

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – JANUARY 13, 2023**

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 9:08 a.m. on Friday, January 13, 2023.

Roll Call:

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

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 January 6, 2023, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on January 6, 2023.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Gray moved for approval of the minutes of the November 14, 2022, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0.

President/CEO Report:

Mr. Roger Dixon, along with Mr. Tom O’Gorman, Ms. Diane Mills, Ms. Chris VanDorn and Chef Tyler Humphry had an opportunity to visit Milwaukee’s Fiserv Forum. This is a multi-purpose arena located in downtown Milwaukee, Wisconsin and is the home of the Milwaukee Bucks of the National Basketball Association (NBA) and the Marquette University Golden Eagles men's basketball team. Food and beverage there is provided by Levy Restaurants. The Fiserv Forum is being used as a prototype for a courtside lounge concept that may be developed at CHI Health Center Omaha (CHIHCO).

Discussions have begun with the City of Omaha and their plans to go back to the State to redefine the increase of the Turnback Tax. There are a number of other entities doing the same.

Other Business:

Convention Center Sales & Marketing Update

Ms. Denise Niebrugge reported that there are currently 118 events on the books, utilizing 249 event days for the current fiscal year. Since the November 14 Board meeting, 21 events with 42 event days and over 12,000 hotel room nights have been added. In addition, 21 license contracts have been signed.

Denise distributed a December article from *Convene*, a magazine of the Professional Convention Management Association (PMCA), which is the leading meeting industry publication for educational content and professional development. It is a great resource for meeting planners and boasts over 36k subscribers. The article (promoting Omaha) entitled, “Add More Wow To Your Wow Factor” was written by Curt Wagner. Mr. Wagner visited Omaha in the beginning of October and toured the city with Cathy Keller of the Omaha Convention & Visitors Bureau (OCVB).

Corporate Sales & Marketing Update

Mr. Tom O’Gorman stated the month of December was one of the busiest MECA has had in a long time, beginning with boxer Terence Crawford retaining his WBO welterweight title by knocking out David Avanesyan in the final minute of the sixth round and maintaining his undefeated record. This was followed by the 2022 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I Women’s Volleyball Semifinals and Championship, where Texas defeated Louisville for the national title. Lastly, Creighton University’s men’s basketball team enjoyed a Christmas Day victory over DePaul.

The 90-day exclusive negotiation with Pepsi Co, Inc. has come to a conclusion, and they have been notified that MECA will be seeking an RFP (Request for Proposal).

Discussions have also begun for renewals of the Lexus Club and adult beverage agreements.

Chairwoman Duren inquired about the attendance for the men’s basketball games. Mr. O’Gorman noted that attendance is down about 3%.

Operations & IT Update

Mr. Kevin Raymond stated December was a busy month for his team with events and projects.

The installation of the security bollards at CHIHCO and Charles Schwab Field Omaha (CSFO) has officially been completed. The cleaning and inspection of the exterior 15kV Switchgear at CHIHCO is done. Over the last couple of weeks, digital displays have been added for the meeting rooms in the convention center. The displays are installed and system integration programming is being finalized.

Next week, work will begin to add back-lit signage on the concourse and install new 65 inch TVs. Work continues with the security provider for the cabling installation that was previously approved by the Board to add additional exterior cameras for added security. This is expected to be finished by spring.

New opportunities are being explored with existing walk through metal detectors. A module has been ordered that will enable detectors to function similar to those used for the 2022 College World Series (CWS). Those devices allowed fans to pass through a scanning device without the need to be wanded/searched, which enhanced security and provided quicker ingress at the stadium. The modules are expected to arrive this month and will be tested at the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) State Wrestling Championships in February.

Levy Food & Beverage Update

Ms. Chris VanDorn reported that December sales kept teams in the arena and convention center uncharacteristically busy. Sales for the month surpassed the highest single month revenues ever generated at CHIHCO, beating out the previous record from February 2014 by 5%. Likewise Fiscal Year 2023 through December year-to-date is higher than any other year, surpassing the nearest July through December six month period which was in 2017 by 40%.

Some notable December events that contributed to these numbers are the Terence Crawford Title Match, with sales increased 94% over this event in 2018 and 104% over the fight in 2016. The Farmers Business Network four-day conference generated sales that represented an increase over their 2019 and 2018 events by 2% and 7.4% respectively. The NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball National Championship generated sales that represented a 51% increase over the event in 2015.

Levy is preparing to begin a Point-of-Sale (POS) upgrade at both CSFO and CHIHCO. Work will begin at the stadium at the end of January. Installation is scheduled to be completed by March 1 and going live for the first Creighton University's men's baseball game on March 9. CHIHCO installation will immediately follow in mid-March.

Ms. VanDorn took this opportunity to recognize the Levy team's hard work and dedication. A crowd of more than 3,500 people gathered to celebrate Jim Pillen at the new governor's inaugural ball. It was the largest three-course plated meal that has ever been served in this building. The team consisted of over 200 people ranging from managers to hourly team members and volunteers from eight local not-for-profit groups. Approximately 3200 meals were served in well under Levy's allotted service time. The client's feedback for the Chef was that the entrée was cooked perfectly, and for the team that the service was outstanding.

Chairwoman Duren and the Board echoed the positive comments they received for the facility and Levy for the inaugural ball.

Public Relations Update

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl stated December was a busy month at the CHIHCO. It began with the return of Terence Crawford to his hometown arena, which included a week of media events leading up to fight night – with a media workout, press conference and public weigh-in. Several local, national and trade publications were accommodated with around 50 media credentials issued for fight night, which the promoter touted as a sold-out event.

Late November into December the NCAA Volleyball Tournament also benefitted from widespread press coverage, with one article from the *Omaha World-Herald* estimating that the event would provide a \$7.7 million economic impact to the City of Omaha.

Last week, Governor Pillen's inaugural ball was covered by several local newspapers, TV outlets and independent blogs, talking about everything from the event's move to CHI Health Center Omaha to the food served. In early December, the Governor-elect also held a press conference

here, in the Grand Hallway, ahead of and in promotion, of the ball. According to his staff, the ball enjoyed sold-out attendance.

With trade show season approaching, media outlets are already asking about coverage opportunities for the upcoming tattoo festival, the Midlands Auto-Show and more.

Media monitoring efforts caught 950 mentions in November reaching 1.4 billion people through a variety of stories and publications, which is a total publicity value of \$13 million. There have been several placements on MSN.com about a number of stories including updates about the Terence Crawford fight and the announcement of Lizzo's tour extension, including an Omaha stop. MECA's MSN.com placement alone reached 347 million people. MECA also benefited from coverage in *Sports Illustrated*, ESPN.com and Yahoo! Entertainment.

Committee Updates:

Internal Governance Committee

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met on Thursday, January 5, 2023. In attendance were Ms. Diane Duren, Mr. Bob Freeman, Mr. Tom Kelley, Mr. Roger Dixon, Ms. Diane Mills, and Mr. Stephen Curtiss, City of Omaha Finance Director.

The Committee reviewed the October and November Financial Statements, which were 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 audited financial statements, and Mr. Kelley congratulated Ms. Mills and her team for their excellent work. It was an unqualified opinion with no adjustments.

Real Estate Committee

Mr. Jay Noddle reported the mayor's office is within weeks of having agreements in place to move the truck route forward. Work is expected to begin in the second half of the year.

Millwork Commons has received final approval from the city for a few multi-family projects.

The Builder's District has broken ground on their office building and in about three months the park will begin development. Later in the year, a city parking garage supporting the office building will begin construction. Another parking garage with approximately 600 spaces will be constructed in approximately 24 months.

Boutique-style hotel interest from operators new to Omaha has increased in the area, with possible hotel sizes ranging between 80-150 rooms.

The Omaha City Council and Mayor Jean Stothert have provided the Streetcar Authority with approval and the notice to proceed with the Streetcar project. The city issued a RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for a general contractor/construction manager. Two qualified teams presented their qualifications, and a subsequent RFP (Request for Proposal) was issued. Those proposals are in

hand and the selection committee (an appointed nine-member group) will handle several interviews. Selection will be made in early February.

There may be an opportunity in seeking a joint procurement for cars with Portland, Oregon. Portland is pursuing 11 cars and Omaha 6 cars. If the order can be combined, it will offer big savings. An order for cars can be placed in the fourth quarter of the year. Mr. Stephen Curtiss will be responsible for offering bonds for sale.

A draft agreement between MECA and the Streetcar Authority is under discussion.

Contract Approvals:

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are three contracts requiring Board approval.

Pueblo Hotel Supply dba Grady's

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Pueblo Hotel Supply dba Grady's for the purchase and delivery of banquet and culinary equipment for 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. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0

TriMark Hockenbergs

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and TriMark Hockenbergs for the purchase and delivery of banquet and culinary equipment for 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 Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0

Sam Tell and Son Inc.

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Sam Tell and Son Inc. for the purchase and delivery of banquet and culinary equipment for 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: 5-0

Next Board Meeting

The next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 15, 2022, at 1:15 p.m. in the MECA Board Room.

Executive Session

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 9:39 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. Gray, seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0.

Adjournment

At 10:00 a.m. a motion was made to come out of Executive Session, and to adjourn, made by Mr. Noddle, seconded by Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0

Adjournment 10:00 a.m.