

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – JUNE 9, 2021**

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 9:18 a.m. on June 9, 2021.

Roll Call:

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

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 2, 2021, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on June 2, 2021.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Warren moved for approval of the minutes of the April 13, 2021, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0.

President/CEO Report:

Mr. Roger Dixon first noted that Board Member Tom Warren will be resigning effective tomorrow to become Mayor Stothert's new Chief of Staff; the Board thanked Mr. Warren for his service and wished him well in his continuing service for the City.

Mr. Dixon stated that it appears that MECA is beginning to return to some type of normalcy with the U.S. Olympic Swim Trials opening at 75% capacity. Wave I has been completed with Wave II beginning on June 13. There are a lot of positive reports regarding staff and their performance on the event.

MECA is now preparing for 100% capacity for the Men’s College World Series after the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) made the determination to follow local health guidelines and recommendations. Although opening at 100%, the NCAA chose not to do general admission (GA) this year. Those outfield tickets will be sold as reserved seats online.

Mr. Warren inquired if the pricing changed with GA since tickets are being sold as reserved seats. Mr. Dixon responded, that yes, the price did increase this year.

Other Business:

Convention Center Sales & Marketing Update

Ms. Denise Niebrugge stated that there are currently 34 events on the books, utilizing 93 event days for the current fiscal year. Since the April 13, 2021, Board meeting, 13 events and over 7,300 hotel room nights have been added. In addition, 16 license agreements have been signed.

The challenge now is to find new dates for all the events coming back to Omaha. The team has started utilizing and promoting The RiverFront's unique outdoor atmosphere, adding to the interest of MECA's facilities.

Chairwoman Duren asked if there was a charge to use the RiverFront. Ms. Niebrugge responded that there is.

Corporate Sales & Marketing Update

Mr. Tom O'Gorman stated that this past month has been particularly busy with the NCAA initially setting capacity at 50% for CWS. There was a lot of communications about half plans or opting out for this season, and then the NCAA decided to bring capacity up to 100%, which the team promptly communicated to ticket holders to determine what they wanted to do.

It has been crucial to focus on educating ticket holders on the digital ticketing process, not only for tickets but also for parking passes, has been crucial. The first time that Club seat holders had the opportunity to purchase tickets online was for the Florida Georgia Line concert. Notifications were emailed and they had an opportunity to purchase online and move tickets into their account. There is more educating to do, but most ticket holders were open to the change.

The Club seat renewal process has started at CHI Health Center Omaha. There are about 300 seats up for renewal.

Conversations continue with Schwab regarding the TD Ameritrade Omaha branded name. It is unclear at this point what will happen.

Operations & IT Update

Mr. Kevin Raymond reported the team has been very busy as the NCAA Volleyball Tournament, Professional Bull Riding, two graduation events, one prom, three weekends of club volleyball tournaments, a basketball tournament, and Creighton University's baseball season wrapped up in April. Focus has now shifted to the U.S. Olympic Swim Trials and CWS.

There is a short break this week between Wave I and Wave II to get the stadium ready for baseball. Most of the seasonal staff will start next week. Jersey curbs have been placed in front of the stadium. Operations are back in full swing; however, like other businesses in Omaha and the regional area, the biggest challenge is staffing. MECA is still currently hiring for full-time and seasonal/event staff. Mr. Raymond anticipates the overlap of events on June 19 and 20 will be challenging.

Mr. Noddle inquired if labor rates were increased. Mr. Raymond responded that yes, thanks to Mr. Dixon and the support of the Board of Directors adjustments have been made to full time and

event staff, making MECA more competitive especially on the event side where there is competition with other venues in the area. Mr. Dixon added that the real impact will not be known until the extra unemployment is gone (June in Nebraska). Mr. Dixon noted that Mr. Raymond understates the impact of not having a full contingent when we overlap; however, he is confident that the events will run seamlessly.

Levy Food & Beverage Update

Ms. Chris VanDorn stated that Levy is preparing for 100% capacity for CWS. The team is fortunate to have a group of Levy support managers coming in to assist with the event as they do every year, as well as the Regional Vice President and Regional Chef who are both very excited to return to Omaha and see both of the events. This year Levy will be reintroducing a lot of foods that have been offered over the past couple of years to get fans excited about being back in the ballpark and enjoying stadium food again. Due to limited staffing, Levy has slimmed down on signature items being offered; however, there will be at least one featured in every concession stand. Food offered is also being driven more this year by supplier/vendor availability of product. Levy has focused on sourcing the big items that are needed such as chicken tenders/wings. There are shortages, and the decision was made to not focus on smaller recipe items that drive smaller sales. These items are fun for media and for the big items, but they don't necessarily generate a lot of revenue.

Since our last Board Meeting in April, Levy has been very busy with all the events previously mentioned by Mr. Raymond, as well as a 3-day Catering conference for 700 in May. It was breakfast, lunch and dinner, with a combination of receptions, bars, plated meals and chef's tables and by all accounts it was a tremendous success.

Levy has also had two routine health inspections in the last 30 days. One from Douglas County Health Department with an excellent rating on the inspection and the other from the external food safety company contracted by Levy Corporate to inspect all locations across the country. Seven of the outlets were inspected during Swim Trials Wave 1. Levy averaged a 98% and after completing the inspection of the areas, the auditor made a comment about how impressed she was with the cleanliness of the entire facility.

Upon completion of the competition pool, Levy served two separate private 5-course dinners on the pool deck. The chefs did an amazing job with the menus and the attendees for both were blown away by the experience.

Catering continues for the back of house areas this week in between Wave 1 and Wave 2 of the Swim Trials, with some increases to Wave 2 counts that will begin on Saturday night when athlete dining resumes.

Public Relations Update

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl stated in April, MECA enjoyed improved coverage of the NCAA Volleyball Tournament, coordinated media availability during practice times and facilitated photo opportunities when local teams played during the initial rounds. After the tournament, the NCAA asked MECA to help donate all the leftover volleyballs. Hundreds of volleyballs and carriers were donated to Girls Inc., PACE Omaha, Boys Town, the Boys and Girls Club and Hope Skate.

There was great weekend morning coverage of the Professional Bull Riding event and advanced stories in the *Omaha World-Herald* highlighting a Nebraska rider. Also, a slew of concert announcements had really successful pick-up.

KETV, *KMTV* and *WOWT* were all live from 5:00 a.m. until 7:00 a.m. the morning of Monday, May 17 when construction began of the Swim Trials competition pool in the arena. Each of them also turned additional stories for their afternoon and evening newscasts. Additionally, every TV station and the *Omaha World-Herald* were on site when the pool began to be filled on May 25. The First Wave of the Swim Trials has benefited from consistent, nearly everyday coverage with angles ranging from the economic boost to bars and restaurants in downtown Omaha to profile pieces on local swimmers who competed last week and even advanced onto the Second Wave. *WOWT*, the local *NBC* affiliate has broadcast several live shots from the pool deck, in both news and sports.

Ms. Engdahl is preparing for several press conferences for Wave 2 beginning this Friday when the USA Swimming CEO and President, Tim Hinchey, will address reporters, followed by swimmers and Olympians Ryan Lochte and Caeleb Dressel, among others. Reporters will receive behind the scenes tours of the building and setup coming up this Saturday. There will be media availability on-site this Sunday morning in preparation for the start of Wave 2.

Shifting to the stadium, it has been a sprint preparing for this year's College World Series. MECA continues to coordinate with the NCAA and CWS, Inc. of Omaha on a number of outreach efforts, talking about ticketing changes (mostly the transition to mobile-only) as well as cash-free concessions and the ongoing clear bag policy. Numerous TV stations are working on 'know before you go' stories and Ms. Engdahl has an interview at *NRG* radio station this afternoon with a similar theme. There are certain to be some changes at this year's CWS, but the messaging will be focused on what you can do, which is come enjoy an in-person baseball game!

Mr. Warren inquired if the fan zone will be a similar experience to the past. Mr. Dixon stated that there will be a fan zone, but not at the level of past years as it will not have any of the regular hospitality tents or vendors.

Mr. Warren asked about MECA's possible continuation of hosting future Swim Trials. Mr. Dixon stated that San Antonio, St. Louis, Indianapolis, Minneapolis and Omaha are the cities in the selection process for 2024, noting that Omaha is the only City without a dome. There are representatives from these cities watching how Omaha runs the event this year. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the activation in the community is not the same as it was in 2016. Mr. Freeman noted that it is interesting that US Swimming is looking to increase the attendance by almost double and putting the event in an indoor football stadium, adding that MECA's facility is uniquely configured to make this event really work well.

Committee Updates:

Internal Governance Committee

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met via teleconference on Monday, June 7, 2021, 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 March and April 2021 Financial Statements, noting that historical financial statements are still running at a deficit on a monthly basis, but there is light at the end of the tunnel. Significant turnaround is expected into the next fiscal year. After overviews from and discussions with Ms. Mills, the Committee found the report to be consistent with standard MECA accounting practices.

MECA has applied for the Shuttered Venue Operators grant program, which is needed to plug the hole that this pandemic created financially for the last 16 months or so. If funds are received, it will go a long way to help finances. Mr. Kelley noted, as MECA ends this period of financial history, the importance of having reserves needs to be emphasized. Mr. Kelley commended MECA's team for managing the facility through this period of negative revenue. It has been an extremely tough year financially, but the situation seems to be improving for the future.

Real Estate Committee

Mr. Jay Noddle announced the work of the Urban Core, which was a joint effort between the City and private sector, is nearing completion. Plan recommendations will be made to the Chamber Board this summer. The plan has been vetted and signed off on by the City of Omaha, City of Council Bluffs and the senior leadership group. Mr. Noddle believes development will be seen with additional parking structures underway in the Builder's District area. Final arrangements are being discussed and negotiated now, with trucks routes out of north downtown being next on the agenda. It is likely to go to City Council in September or October.

Lot B discussions have surfaced, but nothing specific has been discussed. As a reminder, in order for Lot B to be developed builders must comply with the plan previously approved by the Council. The plan is detailed relating to what happens regarding parking and there are covenants which was a key ingredient in all the planning.

Contract Approvals:

Chairwoman Duren indicated there is one contract requiring Board approval.

Ungerboeck Systems, Inc.

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Ungerboeck Systems, Inc. to upgrade the current event business management software, 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.

Mr. Warren inquired if MECA was utilizing the same vendor. Mr. Dixon responded that yes, this contract approval is an upgrade to the current system.

Moved by Mr. Kelley seconded by Mr. Warren.

Motion carried: 5-0

Next Board Meeting

The next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 13, 2021, at 1:15 p.m. in the MECA Board Room.

Executive Session

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 10:00 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. Warren, seconded by Mr. Noddle.

Motion carried: 5-0.

Adjournment

At 10:20 a.m. a motion was made to come out of Executive Session, and to adjourn, made by Mr. Warren, seconded by Mr. Noddle.

Motion carried: 5-0

Adjournment 10:20 a.m.