

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION  
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – SEPTEMBER 18, 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 10:12 a.m. on Wednesday, September 18, 2024.

**Roll Call:**

Present were: Chairwoman Diane Duren, Mr. Tom Kelley, Mr. Jay Noddle, and Mr. Ben Gray who participated by telephone.

**Proof of Publication:**

Notice of the meeting was published in *The Daily Record* on September 11, 2024, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on September 11, 2024.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Mr. Noddle moved for approval of the minutes of the July 16, 2024, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 4-0.

**President/CEO Report:**

Mr. Roger Dixon stated that the past two months have been focused on working with the design/construction team and the City’s Bond Committee to move the bonds forward for the potential expansion to the convention center. MECA has partnered with Bullhorn Communications on a campaign that will provide the public with more detailed information on the benefits to the public of the expansion.

**Other Business:**

**Convention Center Sales & Marketing Update**

Ms. Denise Niebrugge stated that there are currently 123 events on the books, utilizing 252 event days for the current fiscal year. Since the July 16 Board meeting, 24 events with 40 event days and over 4,700 hotel room nights have been added. In addition, 33 license contracts have been signed.

Ms. Niebrugge attended the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) at the Huntington Convention Center in Cleveland, Ohio where over 470 attendees visited the booth. Ms. Niebrugge offered compliments to the Omaha Convention & Visitor’s Bureau (CVB), who provided an array of popular attractions for guests to enjoy.

Ms. Niebrugge also attended the Connect Marketplace hosted in Milwaukee, Wisconsin which was a one-on-one appointment-based business meeting event where event planners requested to meet

with Omaha specifically. There was a lot of interest in Omaha with 47 appointments with associations, and 33 appointments with sports events.

Mr. Bob Freeman inquired if any of the sporting events were on the same level as the U.S. Olympic Swim Trials. Ms. Niebrugge responded that they were not.

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

Mr. Tom O’Gorman stated that MECA is currently at 100% for sponsorships. Club seat renewal at Charles Schwab Field Omaha (CSFO) is at 98%, with next year being a significant renewal year at the stadium. Club seats renewal at CHI Health Center Omaha (CHIHCO) is at 99%.

The team continues to work on bookings into the December – May cycle now. Jerry Seinfeld has just been announced and will go on sale on Friday. Two concerts are being planned for summer 2025 at the stadium.

Creighton University’s men’s basketball schedule is finished and published. Work has begun on the schedule for the Omaha Supernovas professional volleyball team.

Proofs for the WARHORSE GAMING, LLC signage for the courtside lounge shall be available this week.

### **Operations & IT Update**

Mr. Kevin Raymond provided a brief summary of the numerous projects that have been completed. The team has been very busy with RFPs with over 20 between this and next month. The arena and convention center have both been busy with events and it has been a challenge to find times when the facility is available.

The Bob Kerry Pedestrian Bridge expansion, commonly referred to as the “Baby Bob” is still on track for completion. The corner of Lot D will be taken out for the final phase with temporary passage to CHIHCO. The crew will return in the spring to add plants and shrubs. Chairwoman Duren noted that there are no railings installed yet. Mr. Raymond responded that they are on track for substantial completion in October.

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

Ms. Chris Van Dorn stated that Levy has had a great start to Fiscal 2025 as well. July and August had 32 events with 52 event days between both buildings. Year-to-date sales are up 4.8% to budget campuswide and the bottom line is up 39.2% to budget with a flow through of just under 250%. The majority of that growth and flow through is due to the strong concert merchandise sales.

In conjunction with the projects mentioned by Mr. Raymond, the team has been hard at work updating and refreshing Levy’s food and beverage environment with new service ware, small wares, equipment, displays and décor. Most of these items were previously approved by the Board and are just starting to arrive due to shipping delays.

Additionally, the team has been working through a series of new food and beverage menu items that will be available at the start of Creighton University's men's basketball season. Many of the items are rolled out globally by Levy so there will be items that are recognizable to fans at Levy locations across the country and some items are created locally to provide fans with signature items specific to Omaha. As always, Levy will monitor how well the new items are selling and make changes if needed.

Finally, two third-party safety and sanitation audits have been concluded since the last board meeting. Levy received the highest possible ratings of 5 stars for both visits. There are a minimum of three of these visits every fiscal year and with Omaha's rating of 5 stars with each inspection, amongst some other criteria, the team has once again qualified for Levy's President's Award of Excellence for sanitation which is generally presented in December.

### **Public Relations Update**

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl reported that in the past couple of months, connections were made with the *Omaha World-Herald* regarding additional stories pertaining to the potential convention center expansion, namely for the public debut of renderings, illustrating what the future may look like for CHI Health Center Omaha. Educational commercials are being produced to help educate the community on the motivation behind potential expansion and the benefits it could provide to our city and tax base. Those are anticipated to begin streaming towards the end of the month in coordination with the launch of an informational page on MECA's current website.

Ms. Engdahl continues to push forward with the website redesign for CHI Health Center Omaha, Charles Schwab Field Omaha and MECA, aiming for completion by the end of the year.

There was a cross-promotional opportunity on social media in late August with Scatter Joy Acres, a local animal rescue and zoo, when they brought down some creatures, including a fennec fox and capybara, to meet the crew traveling with the Dierks Bentley tour.

Media monitoring reports for July caught about 1,200 mentions of CHI Health Center Omaha across a number of platforms, reaching 1.3 billion people with information about concert announcements, meetings and exhibitions. The biggest story in July on MSN.com was coverage of the Paris Olympics and previous milestones set by USA Swimmers, including history made at the CHI Health Center Omaha. In August, media monitoring reports caught another 1,200 mentions, with some of the widest reaching stories providing updates about the upcoming Creighton Men's basketball season.

### **Committee Updates:**

#### **Internal Governance Committee**

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met on Monday, September 9, 2024. In attendance were Ms. Diane Duren, Mr. Tom Kelley, Mr. Roger Dixon, Mr. Bob Freeman, and Ms. Diane Mills.

The Committee reviewed the June 2024 Financial Statements, which were very 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. Mr. Kelley congratulated the MECA team for a fantastic year that produced reserves which in turn can be reinvested in the facility going forward.

The Committee also reviewed and discussed the finalization of the CWS Waterfall and was pleased to report on one of the best financial years on record for the MCWS.

Finally, the annual return of the 401K Plan was reviewed.

### **Real Estate Committee**

Mr. Jay Noddle provided an update on projects in the downtown area.

The city approved a new parking structure in the Millwork Commons District, which will begin construction soon. There are apartments, hotel and retail spaces underway.

The Builder's District office building is complete and about 45% committed. There is a fitness operator new to Omaha, three restaurants and bars going in. The supporting parking structure will start construction in the spring.

Creighton University is working on both sides of Cuming Street. They have more plans for the future that will help to tie their campus to the "Baby Bob" pedestrian bridge.

No new details are available on the new soccer facility.

The truck route is moving through the design phase, as the city has acquired the properties needed. It is anticipated that construction will most likely begin the second half of 2025. MECA will need to provide a schedule of prohibited timeframes for its events.

The Streetcar Authority and Public Works Department have approved an agreement for Sadler Electric to do the preliminary work to Lot A. The contractor was selected through the city procurement process. Work will be completed ahead of time, so that the parking lot, driveways and lights are reconfigured before work begins on the vehicle maintenance facility site. That RFP, which will be issued by Public Works, is due to go out any day now. No details on Amendment 8 are available. Mr. Dixon noted that Mr. Freeman has made the adjustments to the agreement and returned it to the city's legal department with no response from the city yet.

### **Contract Approvals:**

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are nine contracts requiring Board approval.

### **Bullhorn Communications**

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and Bullhorn Communications for educational advertising for the convention center expansion at CHI Health Center Omaha, as more fully described on the attached summary, is hereby approved.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the President/CEO's execution of the agreement is hereby ratified and approved.

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

Moved by Mr. Kelley; seconded by Mr. Noddle.

Motion carried: 4-0

Kiewit Building Group, Inc.

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and Kiewit Building Group, Inc. to provide all labor, equipment, and materials for concrete repairs 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: 4-0

Mulhall's Landscape

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and Mulhall's Landscape for turf management services 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. Noddle; seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 4-0

AmpThink LLC

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and AmpThink LLC for wireless access points in the convention center 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: 4-0

Doll Construction

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and Doll Construction for concrete repairs 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: 4-0

Buller Fixture

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and Buller Fixture for the purchase and delivery of freezers and cold prep tables 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: 4-0

Sports Graphics

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and Sports Graphics to replace the wall pad system 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. Noddle.

Motion carried: 4-0

HD Supply

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and HD Supply for the purchase of disposable custodial products at CHI Health Center Omaha and 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: 4-0

Abe's Trash Service

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and Abe's Trash Service, Inc. for refuse hauling services at CHI Health Center Omaha and 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. Noddle; seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 4-0

**Contracts Recently Awarded:**

MECA has recently awarded the following contracts:

- Specseats Int'l Corp/Clarín Seating / ADA Folding Chairs
- Miller Electric / Main Circuit Breaker Maintenance
- Spaceworx / Lactation Pod
- AmpThink / VoIP Phone System Support
- Theatrical Media Services / Exhibit Hall Curtains

**Next Board Meeting**

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

**Executive Session**

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 10:39 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. Noddle.

Motion carried: 4-0.

**Adjournment**

At 11:01 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: 4-0

Adjournment 11:01 a.m.