

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION  
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – MARCH 21, 2019**

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 8:45 a.m. on March 21, 2019, in the MECA Board Room at CHI Health Center Omaha, 455 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, Nebraska.

**Roll Call:**

Present: Chairwoman Diane Duren, Ms. Susie Buffett, Mr. Tom Kelley, Ms. Dana Washington, and Mr. Jay Noddle.

**Proof of Publication:**

Notice of the meeting was published in *The Daily Record* on March 14, 2019, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on March 14, 2019.

A copy of the Open Meetings Law was posted on the table near the side entrance to the MECA Board Room.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Ms. Washington moved for approval of the minutes of the February 14, 2019, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0.

**President/CEO Report:**

Mr. Roger Dixon stated that his focus continues to be primarily on the Tri-Park Complex project.

**Other Business:**

**Convention Center Sales & Marketing Update**

Ms. Denise Niebrugge stated that there are currently 140 events on the books, utilizing 242 event days for the fiscal year 2018-2019. Since the February 14, 2019 Board meeting, 22 events with over 37 event days and over 11,500 hotel room nights have been added. Three of these are city-wide events coming to Omaha. In addition, 12 license agreements have been signed.

**Corporate Sales & Marketing Update**

Mr. Tom O’Gorman stated that since the last Board meeting on February 14, 2019, CHI Health Center Omaha has announced Phil Collin’s “Still Not Dead Yet” tour, which will stop in Omaha on October 11, 2019.

A conference call is scheduled for today with the Major League Baseball (MLB) team to determine the date of public sales for the June 13, 2019 MLB game between the Kansas City Royals and the Detroit Tigers. Tickets have gone through eight presales with ticket sales at nearly 10,000 so there are still a good number to offer to the public.

The Box Office has had a quick turnaround in ticket sales as Creighton Basketball accepted an invitation to the 2019 National Invitation Tournament (NIT) and hosted Loyola-Chicago Ramblers in a first-round game on Tuesday, March 19. Their win secured game two for the NIT on Friday, March 22 with the Memphis Tigers.

Ticketmaster has announced they are going away from ticket sales by telephone. MECA will begin communicating this message to guests. Tickets for disabled guests will still be available for purchase by phone via the ADA (American with Disabilities Act) phone center. Mr. O’Gorman noted that only 6% of ticket sales nationally are currently being taken over the telephone. All other sales are online purchases.

### **Operations and Technology Update**

Mr. Kevin Raymond stated that since the last Board meeting on February 14, 2019, the staff’s focus, attention and most of their time has been spent on concerts and tradeshow. The amount of time required to flip the arena following an event and to set up for the next show is a continual reminder of the staff’s dedication and determination to make every event successful.

The last minute scheduling of the NIT game gave staff another opportunity to demonstrate their skills. Creighton used the term “rinse and repeat” as the court went in, came out and went in again. Mr. Raymond recognized Mr. Gavin Utesch, Guest Services Coordinator, for his hard work and dedication. Mr. Utesch was notified less than 48 hours before the event, and went on to personally contact 150 to 200 part-time staff members to coordinate, schedule and have everyone in the building prepared for the event.

Mr. Raymond was happy to announce that the field at TD Ameritrade Park Omaha (TDAPO) looks very green and is ready for the baseball season. Weather permitting, the Stadium will open on Tuesday, March 26 with the Creighton versus Nebraska game.

Notification was received from the City of Omaha yesterday that the primary storm sewer lines that run under Lot D are under a lot of pressure. The City has scheduled to open “the gates” and let the waters flush to the Missouri River, which will amount to more extreme pressure on that pipe. The water is bubbling up through the concrete, jeopardizing its integrity. Lot D is closed off for now. MECA is scheduled to meet with the City today to determine when they will assess the under grade and determine when/if it’s safe to park on it again.

Chairwoman Duren asked if there were other issues from the flooding perspective. Mr. Raymond stated there was some pooling of water in Lot A and D; however, MECA was very fortunate compared to some of the devastation around the State that the campus wasn’t significantly impacted at all. Mr. Dixon noted if the integrity on the concrete is breached, MECA’s counsel will determine whose responsibility it will be to fix it.

### **Levy Food & Beverage Update**

Ms. Chris VanDorn stated that February was an extremely busy month for Levy, and is setting up to be the busiest March on record. Levy knew at the beginning of the month that it would be close. With the addition of the first and second round of the NIT, as well as the rescheduled Justin Timberlake concert this weekend, Levy is now on track to set a new record for March's highest food and beverage revenues, which was previously set in 2015. Current projections show the budget to be exceeded by 49% this month. It will bring Levy back in line since December was slightly below budget due to the Justin Timberlake concert being rescheduled. Ms. VanDorn noted that Levy should be up 10-15% overall year to date.

Ms. VanDorn reported that the Levy team did an excellent job flipping the concourse from Disney on Ice, to the NIT basketball tournament and then to the Justin Timberlake concert on Saturday. Typically, the concourse would be set on Friday with the beer portables. A plan was devised so that it could be done in time to be ready for the concert on Saturday. It's always a challenge for Levy when dates and times of games are up in the air. Ms. VanDorn credits her team as they always rise to the occasion and make it work time and time again.

Ms. VanDorn is excited to finally be able to talk baseball after the long, hard winter season. There has been a team across the street at the Stadium all week, working to get product in place and de-winterize the Stadium now that temps are above freezing.

Levy would also like to welcome the new Senior Concessions Manager to TDAPO, Mr. Thomas Hollowell. Mr. Hollowell was employed with Levy for the last six years as a seasonal hourly employee. He officially retired from the Airforce after 24 years, and is now coming on board as a full time manager and Levy is excited to have him.

### **Public Relations Update**

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl reported that CHIHCO received rave reviews on the March 7 KISS performance. The *Omaha World Herald* noted that, even if you'd seen them before, this show was unlike any other.

The next day, during the Omaha Home Show, Ms. Engdahl received an inquiry from a local TV crew looking for experts to talk about basement flooding. The media was able to speak with experts in that field and received helpful information to pass along to their viewing audience, which also assisted in promoting the event.

The week prior to Disney on Ice Ms. Engdahl participated in a handful of PR events, including a couple guest appearances on local newscasts. MECA also arranged for a special, surprise visitor at a local hospital. There were nearly 20 pediatric patients who were feeling well enough to come from their room to meet Mickey Mouse and have the chance to participate in activities with a couple of performers. Everyone had a lot of fun that afternoon and it received good coverage – considering the event was competing with the media coverage of the weather.

There were a few questions from guests that due to the flooding were unable to make it downtown last weekend, but Feld Entertainment was great. They worked with the CHIHCO Box Office to

accommodate families at other shows within the facility; or they looked to future Disney performances to see if a different show might be a better possibility.

There is a lot of excitement building up to this weekend's NIT game and the Justin Timberlake rescheduled date. Ms. Engdahl has received a long list of media requests, so CHIHCO is certain to get some awesome media coverage over the next few days.

### **Committee Updates:**

#### **Internal Governance Committee**

Ms. Dana Washington reported that the Internal Governance Committee met on Monday, March 18, 2019, at MECA's offices. In attendance were Chairwoman Duren, Mr. Bob Freeman, Ms. Washington, Ms. DeAnn Olsen, Mr. Dixon and Mr. Stephen Curtis, City of Omaha Finance Director.

The Committee reviewed the January 2019 Financial Statements. After overviews from and discussions with Ms. Olsen, the Committee found the report to be reasonable compared to plan and prior periods, and consistent with standard MECA accounting practices.

#### **Real Estate Committee**

Mr. Noddle stated that in 6 – 8 weeks the downtown area will have three active construction projects underway. Work is being done with the City of Omaha to coordinate traffic and parking, while being mindful of the homeless population.

Chairwoman Duren had questions regarding some previous discussion about truck routes changing. Mr. Noddle stated that traffic studies have been completed and it appears that 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets will be more active with trucks, and 16<sup>th</sup> Street south of Cuming Street will be less active. Mr. Noddle does not believe there is a major re-work coming as there are not a lot of options. Mr. Dixon noted there is a no-hauling time zone around the CWS event dates. Kiewit has been made aware of this and recognize there will be times they are unable to haul. Kiewit has MECA's schedules through 2023 (updated periodically) so they are aware of what events will be happening in the area.

### **Contract Approvals:**

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are no contracts requiring approval.

### **Next Board Meeting**

The next MECA Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 9, 2019, at 8:45 a.m. in the MECA Board Room.

### **Executive Session**

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 8:56 a.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 Ms. Buffett seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0.

**Adjournment**

At 8:58 a.m. a motion was made to come out of Executive Session, and to adjourn, made by Mr. Noddle, seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0

Adjournment 8:58 a.m.