during all events held in the facility.
- Provided all event logistics using the ConCentRICS software system.

Guest Services Manager

- Day to day operation of guest services and security division.
- Hire and supervise three (3) Administrative staff, eight (8) Shift Supervisors and 109+ full and part-time staff.
- Control 2.1 million dollar budget for department.

The Freeman Companies/Sullivan Transfer Company **1992-2001**
Dallas, Texas/San Diego California

Convention Manager

- Act as liaison between associations and/or exhibitors in the coordination of freight transportation, unloading, loading and set-up of exhibits.
- Worked with facility Event Managers, van line operators/owners, over the road and air freight carriers.
- Opened and continued day to day operation of Sullivan Transfer San Diego operation, to include working with the Teamster Local Business Agent in the hiring of five (5) full-time members and Office Manager.
- Worked with several GSC drayage Managers in the re-negotiation of a three (3) year labor agreement with the Teamster Local.

Albert Thomas Convention Center/George R. Brown Convention Center **1983-1999**
Houston, Texas

Assistant Manager Operations/Event Manager

- Act as liaison between clients and the Albert Thomas Convention Center and Jones Hall for The Performing Arts including, the Houston Ballet, Opera and Symphony.
- Worked with stagehands, exclusive in-house F&B, electrical, and telecommunication providers.
- Promoted to Assistant Manager Operations and oversaw the Event Management Department, Engineering Department and Housekeeping/Set-up Departments.

Astrodome/Astrohall Stadium Corporation/Houston, Texas **1978-1983**

Event Coordinator

- Act as liaison between clients and the Astrodome, Astrohall and Astroarena.
- Worked with exclusive in-house F&B, electrical, and telecommunications providers.
- Worked with the NFL Houston Oilers and MLB Houston Astros on special event logistics.

Computer Proficiency

- ConCentRICS,
- Ungerboeck/EBMS
- Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook),

Active Industry Memberships:

- PCMA, MPI, ASAE, IAEM, ASME, IAAM