

**CITY OF CHARLESTON ENTERS INTO NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH OAK VIEW  
GROUP FACILITIES TO MANAGE CHARLESTON COLISEUM, CONVENTION  
CENTER, AND MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM AND INCREASE EVENTS AND  
CONVENTION CENTER BUSINESS**

***OVG FACILITIES TO FOCUS ON INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHARLESTON***

**CHARLESTON, WV (September 8, 2020)** – In a unanimous vote, the City of Charleston today approved a new partnership with Oak View Group Facilities, a global firm and specialist in providing premium services, content and streamlining venue operations for its clients, to manage, operate and schedule events for the 13,500-seat Charleston Coliseum, the 250,000-square-foot Convention Center, and the 3,400-seat Municipal Auditorium.

Oak View Group will immediately begin overseeing and managing the day-to-day operations for all three facilities with an emphasis on generating new business opportunities for the Convention Center. Shura Garnett, Senior Vice President, OVG Facilities, a highly-respected industry executive in convention center management, will serve as the interim executive director of the facilities during the transition.

“The Charleston Coliseum and Convention Center is a showplace in our Capital City. The \$100-million renovations made it competitive with other facilities throughout the country, but building a facility and filling it are two different things,” said Amy Goodwin, Mayor, City of Charleston. “Oak View Group has a wealth of industry knowledge and relationships with sales and booking agencies that will bring a major return on our investment to Charleston.”

“Oak View Group is the recognized worldwide industry leader in creating new and exciting customer experiences and providing world-class entertainment,” added Goodwin. “We look forward to working with our new partners in reestablishing Charleston as premier destination for live entertainment and meeting and conventions.”

“As live events and convention and meeting business begins to come back it will be important to work with a company like OVG who is at the forefront of leading the discussions on making sure arenas, stadiums and convention centers like ours can return to hosting events safely,” added Carrie Goodwin Fenwick, Commission Board Chairperson. “We’ve seen what OVG has been able to do at their other convention centers and we’re excited about the opportunities they will bring to Charleston.”

OVG Facilities is at the forefront of assisting arenas, stadiums, and convention centers worldwide in the new protocol to reopen facilities post-COVID-19. The company established a Venue Reopening Task Force of engineering, health testing, and various mechanical systems and chemical applications to help these venues ensure guests, exhibitors, conventioners, performers, athletes, and employees can return confidently and comfortably to live entertainment venues and convention centers.

OVG has been hired by the National Hockey League to oversee the COVID response for Hygiene, Compliance, and Security for the NHL’s Return to Play in Toronto and Edmonton.

“We are excited to deliver a series of unprecedented services, support, and results here in Charleston,” said Peter Luukko, Chairman, OVG Facilities. “We look forward to creating new content, programming and booking opportunities for Charleston.”

“As we further expand our convention center business, the Charleston Convention Center will be one of OVG’s flagship convention centers,” added Luukko. “We also look forward to partnering with the Convention & Visitors Bureau in seeking new and exciting events to fill the Convention Center.”

As the entertainment and convention centerpiece of Charleston, the Coliseum & Convention Center hosts the majority of the state's premier entertainment, sporting, and corporate events. The two facilities can host meetings, banquets, sports, concerts, and exhibitions.

Garnett, a 25-year convention center industry leader, joined OVG in 2019 to help expand the company's existing convention center portfolio. OVG's innovation and entrepreneurial spirit to make a positive disruption in the live entertainment and sports industry is making a difference in the hospitality industry, as well. In addition to securing the contract for the Charleston Coliseum & Convention Center, OVG Facilities recently added the Fredericksburg Expo and Convention Center to its management portfolio and is in contract negotiations with two other convention centers. The company also reduced the City of Grand Junction (CO)'s subsidy by \$200,000 in 2018 at the Grand Junction Convention Center; and continues to reestablish financial best years running at Indiana University of Pennsylvania's Kovalchick Complex in Indiana, PA, since 2016.

Garnett is a past Chairman of the board of the International Association of Venue Managers and was the 2008 recipient of Venue's Today's "Women of Influence" Award and the 2005 IAVM Presidential Citation.

OVG Facilities is successful in delivering new event content and programming opportunities for its clients. The company is experiencing a 587% growth since 2018, including 10 new accounts in 2020. OVG is also working with the NHL on two new arenas, including the Seattle Kraken's Climate Pledge Arena, and the New York Islanders' UBS Arena; as well as the Eastland Arena in Manchester, England; and the new 9,500-seat multi-purpose arena in Savannah, GA.

Oak View Group Facilities, a division of the Oak View Group, which was founded by Irving Azoff, Tim Leiweke, and supported by Silverlake, specializes in event programming, venue assessments, and security and emergency preparedness. Oak View Group Facilities can also provide full management services for arenas, stadiums, convention centers, and performing arts centers. Oak View Group is the largest developer of sports and entertainment facilities in the world with \$4.5 billion of deployed capital across eight projects.

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Ike Richman

215-760-2888

[ike@richmancommunications.com](mailto:ike@richmancommunications.com)

[getmepress.com](http://getmepress.com)

Facebook: Ike Richman

Twitter: @ike\_richman

Instagram: @ike\_richman