

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – APRIL 17, 2024**

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 1:12 p.m. on Wednesday, April 17, 2024.

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 April 10, 2024, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on April 10, 2024.

Approval of Minutes:

Ms. Buffett moved for approval of the minutes of the March 20, 2024, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0.

President/CEO Report:

Mr. Roger Dixon reported that this past month CHI Health Center Omaha (CHIHCO) hosted the First and Second Rounds of the NCAA Division I Men’s Basketball Championship on March 21 and 23. This event took a collaboration of effort to make it successful and Mr. Dixon extended his gratitude to all staff for their commitment and dedication.

Other Business:

Convention Center Sales & Marketing Update

Ms. Denise Niebrugge stated that there are currently 131 events on the books, utilizing 289 event days for the current fiscal year. Since the March 20 Board meeting, 12 events with 29 event days and over 5,800 hotel room nights have been added. In addition, 11 license contracts have been signed.

Corporate Sales & Marketing Update

Mr. Tom O’Gorman reported that Club seats at CHIHCO and Charles Schwab Field Omaha (CSFO) are nearly back to 100% capacity.

Sponsorship discussions continue regarding naming rights for the new Courtside Lounge.

Look for more concert announcements as the team is currently working to finalize the September – November timeframe.

Operations & IT Update

Mr. Kevin Raymond stated that Creighton Men's baseball is in full swing and planning continues with the NCAA for the Big Ten Baseball Tournament, as well as the MCWS. Discussions have begun for the Pro Volleyball Federation Championship 2024. CHIHCO will host the Final Four and Championship events in May.

Operations is focused on numerous projects planned for spring and summer. The biggest challenge will be working around events and finding time when the facility is available.

The leak caused by disintegrating pipes in the restrooms of Exhibit Hall B have temporarily been repaired. They will be fully repaired in July.

Chairwomen Duren inquired if it has been determined why the pipes would deteriorate. Mr. Raymond responded that the pipes are 20 years old and have eroded over time, but were most likely caused by grease since this one had a direct line with the kitchen.

Levy Food & Beverage Update

Ms. Chris Van Dorn reported that last month's numbers for February set the highest single month sales record in this building's history, however that was before the month of March. Throughout the month of March, there were 25 events with 43 event days at CHIHCO the largest being the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Championship. This year was the first time MECA hosted the tournament since the NCAA approved beer and wine sales in general concessions. This change contributed to a significant increase over the previous times it was hosted here. The tournament this year made up 39% of the entire month's sales and it came in 57% higher than budgeted sales. Additionally, the First Round on Thursday now holds the record for the highest single day sales in the building's history. March beat February's record by 7% and that was on top of the 17.8% increase that February had just surpassed the previous record by.

Levy also had a good month at CSFO with the start of men's baseball. This was the first March that Creighton University was able to play all originally scheduled home games in the month of March since 2012. This, combined with favorable weather conditions, resulted in a positive financial impact with sales up 21% over budget.

Ms. VanDorn recognized the entire Levy team with a special acknowledgment to the hourly team members and the non-profit group volunteers. These groups combined logged a staggering 26,179 hours of work just in the month of March.

The Omaha Levy team received a couple of great internal company spotlights this month. One was for the arena in which several signature items from the NCAA March Madness Tournament were featured and shared companywide with a mention of the amazing job done capturing the food story from the event. The second was from the convention center, where the Omaha team was selected to be featured in what Levy refers to as 'Feed from the Field' with impactful pictures from events hosted recently to highlight the team's great work and shared across the entire company.

Public Relations Update

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl reported that visiting press from around the country praised the operations of March Madness events in Omaha, especially in comparison to venues from around the country. There were no significant public relations or communication challenges encountered. Prior to the event, MECA was fortunate to receive favorable coverage from various local media outlets, setting a positive tone for the event. The media accommodations provided during March Madness were also met with acclaim.

Furthermore, in a concerted effort to enhance audience engagement, MECA collaborated closely with Visit Omaha on initiatives aimed at disseminating essential "know before you go" information. This collaboration served to broaden the reach and ensure visitors were well-prepared for their experience.

Additionally, Deb Ward, Executive Director with Visit Omaha, brought a report to the meeting indicating there were nearly 60,000 out-of-town visitors in Omaha for the March Madness Tournament. Also included in the data were mentions of top-visited hotels and various attractions, among those listed were the Gene Leahy Mall, Lewis & Clark Landing and Heartland of America Park at The RiverFront.

Ms. Engdahl had the opportunity to assist with the announcement of the Professional Volleyball Championships' selection of Omaha as the host site next month. Their various communication needs are quickly being accommodated as there are just a few weeks to prepare for this event.

Throughout the past week, various promotional campaigns across both social and traditional media platforms were utilized to raise awareness of today's ongoing job fair, which is taking place across the street at Charles Schwab Field.

There is an agreement on the agenda for Board review to initiate the redevelopment of the websites for CHI Health Center Omaha, Charles Schwab Field Omaha and MECA. Each of these websites are vital tools for both visitors and staff, and the impending redesign will better reflect that necessity. Work is anticipated to continue over the next several months.

Committee Updates:

Internal Governance Committee

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met on Monday, April 16, 2024. In attendance were Ms. Diane Duren, Mr. Tom Kelley, Mr. Roger Dixon, Mr. Bob Freeman, and Ms. Diane Mills.

The Committee reviewed the February 2024 Financial Statements, which were strong and in order. 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.

Finally, the Committee reviewed the updated Conflict of Interest disclosures, and everything appeared to be in order.

Real Estate Committee

Mr. Jay Noddle stated there haven't been any new announcements for construction in the downtown area. Three different construction projects south of Cuming Street are in the process of winding down a good portion of their construction. Barriers in roadways are anticipated to be removed fairly quickly, sidewalks reopened, some previously used laydown areas for construction will be cleaned and opened up in time for the Big 10 Baseball Tournament and continuing on into the Men's College World Series (MCWS) time frame.

The City of Omaha is making progress on their acquisition of the required properties for the truck route. Preliminary design has kicked off. There is an agreement that MECA should review to ensure it is current because it allows some of the trucks to use an entrance point at 11th & Cuming Street during the construction period unless MECA provides a list of prohibited timeframes for events.

Mike Fahey Street will officially be a major east/west bike route from Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge expansion (commonly referred to as the "Baby Bob") through the Creighton University Campus. There is funding available for certain pieces of that, and the City is starting to make arrangements with private property owners along the street.

The Streetcar team is finishing up their pricing and there will likely be some details made available to the public at the May or June Board meeting.

Annual Election of Officers

Mr. Freeman presented the following slate of officers for approval by the Board:

WHEREAS, the following slate of officers is proposed to serve for the designated terms.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the following are elected as officers of MECA for the indicated terms and until their successors are duly elected and qualified:

Chairman: Diane Duren – 2 years	(May 1, 2024-April 30, 2026)
President/CEO: Roger Dixon – 1 year	(May 1, 2024-April 30, 2025)
Vice Chair: Tom Kelley – 1 year	(May 1, 2024-April 30, 2025)
Treasurer: Susie Buffett – 1 year	(May 1, 2024-April 30, 2025)
Secretary: Jay Noddle – 1 year	(May 1, 2024-April 30, 2025)
Assistant-Secretary: Bob Freeman – 1 year	(May 1, 2024-April 30, 2025)

Mr. Freeman Board invited Board comments and asked for a motion.

Chairwoman Duren noted that Mr. Kelley and Mr. Noddle will remain on their designated Committees.

Moved by Mr. Gray seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0

Contract Approvals:

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are five contracts requiring Board approval.

Bland & Associates, P.C.

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Bland & Associates, PC for audit and tax preparation services for four years, 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 Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0

Ultimate Thermal, Inc.

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Ultimate Thermal, Inc. for the purchase and installation of cold storage doors 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. Noddle.

Motion carried: 5-0

TriMark Hockenbergs

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and TriMark Hockenbergs for the purchase and installation of fryers and conveyor ovens 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 Ms. Buffett seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0

TriMark Hockenbergs

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and TriMark Hockenbergs for the purchase and delivery of banquet equipment 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

TriMark Hockenbergs

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and TriMark Hockenbergs for the purchase and installation of soft serve freezers at Charles Schwab Field 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

Contracts Recently Awarded:

MECA has recently awarded the following contracts:

- JM Online / Website Redesign
- Institution Services / Tilting Skillet CHIHCO
- TriMark Hockenbergs / Tilting Skillet CSFO
- Culinary Depot / Beverage Dispensers and Coffee Urns
- Southern Aluminum / Chef's Tables and Cart

Next Board Meeting

The next Board of Directors Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, May 15, 2024, at 9:15 a.m. in the MECA Board Room.

Executive Session

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 1:41 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 2:30 p.m. a motion was made to come out of Executive Session, and to adjourn, made by Mr. Noddle, seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0

Adjournment 2:30 p.m.