

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – NOVEMBER 14, 2023**

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 1:10 p.m. on Tuesday, November 14, 2023.

Roll Call:

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

Proof of Publication:

Notice of the meeting was published in *The Daily Record* on November 7, 2023, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on November 7, 2023.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Gray moved for approval of the minutes of the October 16, 2023, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0.

President/CEO Report:

Mr. Roger Dixon reported MECA, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), CWS, Inc., and the City of Omaha just concluded the annual fall partners meeting to discuss details for the upcoming 2024 Men’s College World Series (MCWS). This was a record year; hopefully that trend will continue, though it is always dependent on which schools make it to Omaha, and the weather.

A follow-up was conducted with the D1 Baseball Committee to discuss the possibility of Major League Baseball’s (MLB) Oakland A’s temporarily being hosted at Charles Schwab Field Omaha (CSFO). It is unclear when a decision will be made as Oakland’s Mayor Sheng Thao recently wrote a letter to MLB requesting they not approve the move to Las Vegas by the Oakland A’s. If the move is approved, the A’s aren’t expected to play in Las Vegas until 2028.

Other Business:

Convention Center Sales & Marketing Update

Ms. Denise Niebrugge reported that there are currently 123 events on the books, utilizing 278 event days for the current fiscal year. Since the October 14 Board meeting, 36 events with 72 event days and over 20,000 hotel room nights have been added. In addition, 32 license contracts have been signed.

Ms. Niebrugge, along with the Omaha Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) and the Omaha Marriott Downtown at the Capitol District, attended the IMEX Tradeshow and Conference in October. This is a great networking working event that is very popular with meeting planners. There were approximately 15,000 attendees with over 5,000 buyers at this global business event. The Omaha booth had over 200 meeting planners visit, with 56 one-on-one appointments scheduled, and heard numerous positive comments on the progress in downtown Omaha.

The RiverFront not only draws visitors to the park but also potential business for CHIHCO. A site visit with RTO, an organization comprised of Rent-to-Own store owners, was recently conducted after the CEO happened to stay at The Farnam Hotel. After he visited the new park, he put Omaha into consideration for their 2025 conference.

Last week, the CVB conducted a Connect Sports Fam. Sports planners from all over the United States were here to see all the sports facilities in Omaha. There was a focus group held at the conclusion to discuss thoughts on using Omaha for future sporting events. The planners seemed somewhat shocked at what Omaha could offer and indicated the city felt safe and gave off a great vibe. As a result, Ms. Niebrugge is working on a Pickleball tournament for next year.

Corporate Sales & Marketing Update

Mr. Tom O’Gorman reported that documentation is currently being collected for NCAA’s 2026, 2027 and 2028 bid cycles, which are due in February.

The Big Ten is in the last year of their 5-year contract at CSFO and discussions have begun for renewal. Coaches have expressed an interest in another 5-year deal while the administrators are leaning towards a 3-year deal. As soon as the Commissioner’s Baseball Committee is available, talks will continue.

The last of the shows have been announced for this timeframe, with the exception of one more due after the first of December. Booking agents are mostly out of office for the month of December.

There are still 10 accounts open at CSFO, which are slow to fill because they are located in a full sun area in section 220.

The last of the CHI Health Center Omaha (CHIHCO) contracts are out for renewal.

Operations & IT Update

Mr. Kevin Raymond stated that focus remains on arena events with a busy fall season going from one event directly to the next.

The NCAA is in town today to tour local hotels and will attend the Creighton University Men’s basketball game tonight. Tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m. they will meet with MECA for an on-site tour and will review the manual for the coming 2024 March Madness tournament.

Expansion construction on the Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge, commonly known as the “Baby Bob”, is progressing as planned. They are working on driving piles and have located a few unexpected items.

All the concrete has been removed from the courtside lounge. Crews are expected to pour the entire section tomorrow morning inside the lounge. Once completed, it will open up the area for more contractors to work. The project is on track to open in the February time frame.

Levy Food & Beverage Update

Ms. Chris VanDorn reported that after talking about our sustainability efforts in the October Board meeting, more information was owed to the Board about who Levy works with on composting in the main kitchen. The name of the company is Hillside Waste Solutions, which is part of Gretna Sanitation. They are a commercial composting farm created in 2017, designed to connect schools, apartment communities and businesses with the land fill recycling and compostable hauling services. Levy began working with them in 2021; they took on the volume of the MCWS the following June and the process has continued across campus since then.

October was another busy month, most notably on the catering side with 15 events for 36 total event days between the convention center and private events hosted at CSFO. This resulted in group sales being up 16.7% over budgeted sales which leaves Levy at CHIHCO overall exceeding year-to-date budgeted sales by 37%, and CSFO exceeding year-to-date budgeted sales by 70%.

Levy officially started the 2023-2024 arena season with the start of Creighton University’s Men’s basketball on November 3. New concession menu items were rolled out for the new season and there have been a few solid standouts from the first three games alone. The cheesy chicken quesadilla has been the highest seller followed by a smoked green chili pulled pork mac & cheese. Other items include a Coca-Cola infused BBQ pulled pork sandwich, a southwest guacamole burger, loaded smoked chili cheese dog and smokey chili cheese loaded French fries. There is also an Italian sausage flatbread pizza, a grilled elote, loaded hot dog, patty melt sandwich, an Asian crispy chicken sandwich and a favorite hot Italian beef sandwich. These are all additions to the fan- favorites offered in all the concession stands. All are performing well across the concourse. There will also be game-day specials offered, with tonight’s special being tempura fried sushi.

Public Relations Update

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl reported in late October, MECA was invited to participate in a crisis communications tabletop exercise, facilitated by the Omaha Police Department. The fictional event involved the CHI Health Center and invited several partners from throughout the community to participate in conversation and increase preparedness. MECA is cognizant of these opportunities, because routinely connecting with these partners has proven to be invaluable for all events.

Levy mentioned their various new concession items, which Ms. Engdahl will share with the *Omaha World-Herald* entertainment editor to gauge their interest in a feature story.

Third quarter media monitoring numbers for CHI Health Center Omaha were also significant, given in part to a number of rapid-fire concert announcements. In the third quarter of this year 5.1 billion people were reached with mentions of the CHIHCO, a total publicity value of about \$47 million. With approximately 2,600 mentions over the past three months, content in the New York Post reached the most people (about 670 million), with an article about the affordability of ODESZA tickets in this market, compared to some others around the country.

Committee Updates:

Internal Governance Committee

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met on Monday, November 13, 2023. In attendance were Ms. Diane Duren, Mr. Tom Kelley, Mr. Roger Dixon, Mr. Bob Freeman, Ms. Diane Mills and Mr. Stephen Curtis, City of Omaha Finance Director.

The Committee reviewed the August Statements, which were very strong and in order, the result of having two concerts in the stadium and two in the arena, along with the receipt of the Shovel Ready Grant. 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.

In addition, Mr. Kelley noted that a designation (usually to Capital Reserves) is required for the Capital Improvement Fund and the Committee has discussed recommending 100% of last year's Earnings Before Depreciation & Amortization (EBIDTA).

Chairwoman Duren invited Board comment.

Mr. Noddle inquired if the amount was consistent with prior years. Chairwoman Duren answered that the required amount is 35% and MECA has never designated 100% of EBIDTA, but has been increasing the amounts yearly. Mr. Kelley noted that MECA's financial strength is very strong and there are still adequate reserves for operations. Chairwoman Duren added that designating 100% shows investors that MECA is growing and willing to reinvest in itself.

Mr. Kelley made a motion to the chair to designate all of MECA's Fiscal 2023 EBIDTA in the amount of \$7,436,273 to MECA's Capital Reserves.

Motion was seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried 5-0.

Real Estate Committee

Mr. Jay Noddle stated that private commercial real estate activity continues to be steady in the downtown area.

Last week, Mayor Jean Stothert held a press conference for the Streetcar project; the primary purpose was to provide the community with information about the route, which has been slightly modified. The city applied for a grant, which if it is successful in procuring, will study extending the route to the north. Other items provided in the press conference were the first images of the stops, as well as what the streetcars themselves will look like. A schedule was communicated about the bid process. The response from media and the community seemed positive

The mayor will also be holding a ceremonial groundbreaking for the "Baby Bob" project. It will be held on Thursday November 16 at 1:30 p.m., likely at the circle drive of the pedestrian bridge.

Contract Approvals:

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are four contracts requiring Board approval.

Pareto Captive Services, Meritain and Guardian

RESOLVED, that the Agreements between MECA and Pareto Captive Services, Meritain and Guardian for health insurance, as set out on the attached summary, are hereby approved, and Roger Dixon as President/CEO is authorized on behalf of MECA to execute the Agreements following their 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. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0

Omaha National Underwriters

RESOLVED, that the Advertising/Sponsorship Agreement between MECA and Omaha National Underwriters for advertising at CHI Health Center 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 Ms. Buffett seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0

AOI Corporation

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and AOI Corporation for the purchase and installation of Club Lounge Furniture 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. Noddle.

Motion carried: 5-0

Daktronics, Inc.

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Daktronics, Inc. for the purchase of Shot Clocks 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 Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0

HUB International

The Insurance Agreement was ratified by unanimous Board consent on October 25, 2023.

Recently Approved Contracts

MECA management has awarded a contract for CHI Health Center Omaha and Charles Schwab Field Omaha to Tennant for a Tennant T16 ride-on floor scrubber.

Next Board Meeting

The next Board of Directors Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at 9:15 a.m. in the MECA Board Room.

Executive Session

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 1:39 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. Gray, seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0.

Adjournment

At 2:15 p.m. a motion was made to come out of Executive Session, and to adjourn, made by Mr. Gray, seconded by Mr. Noddle.

Motion carried: 5-0

Adjournment 2:15 p.m.