

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION  
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – JUNE 14, 2022**

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 9:15 a.m. on June 14, 2022.

**Roll Call:**

Present or participating via teleconference were: Chairwoman Diane Duren, Ms. Susie Buffett, Mr. Ben Gray, Mr. Tom Kelley, and Mr. Jay Noddle.

As a reminder, during the continuing pandemic, both the City and State had waived applicability of the ‘public meeting’ requirements that would otherwise apply, and therefore all Board members who were attending the meeting by telephone were eligible to participate.

**Proof of Publication:**

Notice of the meeting was published in *The Daily Record* on June 7, 2022, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on June 7, 2022.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Mr. Gray moved for approval of the minutes of the May 19, 2022, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Mr. Noddle.

Motion carried: 5-0.

**President/CEO Report:**

Mr. Roger Dixon stated that the installation of the bollards at Charles Schwab Field Omaha (CSFO) has been completed. The appearance of the facility has improved since the concrete jersey barriers around the stadium have been removed.

The project with Union Pacific Railroad Environmental Department on their remediation efforts in Lot B to remove contaminated soil has been postponed. Contractors were hesitant to bid on the project due to cost estimates coming in too high. Timing is also a consideration due to a number of conflicts; MECA suggested completing the project when Lot B is up for development. If the time frame is over a year, Union Pacific will be asked to replace a few trees that were removed.

Mr. Dixon met with Marcus Blossom, Creighton University’s Athletic Director, and his new operations person. MECA will begin to be more involved in group sales.

The Billings Montana Chamber of Commerce was here with about 50 of their staff. They had reached out to a number of cities around the country to see what other facilities were doing. Roger Dixon, Diane Duren and Katie Bassett did a presentation for them. It was helpful for MECA when other cities obliged, and it helped formulate the concept of MECA which led it to become privately managed and less of a city run facility. Chairwoman Duren noted that it was a pleasure to speak with them and to show off a facility that looks as good as the day it was opened.

## **Other Business:**

### **Convention Center Sales & Marketing Update**

Ms. Denise Niebrugge reported that there are currently 113 events on the books, utilizing 193 event days for the current fiscal year. Since the May 19 Board meeting, eight events with 17 event days and over 8,400 hotel room nights have been added in the next five years. In addition, 11 license contracts have been signed.

Chairwoman Duren inquired if having The RiverFront was helping to book new business in Omaha. Ms. Niebrugge responded that it is exciting to present such a unique outdoor facility for private events and people are definitely interested.

### **Corporate Sales & Marketing Update**

Mr. Tom O’Gorman stated that 100% of all the advertising opportunities have been sold at CSFO.

MECA is working with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) for the distribution of roughly 182 club seats in section 204 for the Men’s College World Series (CWS), that will be offered for single day sales on Wednesday.

Post Malone announced his September 10 concert yesterday. Look for more announcements following CWS.

### **Operations & IT Update**

Mr. Kevin Raymond reported that the Big Ten Baseball Tournament was a challenge with the first day of play on Wednesday postponed due to heavy rain.

Move in started on Sunday for CWS. The staff is eager to use the new technology that will allow fans to pass through a scanning device without the need to be wanded/searched. Common items such as cellphones, sunglasses or wallets would be recognized and would not need to be removed prior to entering. This will enhance stadium security and ensure quicker ingress.

Lastly, the security bollards have been installed at CSFO. Signage for Charles Schwab has been paused with the beginning of CWS.

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

Ms. Chris VanDorn stated that that Levy has hosted 53 events in 49 days throughout April and May between both buildings.

Although Nebraska didn’t make it to the Big Ten Tournament this year and the weather did not cooperate, Iowa advancing through the week did help Levy exceed May’s budgeted sales at CSFO by 5.4% with an average per cap of \$18.60 over the week of the tournament.

It has been a busy couple of months at CHI Health Center Omaha (CHIHCO). Despite the fact that May sales were down to budget, CHIHCO sales were up overall compared to budget by 6.3%

over the two months with a flow-through of 120%. Year-to-date flow-through also remains well above target, at 100.5%.

Now that we are into June, focus has shifted to the ballpark and operations for CWS. There are 22 supporting managers from across the company who started arriving on-site yesterday to support the food and beverage operation for these two weeks.

The menu has been finalized for the much-anticipated media tasting tomorrow and the return of signature items to this year's concessions menus. A few items to look for are:

- The Slugger – Italian beef sandwich, one pound of house-braised Italian beef, topped with Mozzarella cheese, Giardiniera and herb Parmesan cheese, toasted and served with a cup of jus.
- Shrimp Po'Boy – Crispy fried shrimp, shredded lettuce, tomatoes and Cajun-style remoulade on a freshly baked hoagie.
- Cauliflower & Tots – Spicy breaded cauliflower and crispy tots topped with curry mayo and spicy sriracha.
- Sweet Chili Ribs – Crispy fried rib tips tossed in sweet chili sauce and then topped with a sweet Asian slaw.
- Chicken & Waffle Fries – Seasoned waffle fries topped with crispy chicken bites tossed in maple syrup and then sprinkled with bacon bits and then spicy maple aioli.

These are just a few of the items that will be featured tomorrow at the media tasting and will be in addition to many traditional and fan favorite items from previous years that will be returning to the menu for this year's event.

Levy will also have food and beverage portables spread out around the concourse again this year, along with traditional subcontractors. In addition to BBQ, smoothies, Dippin' Dots, shaved ice, funnel cakes and cotton candy, kettle corn has been added this year on the concourse and E-Creamery will have a location on the Club Level with a variety of ice cream flavors. A Grab N Go location has been added to the concourse this year, with beverages, snacks, cold sandwich and salad options. Fans can walk through and choose the items they want to purchase, with six points of sale for payment to facilitate quick movement of fans through that area.

### **Public Relations Update**

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl stated the annual Men's College World Series press conference is tomorrow at the newly rebranded Charles Schwab Field Omaha. There will be comments from dignitaries as in years past, and then the much-anticipated menu tasting makes its triumphant return.

Also, this year at the CWS, the return of Fan Fest will be promoted, which will begin this Thursday, June 16 to coincide with the Opening Ceremonies.

Media monitoring for CHI Health Center Omaha caught several stories over the last month, there were 718 mentions reaching 672 million people for a publicity value of about \$6.2 million. It appears the bulk of that publicity was residual from the annual Berkshire Shareholders Meeting with Yahoo! News and Yahoo! Finance accounting for a large part of that reach.

## **Committee Updates:**

### **Internal Governance Committee**

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met on Thursday, June 2, 2022, at MECA's offices. In attendance were Chairwoman Duren, Mr. Bob Freeman, Mr. Tom Kelley, Mr. Roger Dixon, and Ms. Diane Mills.

The Committee reviewed the April Financial Statements, which were strong, and also discussed the preliminary budget planning for fiscal year 2023. After overviews from and discussions with Ms. Mills, 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. Jay Noddle stated the Streetcar Authority Board has been formed, populated, and had their first meeting. Today is the public hearing for the Redevelopment Agreement referred to as the Housing and Total Mobility Plan for the Core of the City, which will go to vote in two weeks. Upon approval, the 30% drawings will commence and there will be some discussion about the location of the vehicle maintenance facility. There is likely to be a consultant or interim director that will serve for 6-12 months until a permanent director can be appointed. It will be important to have a good collaboration between the Streetcar project and MECA.

### **Contract Approvals:**

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are two contracts requiring Board approval.

#### **First National Bank of Omaha**

**RESOLVED**, that the Advertising/Sponsorship Agreement between MECA and First National Bank of Omaha for advertising at Charles Schwab Field Omaha, as more fully described on the attached summary, is hereby approved, and Roger Dixon as President/CEO is authorized to execute this 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. Noddle.

Motion carried: 5-0

#### **Miller Electric Company**

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and Miller Electric Company for the testing and inspection of the arena's electrical distribution system 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. Gray seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0

**Next Board Meeting**

The next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 13, 2022, at 9:15 a.m. in the MECA Board Room.

**Executive Session**

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 9:38 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 Mr. Kelley, seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0.

**Adjournment**

At 9:51 a.m. a motion was made to come out of Executive Session, and to adjourn, made by Mr. Nodde, seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0

Adjournment 9:52 a.m.