

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – MARCH 16, 2021**

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Entertainment & Convention Authority (“MECA”), a Nebraska nonprofit corporation, was called to order by Chairwoman Diane Duren at 1:14 p.m. on March 16, 2021.

Roll Call:

Present: Chairwoman Diane Duren, Mr. Tom Kelley, Mr. Jay Noddle and Mr. Thomas Warren.

Proof of Publication:

Notice of the meeting was published in *The Daily Record* on March 9, 2021, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on March 9, 2021.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Kelley moved for approval of the minutes of the February 16, 2021, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Mr. Noddle.

Motion carried: 4-0.

President/CEO Report:

Mr. Roger Dixon has been involved on several legislative bills. Most recently was LB181, which was the turnback tax whereas the City of Omaha was looking to increase the cap from their existing turnback from \$75M to \$150M. This bill was arbitrarily rewritten by Senator Lou Ann Linehan unbeknownst to the City. There is talk that this bill will be amended before further consideration.

Senator Mike McDonnell’s Bill LB566, which is the Shovel Ready Capital Recovery and Investment Act is already on the floor and not taking any amendments, so it appears the turnback tax is dead for 2021. This bill is for not-for-profits that had capital projects that were stopped because of the COVID-19 crisis. MECA is still in the process of evaluating qualification, it but it may be a possible to secure money for the completion of security barriers at CHI Health Center Omaha (CHIHCO) or at TD Ameritrade Park Omaha (TDAPO).

Very little information has been received from the Small Business Association (SBA) regarding the Shuttered Venue Act, but MECA continues to work through the process.

There is light at the end of the tunnel as MECA has been awarded all sessions for the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Women’s Volleyball Championship. USA Swimming announced a revised plan and schedule for the U.S. Olympic Swim Team Trials, dividing it into two competitions, with Wave I on June 4-7, 2021 and Wave II on June 13-20, 2021.

Mr. Kelley inquired if there were any updates on NCAA Men’s College World Series (CWS). Mr. Dixon responded that the dates are on hold and they are scheduled to begin play on Saturday, June 19, at TDAPO, with capacity still being determined by the NCAA. MECA has made the case that the facilities are currently approved at 100% capacity indoors and outside. Mr. Kelley asked when

the NCAA will make a decision to determine capacity. Mr. Dixon believes it will be the first part of April. Chairwoman Duren added that the guidance from the CDC is continuously changing and vaccinations are being offered so hopefully things will eventually transition back to normal.

Other Business:

Convention Center Sales & Marketing Update

Ms. Denise Niebrugge stated that there are currently 36 events on the books, utilizing 99 event days for 2021. Since the February 16, 2021 Board meeting, 11 events and over 18,000 hotel room nights have been added. In addition, nine license agreements have been signed.

MECA's first sit-down dinner is scheduled in April, with over 1,000 attendees expected. The first large conference is scheduled in May with approximately 700 attendees expected for 3-4 days.

Corporate Sales & Marketing Update

Mr. Tom O'Gorman reported that the NCAA is set to bring in 48 teams to Omaha for the NCAA Women's Volleyball Championship. The NCAA will bring in their own team to handle the COVID-19 testing. At this time, teams will have to test negative before leaving their home state and will have to test negative twice while in Omaha before they are allowed to practice. They will also be tested daily.

Halls A & B in the convention center will host the First and Second rounds, with the Regional Finals, National Semi Finals and the Championship games being moved into the arena. The NCAA set the capacity at 25% but they also provided two more sessions. Ticket sales will be just over 20 thousand total. MECA hopes that by receiving two extra sessions that guests who previously purchased tickets for the sold-out national championship two years ago will still be able to attend some of the games. T.V. towers are being constructed in the convention center and MECA is bringing in bleachers.

Mr. Kelley added that he has received a lot of questions from the community whether spectators will be allowed in for the games in the Convention Center. Mr. O'Gorman responded that no, only friends and family will be allowed to attend those sessions. The Regionals, Semis and Championship games will be open to public onsale. There will be a single court set up in the middle of the arena with two games in the morning, a break taken to sanitize the facility, followed by two games in the evening. Mr. Noddle asked if all the games will be televised. Mr. O'Gorman responded yes, televised or streamed. All tickets for the previously sold-out event were refunded last Wednesday. Tickets are being sold with a rolling bar code, allowing guests a passcode to use once for a ticket purchase and then it is disabled. This method is being used to try to give guests who had purchased tickets two years ago to have a chance attend at least one session.

Mr. O'Gorman added that his team is working with Creighton University on their graduation ceremonies. There will be three ceremonies at CHIHCO, one Friday night and two on Saturday. The Baccalaureate Mass will be held at TDAPO.

Public Relations Update

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl stated that just this week an email was received from the Douglas County Health Department (DCHD) where a COVID-19 Review Team member wrote: “A huge thank you to you and the MECA team in your continued safety measures as venues open in an expanded way.” DCHD also praised MECA’s efforts to enforce mask use and even solicited feedback from previous experiences that might be shared with other venues. MECA understands that no system is perfect with a lot of uncertainty to navigate through, but it is encouraging to see MECA recognized as a leader among the venues who have overseen reopening guidelines.

MECA continues to submit applications to the DCHD with another large event application submitted last week for the Professional Bull Riding event in May.

Over the past couple weeks, MECA has had media present on several occasions. There was great advanced coverage of the seasonal job fair as well as Disney on Ice and World of Wheels. Disney even rapid tested members of the media before they were granted the opportunity to interact with performers. Those stories provided an opportunity to remind the public of the health and safety standards at CHIHCO before the events.

Lastly, both NCAA Volleyball and USA Swimming are having regular planning meetings (on many topics) but also to determine what media access will look like for these events as it will undoubtedly be different than previous years. MECA is working to achieve a balance of safety, yet a level of accessibility and sightlines that the NCAA has grown accustomed to.

Mr. Dixon added that the DCHD is not comfortable with devices being used for temperature scans so the procedure is being discontinued for guests. Staff will still scan daily for the time being. Ms. Engdahl stated that the DCHD believes temperature scanning creates a false confidence and have expressed a preference that MECA stops.

Committee Updates:

Internal Governance Committee

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met via teleconference on Monday, March 15, 2021, at MECA’s offices. In attendance were Chairwoman Duren, Mr. Bob Freeman, Mr. Tom Kelley, Mr. Roger Dixon, Ms. Diane Mills, and Mr. Stephen Curtis, City of Omaha Finance Director.

The Committee reviewed the January 2021 Financial Statements, noting that historical financial statements continue to look bleak. After overviews from and discussions with Ms. Mills, the Committee found the report to be consistent with standard MECA accounting practices.

Mr. Kelley noted the importance and necessity of the public funds that MECA benefited from and is hopeful to receive more information on the Shuttered Venue Operators grant program soon. A second draw of the federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) may also be a viable possibility. It has been an extremely tough year financially, but the situation seems to be improving for the future.

Real Estate Committee

Mr. Jay Noddle provided an overview of work on North Omaha truck routes. An increase in development activity in the area will occur after the CWS.

Contract Approvals:

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are three contracts requiring Board approval.

Hussey Seating

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Hussey Seating to provide replacement cushions and upholstery to the seats and seatbacks, as well as replace cupholders in the arena at CHI Health Center Omaha, as more fully described on the attached summary, is hereby approved, and Roger Dixon as President/CEO is authorized on behalf of MECA to execute the Agreement following its finalization in a form reasonably approved by counsel.

Chairwoman Duren invited public and Board comment and asked for a motion.

Mr. Dixon noted that this improvement is long overdue, as this item was slated for replacement in the Capital Improvement Plan in 2018. The structure and fabric are in decent condition, but the seat cushions are worn out. Chairwoman Duren noted that the timing is right when there are not many activities in the arena.

Moved by Mr. Noddle seconded by Mr. Warren.

Motion carried: 4-0

Big Ten Rentals

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Big Ten Rentals for the rental of 8 bleacher units for the 2021 NCAA Women's Volleyball National Championships at CHI Health Center Omaha, as more fully described on the attached summary, is hereby approved and Roger Dixon as President/CEO is authorized on behalf of MECA to execute the Agreement following its finalization in a form reasonably approved by counsel.

Chairwoman Duren invited public and Board comment and asked for a motion.

Moved by Mr. Kelley seconded by Mr. Warren.

Motion carried: 4-0

Creighton University

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between Creighton University and MECA for extending the lease of TD Ameritrade Omaha Park for Creighton University Baseball games, as more fully described on the attached summary, is hereby approved, and Roger Dixon as President/CEO is authorized on behalf of MECA to execute the Agreement following its finalization in a form reasonably approved by counsel.

Chairwoman Duren invited public and Board comment and asked for a motion.

Moved by Mr. Noddle seconded by Mr. Warren.

Motion carried: 4-0

Next Board Meeting

The next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 13, 2021, at 9:15 a.m. in the MECA Board Room.

Executive Session

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 1:47 p.m. and invited a Motion to enter into closed Executive Session for purposes of discussing personnel, real estate and potential claims matters.

A Motion to go into Executive Session for these specified purposes was made by Mr. Noddle, seconded by Mr. Warren.

Motion carried: 4-0.

Adjournment

At 2:05 p.m. a motion was made to come out of Executive Session, and to adjourn, made by Mr. Noddle, seconded by Mr. Warren.

Motion carried: 4-0

Adjournment 2:05 p.m.