

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – AUGUST 19, 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 1:15 p.m. on August 19, 2021.

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 August 12, 2021, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on August 12, 2021.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Kelley moved for approval of the minutes of the June 9, 2021, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Ms. Buffett. Mr. Gray abstained from voting.

Motion carried: 4-0.

President/CEO Report:

Mr. Roger Dixon stated that last night’s Blake Shelton concert was the first event to return to the arena since the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020.

Concert promoters are beginning to develop many protocols that they will ask venues to comply with. There was not much opportunity or time for last night’s concert to enable protocols, but they did request that all back of house staff be vaccinated and wear masks. Mr. Dixon believes that more stringent protocols and amendments to agreements will be seen in the upcoming months. These will require legal involvement because of potential liability considerations for CHI Health Center Omaha (CHIHCO). There is industry talk that performers will require vaccination cards be uploaded, or negative COVID-19 test results must be provided prior to concert entry.

Mr. Dixon was contacted by the Union Pacific Railroad Environmental Department regarding contamination of subsoil in Lot B. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is pushing to remediate this issue. At this time, there is no active interest in developing Lot B and tentative remediation plans are being discussed for 2022, after the Men’s College World Series (CWS). Mr. Dixon and Mr. Raymond will participate in the planning process, considering other projects scheduled at this time period. The expense will be covered by Union Pacific Railroad and is estimated to take 90+ days for completion.

Mr. Noddle added that he was unaware of any current interest in development of Lot B and suggested a coordinating meeting following the next briefing.

Other Business:

Convention Center Sales & Marketing Update

Ms. Denise Niebrugge stated that there are currently 96 events on the books, utilizing 169 event days for the current fiscal year. Since the July 13, 2021 Board meeting, 12 events and over 11,000 hotel room nights have been added.

Corporate Sales & Marketing Update

Mr. Tom O’Gorman reported the club seat renewal process is nearing completion at CHI Health Center Omaha with approximately 11 accounts (42 seats) remaining.

Work continues on acquiring new sponsorships for the remaining 5% that are open.

Conversations with promoters are constantly evolving regarding possible COVID-19 restrictions and mandates. The James Taylor/Jackson Browne event is requiring that attendees show proof of vaccination, or a negative COVID-19 test result (72 hours). Mr. O’Gorman believes the Eagles may move to these mandates too, which went on sale weeks ago. There need to be conversations on how guests who are not able to receive the vaccination may still be accommodated, as well as what MECA’s ticket refund policy will be. Mr. O’Gorman stated the new policies will increase the number of staff needed and may also slow entry times. Costs incurred should be directed back to the performer or promoter.

Chairwoman Duren noted that technology seems to be moving towards people uploading vaccination cards, in advance, either to gain building entry or at the point of sale (POS) before purchasing.

Mr. O’Gorman provided the Board with a digital ticketing presentation for purchase of club seat tickets to the Board of Directors.

Operations & IT Update

Mr. Kevin Raymond stated it’s been 18 months since the COVID-19 pandemic shut down the industry and it felt good to host a full house at CHIHC. It had been a while for staff, but everything went well. Close attention was paid to crowd flow, realizing that upcoming concerts may require additional check points and procedures. Logistics will need to be discussed to maintain MECA’s expectations on getting guests into the facility in a timely fashion. Questions on how much burden will be placed on event staff to decide what information is valid from guests also needs to be addressed.

The seat renovation project was delayed about two weeks due to shipping issues. This project will be completed in phases, working around concerts, practices, events, etc. Mr. Raymond is confident the arena will be completed in time for Creighton University men’s basketball conference play.

A few design changes have been finalized on the permanent security barriers. Work at TD Ameritrade Park Omaha (TDAPO) gates 1 and 2 will begin mid-March and completion is estimated by mid-May in time for the 2022 Big Ten Tournament and CWS. Once work at TDAPO is complete, work at CHICHO will follow, and weather permitting, will be completed by November 2022.

MECA was fortunate not to have sustained much storm damage from the 4+ inches of rain received from the last storm.

Levy Food & Beverage Update

Ms. Chris VanDorn reported with events picking up in the convention center and last night's concert kicking off events in the arena, Levy has begun to transition back to more "normal" operations. Focus remains on maintaining health and safety protocols in all areas, keeping in contact with the Douglas County Health Department to ensure compliance with any restrictions that may be reinstated. Levy continues to be flexible and accommodating with convention center clients and their preferences on health and safety protocol requirements for their events.

Cash-to-card kiosks have been replaced with upgraded models. These machines hold 500 cards as opposed to 125 and have a benefit of higher usage between replenishment. Levy will receive a daily usage report on the back end. Guests will appreciate the quicker processing times and the new technology will allow a technician to trouble shoot any error issues that may arise in real time and most often fix remotely.

Levy's corporate human resources department has begun a transition to a new hourly team member recruiting platform. This system has been integrated with corporate timekeeping and payroll systems. Candidates who are looking for hourly positions will be directed to a new website where they can search any open positions within Levy. The application process has been simplified and hiring managers are notified immediately of qualified candidates. All new hire paperwork and onboarding is completed in this system, allowing new hires to be automatically interfaced into both timekeeping and payroll systems. This transition will be available for salaried manager recruiting as soon as the hourly transition is complete.

Public Relations Update

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl stated MECA issued a press release last week with some important clarification about digital versus paper tickets, namely a reminder that previously issued hard tickets will still be valid for concert entry, despite the transition to digital only in late 2020. Within that press release, the public was also reminded that digital ticket receipt was not contingent upon smart phone use. Any feature phone that is capable of receiving a text message or picture can receive a scannable QR code. This information was also emphasized on social media, but traditional media is helpful for reaching a broader audience.

Additional education verbiage has been added to pre-show emails about MECA's customer service text messaging system. This information was distributed to all Blake Shelton digital ticket holders and will continue to be a part of the pre-show routine. That platform was also utilized to share cash-free reminders and nearby traffic restrictions.

The *Omaha World-Herald* and KETV were onsite for Blake Shelton's show last night. There was additional interest in this show as it was among the first to postpone in March of 2020. The announcement of The Eagles, James Taylor and Jackson Browne has also generated a lot of interest in CHI Health Center Omaha (CHIHCO) and Omaha.

MECA's second quarter media report from Visit Omaha showed stories about the CHIHCO reached 3-billion people, for a publicity value of \$31.8 million.

Committee Updates:

Internal Governance Committee

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met via teleconference on Friday, August 13, 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 did not have an opportunity to review year end financials due to the U.S. Olympic Swim Trials and Men's College World Series events occurring at the end of the fiscal year. In addition, many of the COVID-19 relief funds received throughout the course of the year will require an audit review.

Real Estate Committee

Mr. Jay Noddle announced the Real Estate Committee negotiations and arrangements for truck routes north of MECA continue to advance. Documentation is expected to be presented to the Omaha City Council in the next couple months.

Contract Approvals:

Chairwoman Duren indicated there is one contract requiring Board approval.

Skold Door Company.

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Skold Door Company to inspect and perform annual maintenance on the 379 Panelfold Moduflex operable wall panels and pocket 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. Gray seconded by Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0

Next Board Meeting

The next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 14, 2021, at 9:15 a.m. in the MECA Board Room.

Executive Session

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 1:49 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. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0.

Adjournment

At 1:58 p.m. a motion was made to come out of Executive Session, and to adjourn, made by Mr. Gray, seconded by Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0

Adjournment 1:58 p.m.