

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – JULY 13, 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 1:16 p.m. on July 13, 2021.

Roll Call:

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

Proof of Publication:

Notice of the meeting was published in *The Daily Record* on July 6, 2021, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on July 6, 2021.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Noddle moved for approval of the minutes of the June 9, 2021, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 4-0.

President/CEO Report:

Mr. Roger Dixon welcomed the Board of Directors back into MECA offices. It has been about 16 months and there were questions as to when normal business activities would return.

MECA was fortunate to have had volleyball tournaments throughout last winter, but the true test came with a return of guests for two large-scale events in June. Mr. Dixon thanked the Board for their kind comments and support regarding MECA’s execution of the events, especially in light of staffing hurdles, being short nearly 100 seasonal event staff. It truly was a team effort, with MECA staff from every department stepping up to haul out trash, take tickets and escort guests to their seats.

Other Business:

Convention Center Sales & Marketing Update

Ms. Denise Niebrugge stated that there are currently 92 events on the books, utilizing 162 event days for the current fiscal year. Since the June 9, 2021, Board meeting, 14 events and over 3,700 hotel room nights have been added. In addition, 10 license agreements have been signed.

Corporate Sales & Marketing Update

Mr. Tom O’Gorman stated that all of the 2020 carryover events have been given new dates, although there remains quite a bit of shuffling around on the calendar.

The Club seat renewal process continues at CHI Health Center Omaha. There are about 300 seats that did not opt for renewal at TDAPO for 2021. The renewal period for TDAPO will begin this fall.

Work continues on acquiring new sponsorships. The Chevrolet automotive sponsorship agreement has expired, but Mr. O’Gorman believes another agreement will be ready to present to the Board of Directors in September.

Planning has already begun for the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Volleyball Tournament in 2022.

Operations & IT Update

Mr. Kevin Raymond also took the opportunity to recognize the staff’s hard work and efforts for the U.S. Olympic Swim Trials and Men’s College World Series (CWS) in June. A complete team effort was necessary for successful completion of these events. Mr. Raymond was very proud to be part of that group. The jersey curb barriers were removed two days following CWS at the stadium and the remainder at CHIHCO will be removed on Thursday.

July is typically project time for operations, and this year is no exception, which will include HVAC, electrical and normal maintenance items. The seat renovation project is still on track to start at the end of August. The permanent security barriers are being reassessed with timeline challenges on staffing, supplies and sourcing the actual material.

MECA was fortunate not to have sustained much storm damage from the high winds earlier this week. There was some tree and shrub damage and minimal HVAC damage on the roof.

Levy Food & Beverage Update

Ms. Chris VanDorn reported that the 2020 US Olympic Swim Trials was a success, although a different event from 2016, as it was broken up into two separate waves.

Levy served breakfast and dinner for to up to 350 Olympic hopefuls each day, in addition to breakfast, lunch and dinner daily for 1,000 coaches, volunteers, media and broadcast teams, as well as corporate-sponsored poolside boxes. A combination of action stations, chef’s tables and individually packaged meals were offered based on the requests of USA Swimming for each hospitality area. Levy received lots of positive feedback on how much guests enjoyed the food that was provided.

Food and beverages were available in the concession stands on the concourse during all sessions, but the majority of concourse sales were in Olympic swim trials merchandise. Levy did almost 90% of 2016’s sales despite the reduced attendance capacity for both Waves I and II.

Up until three weeks before the College World Series started, Levy planned on roughly 50% of 2019 food and beverage revenues. At the end of the Series, revenues actualized at a combined 12% increase over total 2019 CWS revenues, even with no opening ceremonies this year. The food and beverage split increased to just over 61% beverage and 39% food.

In comparison to 2019: group sales catering was down 28% (a portion of this decrease was due to a change to Levy gift cards for media in lieu of catered meals for the entire series, so these sales are reflected in concessions revenues in 2021); InSeat service was down 40%; suites sales was nearly identical to 2019; club sales were up 12% (this increase includes the addition of cocktails to the club level this year as well); and, concessions revenues were up 18.3%.

Major operational changes this year included having draft beer being replaced with canned beer at all locations. A combination of domestic and local craft options continued to be offered throughout the concourse. Local craft beer as a percentage of total concession beer sales increased slightly from 7.4% in 2019 to just over 8% of the total in 2021 with an increase of almost 3,000 craft units sold over 2019. Beer cans were handed directly to guests instead of each beer being poured into a cup prior to being served. Fountain soda transitioned to bottled soda in some locations on the concourse. The souvenir cups were completely sold out, which represented a 16.5% increase in fountain soda sales over the same locations in 2019. Bottled soda sales were almost three times 2019 numbers. Cocktails were added to the club level and were available at the main bar as well as portable locations in the first and third base alcoves. Finally, Levy transitioned to a cash-free environment campus-wide, and this was the first time CWS fans had the opportunity to use contactless payment options. This change contributed to increased speed of service and also resulted in a significant reduction of labor hours per day for this event.

Public Relations Update

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl stated that between the US Olympic Swim Trials and the Men's College World Series, national mentions of these events and the City of Omaha skyrocketed in June.

Although still waiting for a CWS media report; MECA learned the US Swim Trials alone generated 3,900 media features, with an estimated reach of over 8-billion people globally with pickup in Europe, Australia and Tokyo.

Chairwoman Duren officiated the annual pre-series press conference for CWS which was virtual this year. Although MECA did not offer the traditional media food tasting, Levy helped to coordinate a private feature with the *Omaha World-Herald*, which celebrated all the favorite ballpark food that returned in 2021. That story generated traditional and social media interest.

Stories about the return of the CWS were featured in various publications this year, including *Sports Illustrated online*.

Certainly, this was an unusual CWS for a lot of reasons; so, the public feedback received was occasionally mixed. Interestingly enough, the *Omaha World-Herald* story that mentioned a pinch in custodial services actually generated phone calls from people looking for this type of work.

Also, regarding the shameful use of language that Chairwoman Duren discussed at the start of this meeting, Ms. Engdahl took an opportunity to speak with *The Associated Press*, *ESPN* and local affiliates denouncing this behavior and promising future action should it happen again. MECA took a strong stance against these actions and assured the community more work will be done to ensure that both TD Ameritrade Park Omaha and the CHI Health Center Omaha continue to be safe and welcoming places for everyone.

Ms. Engdahl will prepare an educational piece for the next concert announcement and social media push to inform the public on the use of MECA's text messaging service. Although the information is broadcast on arena banners, scoreboard and website, there is a need to make it more easily accessible especially in the event of emergency. MECA wants guests to know, not only know that the service is available, but that it is well monitored during events.

Mr. Freeman inquired as to what Ms. Engdahl thought was the most significant national public relations win for Omaha. Ms. Engdahl believed the Sport Illustrated article, with such a wide audience was very beneficial, as the challenge was not to make the story about the pandemic. Their article primarily focused on the history of the Series, and why the CWS is endeared not only to Omaha but baseball fans everywhere.

Mr. Noddle added MECA's events were being discussed on the golf channel during the U.S. Senior Open that was played at the Omaha Country Club Golf Course. There was a commercial featuring swimming and one of the commentators noted how both the U.S. Olympic Swim Trials and CWS were also hosted in Omaha and went on to say that Omaha knows how to do events. Ms. Engdahl noted that a genuine observation in front of a national audience provided valuable publicity for the City of Omaha.

Committee Updates:

Internal Governance Committee

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met via teleconference on Thursday, July 8, 2021, at MECA's offices. In attendance were Chairwoman Duren, Mr. Bob Freeman, Mr. Tom Kelley, Mr. Roger Dixon, Ms. Diane Mills, and Mr. Stephen Curtis, City of Omaha Finance Director.

The Committee reviewed the May 2021 Financial Statements, noting that historical financial statements are improving with each passing month. After overviews from and discussions with Ms. Mills, the Committee found the report to be consistent with standard MECA accounting practices.

MECA was granted a Shuttered Venue Grant (SVG), which will be applied to operational expenses.

The Committee discussed the traffic safety barriers and potential opportunities for funding.

Real Estate Committee

Mr. Jay Noddle announced the Real Estate Committee continues to meet on a regular basis. There is a huge effort from the civic, business, and philanthropic community to revitalize downtown Omaha. This area is set up for unprecedented growth and with all the new construction projects underway, will look very different in the years to come.

Contract Approvals:

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are five contracts requiring Board approval.

Daktronics, Inc.

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Daktronics, Inc. for the removal of the old, and then installation, and configuration of a new Daktronics control system 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. Kelley.

Motion carried: 4-0

Tennant Sales and Service Company

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Tennant Sales and Service Company for the purchase of a T20 Riding Scrubber, 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 Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 4-0

Kiewit Building Group, Inc.

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Kiewit Building Group, Inc. to provide vehicle security bollards and fencing at various locations around CHI Health Center Omaha and TD Ameritrade Park 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.

Mr. Dixon informed the Board that this cost is likely to increase as MECA is currently having redesigns prepared by HDR and asking Kiewit to monitor commodities prices. If monies from the Shuttered Venue Grant are utilized, the project must start in 2022. There may also be funds available from the Shovel Ready Act through the State of Nebraska as monies received through the SVG cannot be used for the Stadium. Mr. Noddle asked if monies from the State were used, would MECA still need funds from the capital reserve. Mr. Dixon responded that yes, MECA would probably still use some of it and will ask the State to use some of the capital reserve money that they are receiving.

Moved by Ms. Buffett seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 4-0

US Foods, Inc.

RESOLVED, that the Advertising/Sponsorship Agreement between MECA and US Foods, Inc. for advertising at CHI Health Center Omaha and TD Ameritrade Park Omaha, as more fully described on the attached summary, is hereby approved, and Roger Dixon as President/CEO is authorized to execute the Advertising/Sponsorship Agreement following its finalization in a form reasonably approved by counsel.

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

Mr. Kelley inquired how this agreement would work in conjunction with Levy's procurement of product. Mr. Dixon responded that part of MECA's agreement with Levy is that they act as our management partner in these instances.

Moved by Ms. Buffett seconded by Mr. Noddle.

Motion carried: 4-0

Chesterman Coca-Cola Company

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Chesterman Coca-Cola Company for advertising and pouring rights at TD Ameritrade Park 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

Next Board Meeting

The next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 19, 2021, at 1:15 p.m. in the MECA Board Room.

Executive Session

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 1:52 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 Ms. Buffett, seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 4-0.

Adjournment

At 2:04 p.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 2:04 p.m.