

Groundbreaking Ceremony marks start of expansion project at convention center

On Saturday, August 20, an official ground breaking ceremony was held for the Roland E. Powell Convention Center expansion project on the west deck of the facility overlooking the bay showcasing the view of the new ballroom. Ocean City Mayor Rick Meehan officiated and introduced Governor Martin O'Malley. Both the Mayor and Governor spoke of the long-term relationship between the City and State using the convention center as a positive example of a truly successful partnership. Also in attendance from the original groundbreaking were former Ocean City Mayor Roland E. Powell, former Council Member Buck Mann and Senator Jim Mathias. Representing the Maryland Stadium Authority was Gary A. McGuigan.

Construction is currently moving forward on time and on budget with completion scheduled in late fall of 2012. The expansion will be a welcomed addition to the facility, increasing needed space and providing breath-taking bay views. The 32,000 sq. ft. expansion will include a new lower exhibit hall and a new bayfront ballroom exposure.

Total project cost, including design fees, is \$9.3 million, with \$5 million being paid by the Town through the half-cent food tax collection and \$4.3 million contributed by the Maryland Stadium Authority. Estimated new tax revenue for the State once completed is \$1.1 million to \$1.6 million annually and 300 to 400 full-time new jobs.

