

## **MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – APRIL 16, 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 9:06 a.m. on Wednesday, April 16, 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 April 9, 2025, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on April 9, 2025.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

Ms. Buffett moved for approval of the minutes of March 11, 2025, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0.

### **President/CEO Report:**

Mr. Roger Dixon reported that discussions are ongoing with the Omaha Police Department regarding the relocation of ADA parking at Charles Schwab Field Omaha. The proposed change would move parking away from Gate 2, with the primary goal of enhancing guest safety and security at the stadium.

MECA’s convention center and arena are undergoing a spring cleaning in preparation for the highly anticipated Berkshire Hathaway Annual Shareholder’s Meeting.

CHI Health Center Omaha’s convention center expansion is progressing as planned. Although there were initial concerns about noise from pile driving, Kiewit has significantly reduced the disruption by implementing new technology.

Mr. Noddle inquired whether MECA has an outreach process in place to notify private property owners near the campus of upcoming road closures and construction activity in the area. Mr. Dixon confirmed that MECA does utilize its social media platforms for outreach and will continue to share information with partners to provide as much advance notice as possible to keep nearby property owners informed.

Mr. Dixon announced Kristyna Engdahl’s resignation as MECA’s Vice President of Communications. He expressed sincere gratitude for her years of dedicated service, leadership,

and the meaningful impact she has had on the organization. The Board joined in thanking Kristyna and wished her continued success in all her future endeavors.

### **Other Business:**

#### **Convention Center Sales & Marketing**

Ms. Denise Niebrugge reported that there are currently 128 events scheduled, accounting for 257 event days in the current fiscal year. Since the March 11 Board meeting, 17 additional events - totaling 36 event days and generating over 8,700 hotel room nights - have been added, along with 14 newly signed license agreements.

#### **Corporate Sales & Marketing Update**

Mr. Tom O’Gorman reported that, as expected, radio advertising rates have been steadily increasing. In response, MECA is currently in discussions with radio stations to explore bundled pricing options in an effort to manage costs. Rising rates are contributing to higher overall expenses for shows.

The team is currently in the planning stages for the Big Ten Baseball Tournament, which will take place at Charles Schwab Field Omaha in May.

Fans can look forward to approximately three more concert announcements coming soon.

#### **Operations & IT Update**

Mr. Kevin Raymond reported that, as Mr. Dixon mentioned, spring cleanup efforts are underway at both CHI Health Center Omaha (CHIHCO) and Charles Schwab Field Omaha (CSFO). Current tasks include installing mulch, washing windows, activating the irrigation system, replacing broken sprinkler heads, and addressing various concrete projects. While concrete replacement typically covers 15–20% of the area, initial work revealed that the concrete on the Plaza requires full replacement. A proposal for this project is included on today’s agenda for Board approval.

Last night, Creighton University’s Men’s Baseball team hosted the University of Nebraska–Lincoln at the stadium. It was a well-attended game with favorable weather and strong fan engagement.

The Big Ten Baseball Tournament and the Men’s College World Series (MCWS) are quickly approaching, and weekly operational meetings are underway to ensure thorough preparation for both events.

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

Ms. Chris Van Dorn stated that March was a very busy month in the convention center, arena and at the baseball stadium. Levy hosted 22 events with 40 events days at CHIHCO, and seven of the eight scheduled games at the stadium were played. March sales are over budget at CHIHCO by 21.3% and year-to-date remain slightly ahead of budgeted sales by 4.4%. Despite some unpredictable March weather that caused some scheduling changes with baseball, Levy is ahead

of year-to-date budgeted sales at CSFO by 32.7% as well. Levy's year-to-date bottom line combined is also exceeding budget expectations by 8.1% and the year-to-date flowthrough is 77.6%.

The Levy team continues to focus on driving revenues, improving processes and delivering heartfelt hospitality in every aspect of the business.

As previously mentioned, last night's Creighton versus UNL baseball game drew a large crowd and generated strong results. Sales were 75% higher than during their first matchup last year, with the pleasant weather playing a significant role in boosting both attendance and overall sales.

Levy is now within 60 days of the Men's College World Series and is focused on finalizing the travel team, which includes staff from across the country who will support food and beverage operations. In addition, the team is conducting a series of scheduled tastings to finalize the signature items that will be featured on this year's menu.

Sustainability efforts are being continued, with a growing emphasis on tracking production waste as part of the daily reporting routine. As previously discussed, this data collection has become a key focus. The company is now shifting toward strategies aimed at reducing production waste and evaluating the broader impact these efforts may have on overall operations.

### **Public Relations Update**

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl reported that planning meetings are ongoing with CWS of Omaha, Inc. and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) to revamp the annual pre-Men's College World Series media availability and menu tasting event. The objective is to enhance the experience for both speakers and attendees while aligning with current media best practices. Although details are still being finalized, the event is moving toward a more structured format. Key speakers, including representatives from MECA, the Mayor's Office, and CWS of Omaha, Inc., will participate in a formal Q&A session, with additional partners available as needed. Notably, this new format will allow the event to be held indoors, addressing a long-standing request.

Last week, KETV returned to the ballpark to scout locations for their *First News From the Field* morning broadcast, scheduled for the first Friday of the Men's College World Series. Hosting a multi-hour live newscast on-site offers valuable exposure for the event. MECA has also engaged with the NCAA to explore ways their involvement could further enhance the broadcast. By remaining supportive and flexible, MECA is helping to promote shared goals around event visibility and community engagement. Additionally, more information will be provided on an upcoming call with ESPN to learn more about a special segment they're producing in celebration of the MCWS 75th Anniversary.

There have also been ongoing discussions with CWS of Omaha, Inc. to develop fresh messaging and story angles aimed at maintaining momentum and public interest in the lead-up to the Series. Additional details will be shared soon.

In related coverage, Mr. Dixon was recently interviewed by *LAVM Magazine* to highlight the 75th anniversary of the Men's College World Series. The feature focused on the legacy of Charles Schwab Field and its role in hosting this historic event, providing national exposure among venue professionals across the country.

Meanwhile, media monitoring for CHI Health Center Omaha in Q1 of 2025 showed strong national reach. Coverage of concert announcements and sporting events was picked up by outlets like MSN.com and Yahoo! Entertainment, reaching approximately 8.3 billion people. With more than 7,000 mentions across various publications, and syndication through USA Today and the Associated Press, MECA's campus continues to keep Omaha in the national spotlight.

Ms. Engdahl noted that today marked her final Board meeting. She expressed what a privilege it has been to be part of the organization, adding that she will look back on her time here with immense pride and deep gratitude.

### **Committee Updates:**

#### **Internal Governance Committee**

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met on Monday, April 14, 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 December 2024 and January 2025 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.

#### **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 with the design being underway, and the Streetcar project is moving forward.

#### **Annual Election of Officers**

Chairwoman Duren presented the following slate of officers for approval by the Board:

**WHEREAS**, the following slate of officers is proposed to serve for the designated terms.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the following are elected as officers of MECA for the indicated terms and until their successors are duly-elected and qualified:

President/CEO:	Roger Dixon – 1 year	(May 1, 2025-April 30, 2026)
Vice Chair:	Tom Kelley - 1 year	(May 1, 2025-April 30, 2026)
Treasurer:	Susie Buffett - 1 year	(May 1, 2025-April 30, 2026)
Secretary:	Jay Noddle - 1 year	(May 1, 2025-April 30, 2026)

Assistant-Secretary: Bob Freeman – 1 year (May 1, 2025-April 30, 2026)

[Note: Diane Duren remains Chairwoman for the second year of her two-year term.]

Moved by Mr. Gray seconded by Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0

**Contract Approvals (6):**

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are six contracts requiring Board approval.

**City of Omaha**

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and the City of Omaha for the advance of \$10,000,000 against the City's \$100,000,000 commitment for Convention Center Expansion 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.

Mr. Bob Freeman noted that Jennifer Taylor from the City's Law Department was in attendance should any Board members have questions. No questions were submitted.

Moved by Ms. Buffett; seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0

**TRI Project Solutions**

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and TRI Project Solutions to facilitate the east expansion project 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 Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0

**DLR Group**

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and DLR Group, Inc. to provide architectural, interior design and MEP Engineering for convention center renovations 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. Kelley; seconded by Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0

Evan Corporation

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and Evan Corporation for design, furnishing and installation of a rigging fall protection 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 Mr. Gray; seconded by Ms. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0

Buller Fixture

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and Buller Fixture for the purchase and installation of a Hobart dishwasher 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. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0

Doll Construction

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and Doll Construction for the removal, disposal and installation of concrete 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 Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0

**Contracts Recently Awarded:**

MECA has recently awarded the following contracts:

- Commercial Flooring Systems, Inc. for rubber floor replacement at Charles Schwab Field Omaha.

**Next Board Meeting**

The next Board of Directors Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, May 14, 2025, at 1:15 p.m. in the MECA Board Room.

**Executive Session**

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 9:36 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 11:50 a.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 11:50 a.m.