

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION  
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – FEBRUARY 18, 2025**

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 10:07 a.m. on Tuesday, February 18, 2025.

**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 February 11, 2025, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on February 11, 2025.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Ms. Buffett moved for approval of the minutes of January 14, 2025, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0.

**President/CEO Report:**

Mr. Roger Dixon reported that officials from Sioux Falls, SD have expressed interest in developing a convention center in their city. In collaboration with the Omaha Convention and Visitors Bureau, Mr. Dixon is coordinating a visit to MECA’s facility to share insights and provide valuable information.

Earlier this month, Mr. Dixon took part in a press conference at Charles Schwab Field Omaha (CSFO) to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Men’s College World Series (MCWS) in Omaha. To celebrate this milestone, special activities will be held on June 12 at Gene Leahy Mall in The RiverFront.

**Other Business:**

**Convention Center Sales & Marketing**

Ms. Denise Niebrugge stated that there are currently 128 events on the books, utilizing 257 event days for the current fiscal year. Since the November 18 Board meeting, 31 events with 61 event days and over 19,000 hotel room nights have been added, and 37 license agreements have been signed.

**Operations & IT Update**

Mr. Kevin Raymond reported that the operations team is primarily focused on events. Creighton’s men’s basketball and the Supernovas women’s volleyball team have been drawing impressive

attendance numbers.

Facility precautions are being taken to address the extremely cold weather affecting the region. Fewer issues are expected this year due to modifications implemented over the past few years.

An update was given on various projects throughout the facility, including a contract up for Board approval today for Phase I of the new LED sign at Charles Schwab Field Omaha. If approved, work is expected to begin in July and be completed by the end of the year.

Chairwoman Duren requested an update on the completion status for the Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge expansion, commonly referred to as the “Baby Bob”. Mr. Raymond stated that the project suffered a setback due to theft of the fencing. New fencing had to be ordered and manufactured, which has pushed the timeline for completion to the first of June.

### **Levy Food & Beverage Update**

Ms. Chris Van Dorn stated that fiscal year 2025 continues to be very strong, just edging past last year’s record breaking sales by 1.75% at the end of January. Last month was the building’s highest sales for the month of January since 2019. Levy hosted 23 events with 28 event days, which included the Pink Out Day with Creighton University’s men’s game with Seton Hall immediately followed by Creighton’s women’s game against UConn. The Pink Out Day produced the highest sales day of the month and made up nearly 25% of the month’s total revenues.

Yesterday afternoon, Levy wrapped up this year’s three-day President’s Day Volleyball Tournament, featuring the expanded food court on the meeting room level. Given the weekend’s weather, the indoor dining option was a big hit with attendees who preferred to stay inside. Sales on the final day alone exceeded last year’s Monday sales by 80%.

Focus is quickly being switched today to welcome fans for five days of wrestling with the new format separating the girls and boys events. Popular menu items will return, as well as adding in new options around the concourse.

Last month, Levy expanded composting efforts beyond the main kitchen to include coffee grounds and filters in an effort to divert more waste from ending up in the landfill. Working alongside Hillside Solutions, extra bins were secured to make this happen. From one conference alone, the team was able to divert over 3,700 pounds of compostable products out of the landfill and achieved a landfill diversion rate of over 90%.

### **Public Relations Update**

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl reported that over the past month, heavy focus has been placed on road closure communications, particularly in relation to the ongoing changes near the building, as well as the potential bridge closure on 480 this weekend. The team has been proactive in reaching out to stakeholders and clients who may not be fully aware of these changes, providing them with clear, timely messaging. Specifically, supporting the NSAA State Wrestling Championship as they prepare for a large influx of out-of-town visitors. Efforts have been centered around helping them

communicate venue policies to first-time visitors and notifying them of potential route changes, especially this Saturday. Additionally, collaboration continues with Creighton University, sharing essential "Know Before You Go" road closure information through our social channels.

Last week, MECA had the opportunity to participate in a press conference marking the 75th anniversary of the Men's College World Series (MCWS), which was held at Charles Schwab Field Omaha. The event was coordinated with CWS of Omaha, Inc., Mayor Jean Stothert, and Governor Jim Pillen. In addition to highlighting the exciting game-related celebrations to come, Roger Dixon had the honor of making an early announcement about the MCWS community party, set to take place at The RiverFront on June 12, the Thursday evening before the games. This event will feature fireworks, live music and a range of exciting activities — more details to follow.

With so many ongoing events, continual work is being done to enhance and build MECA's visual assets, which have proven invaluable for first-time clients who are looking to create promotional or introductory videos for their upcoming attendees.

In terms of media coverage, monitoring of CHI Health Center Omaha in January yielded just over 3,700 mentions, reaching an astounding 1.9 billion people across various markets, which included local, national and even international. The most significant coverage came from MSN.com, with stories related to Creighton Men's Basketball, generating approximately \$5 million in earned media value and reaching 616 million people. Additionally, there were mentions in high-profile outlets like USA Today and Yahoo! Entertainment, thanks to concert announcements featuring the arena as a key stop on their tours.

## **Committee Updates:**

### **Internal Governance Committee**

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met on Thursday, February 12, 2025. 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 October 2024 Financial Statements, which were 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.

In addition, the Committee also reviewed a draft of the 2024 MECA Audit and commenced work on the convention center expansion.

### **Real Estate Committee**

Mr. Jay Noddle provided an update on activity in the downtown Omaha area, noting the city continues to advance the truck route, and the Streetcar project is moving forward.

**Contract Approvals:**

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are four contracts requiring Board approval.

**Fusion Medical Staffing, Inc.**

**RESOLVED**, that the Advertising/Sponsorship Agreement between MECA and Fusion Medical Staffing, LLC for advertising at CHI Health Center Omaha, as more fully described on the attached summary, is hereby approved, and Roger Dixon as President/CEO is authorized to execute this 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

**ABM Parking Services**

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and ABM Parking Services to provide parking staff and management services for designated events at CHI Health Center Omaha and Charles Schwab Field Omaha, as set out 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

**GXC, Inc.**

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and GXC, Inc. for the rental of OpenGate metal detectors for the 2025 NCAA® Men's College World Series at Charles Schwab Field Omaha, as set out 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 Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0

**Daktronics, Inc.**

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and Daktronics, Inc. for the replacement and addition of LED display systems at Charles Schwab Field Omaha, as set out 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 Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0

### **Next Board Meeting**

The next Board of Directors Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at 1:15 p.m. in the MECA Board Room.

### **Executive Session**

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 10:26 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 Ms. Buffett, seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0.

### **Adjournment**

At 10:50 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: 5-0

Adjournment 10:50 a.m.