

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – OCTOBER 15, 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 9:06 a.m. on Tuesday, October 15, 2024.

Roll Call:

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

Proof of Publication:

Notice of the meeting was published in *The Daily Record* on October 8, 2024, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on October 8, 2024.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Gray moved for approval of the minutes of the September 18, 2024, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 4-0.

President/CEO Report:

Mr. Roger Dixon stated that this past month the fall partners meeting was conducted with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the City of Omaha, and CWS, Inc. to discuss planning for the future series. MECA proposed adding a new scoreboard for Charles Schwab Field Omaha (CSFO), which was positively received by all and prompted further discussions about funding options. Also discussed was the demand for free Wi-Fi at the stadium.

MECA will move forward with issuing Request for Proposals (RFP) for a new score board at CSFO, as well as replacing the current score board at CHI Health Center Omaha (CHIHCO), as per the agreement with Creighton University.

Other Business:

Convention Center Sales & Marketing Update

Ms. Denise Niebrugge stated that there are currently 124 events on the books, utilizing 253 event days for the current fiscal year. Since the September 18 Board meeting, 15 events with 32 event days and over 8,200 hotel room nights have been added.

Ms. Niebrugge thanked Chairwoman Duren for her introduction to Jannette Taylor at WCA (Women’s Center for Advancement). The meeting went well but it will be a challenge to secure an available date in 2025 to host the event at CHIHCO.

Corporate Sales & Marketing Update

Mr. Tom O’Gorman stated that discussions continue with WARHORSE GAMING, LLC on the design for signage for the courtside lounge. The branding should be completed by November.

Arena bookings are slow right now compared to last year, with a lot of booking dates moving from 2024 to 2025.

Mr. O’Gorman and Mr. Dixon recently attended the International Entertainment Buyers Association (IEBA) Conference held in Nashville, TN. IEBA is one of the leading not-for-profit trade organizations for live entertainment industry professionals. Although some productive contacts were made at the conference, Mr. O’Gorman felt it was not nearly as fruitful as conferences in the past.

Although MECA did not end up winning the Women’s Final Four Volleyball Tournament for 2026-2027, the First and Second Round Division I Basketball Tournament for men will be held at CHIHCO in 2027.

Finally, the NCAA has moved next year’s men’s basketball schedule so Creighton University’s Men’s Basketball season will begin two weeks earlier in 2025.

Operations & IT Update

Mr. Kevin Raymond reported that the team continues to focus on events; he provided a brief summary of the numerous projects that have been recently completed. Currently, MECA is working along with Creighton University on the completion of the basketball court. The finished court is anticipated before the first men’s basketball game on October 26. The renovation of the Board room, reception area and staff kitchen will begin tomorrow. Work done in the reception and kitchen area will be limited to evenings and weekends. The updated aesthetics and technology should be completed by next month’s Board of Director’s meeting.

Bollards are being installed on 10th Street and MECA Drive for The Bob Kerry Pedestrian Bridge expansion, commonly referred to as the “Baby Bob”. If all things stay on track, it should be completed soon.

Levy Food & Beverage Update

Ms. Chris Van Dorn stated that Levy had a successful first quarter of Fiscal Year 2025. September brought 22 events with 34 event days across both buildings and generated revenues of 3.8% over budget. The total first quarter revenues actualized at 4.6% over budget. Levy’s year-to-date net profit for the quarter started strong as well, being up 46.5% from budget campus wide with a 257% flowthrough. This increase was due to some savings in expense lines to budget and also from increased net subcontractor revenue primarily from concert merchandise sales.

Operationally, work is being done to plan and put finishing touches across all departments to welcome fans back into the arena for the start of the Creighton University’s Men’s Basketball season next week.

A new location risk self-assessment program is being rolled out for fiscal 2024-2025. A high emphasis has always been placed on internal controls and how critical they are to reducing risks throughout the operation. Now, in addition to corporate-led risk audits at all locations, Levy Omaha will also regularly document self-audits and the steps taken to reduce all of those risks. This internal control review process involves 100 plus line items across four main areas of risk, including HR, finance, supply chain and operations, with all of those findings reported directly to regional leadership for action plans to be created with the team to address any areas of opportunity.

Public Relations Update

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl reported that MECA's educational text message and streaming efforts regarding convention center expansion ended on Monday. The data showed 81% of people who clicked through or engaged with any of these items gave a positive response rate, with about 8% coming back neutral and just 9% returning negative. The Bullhorn Communications team remarked that those numbers are consistent with a positive and watchable ad, with the vast majority of engagers looking for more information, which achieved the goal of this particular project. Additional paid opportunities may be necessary, but earned media coverage is also being pursued, which is admittedly tough in the current political landscape. Social media followers are being engaged as well.

Also, over the past month the team has been working with the Omaha Symphony on an upcoming concert announcement. Similarly, MECA had the opportunity to collaborate with Creighton in a bit of a fire drill when the NCAA announced that CHI Health Center Omaha would be a First and Second Round Division I Basketball Tournament host. Both have been a welcome opportunity to enlist community partners on some exciting developments in the arena and convention center.

Lastly, work continues to push forward with website redesigns, with the main pages of CHI Health Center Omaha inching towards completion, and a first draft of Charles Schwab Field's new website becoming available later this week.

Committee Updates:

Internal Governance Committee

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met on Wednesday, October 2, 2024. 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 July 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.

The Committee also reviewed the draft of the MECA Tri-Park Complex, LLC audit report, the employee benefits insurance renewal, and the annual code of ethics for Board members and employees.

Real Estate Committee

Mr. Jay Noddle stated that there are no major updates to report.

Contract Approvals:

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are three contracts requiring Board approval.

Levy Premium Foodservice Limited Partnership

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Levy Premium Foodservice Limited Partnership for foodservice management for 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.

The Board discussed the specifics of the Agreement.

Moved by Mr. Kelley; seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 4-0

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. Noddle; seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 4-0

HUB International Insurance Services

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and HUB International Insurance Services for insurance for the indicated coverages and premiums, 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 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

Contracts Recently Awarded:

MECA has recently awarded the following contracts:

- Miller Electric / Parking Lot Lamp Replacement at Charles Schwab Field Omaha

Next Board Meeting

The next Board of Directors Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Monday, November 18, 2024, at 10:15 a.m. in the MECA Board Room.

Executive Session

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 9:36 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. Gray, seconded by Mr. Noddle.

Motion carried: 4-0.

Adjournment

At 10:14 a.m. a motion was made to come out of Executive Session, and to adjourn, made by Mr. Gray, seconded by Mr. Noddle.

Motion carried: 4-0

Adjournment 10:14 a.m.