

MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – JULY 22, 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 9:09 a.m. on Tuesday, July 22, 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 July 8, 2025, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on July 8, 2025.

Approval of Minutes:

Ms. Buffett moved for approval of the minutes of June 10, 2025, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Mr. Kelley. Mr. Gray abstained from voting.

Motion carried: 4-0.

President/CEO Report:

Mr. Roger Dixon announced that MECA had successfully completed its fourteenth year hosting the Men’s College World Series (MCWS). He noted the event was a success and expressed his gratitude to all staff who dedicated long hours to ensure its smooth execution.

MECA has reached an agreement with the City of Omaha on the Ninth Amendment to the Agreement and Lease for the Omaha Convention Center and Arena. The fully executed document was returned yesterday.

Other Business:

Convention Center Sales & Marketing

Ms. Denise Niebrugge reported that there are currently 107 events scheduled, accounting for 233 event days in the current fiscal year. Since the May 14 Board meeting, 25 additional events - totaling 44 event days and generating over 15,000 hotel room nights have been added, along with 28 newly signed license agreements.

Contracts are already being signed for future use of the new convention center space.

Corporate Sales & Marketing Update

Mr. Tom O’Gorman reported that Nebraska Athletics has established a new Special Events Department, appointing Arek Olson to lead the initiative. The newly formed Husker Special

Events team will focus on hosting large-scale events at Memorial Stadium during the offseason, transforming the venue into a year-round destination for concerts, corporate functions, and community gatherings.

The team is actively working on renewals for suites and club seats at Charles Schwab Field Omaha. Renewals are at 100% at CHI Health Center Omaha (CHIHCO).

Recently, Mr. O’Gorman and Mr. Dixon had a call with representatives from Sony/PlayStation and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) regarding an exciting opportunity. PlayStation is launching a new college baseball video game and is interested in featuring Charles Schwab Field Omaha as a highlighted venue. Both MECA and the NCAA have agreed to participate and are currently in discussions with Charles Schwab to explore a potential agreement.

Mr. Raymond will provide more details about the new scoreboard, but once the scoreboard burn-in process is complete, Mr. O’Gorman will meet with Creighton University to review the 50/50 sponsorship arrangement between both entities.

Event bookings remain strong, with anticipated announcements extending through December and into early 2026.

Operations & IT Update

Mr. Kevin Raymond took the opportunity to recognize the staff’s hard work and efforts for the Men’s College World Series in June. A complete team effort was necessary for the successful completion of this event, and Mr. Raymond was proud to be part of that team.

The LED scoreboard project is progressing well and remains on schedule for completion in the first week of August. Structural and electrical work has already begun at the stadium, and once the LED installation is finished, work will shift across the street to begin on the new scoreboard, ribbon panels, and marquee - all of which are expected to be completed by year-end.

Additionally, the new arena curtains have been installed and are fully operational, offering a clean and polished look. The arena roof coating project is also underway, with completion anticipated by the end of summer.

Levy Food & Beverage Update

Ms. Chris Van Dorn reported a busy and successful month since the last meeting, highlighted by major events including the Men’s College World Series, the National High School Baseball Tournament, several large conferences at CHI Convention Center throughout June and July, and most recently, Heartland Pride.

The 2025 Men’s College World Series was a standout success and one of the smoothest operations to date, particularly from a food and beverage standpoint. Levy was fortunate to have an exceptional team in place, including dedicated local staff, a visiting crew of 22 managers, hundreds of team members, and volunteers from Not-for-profit groups. Their hard work and long hours across nearly two weeks were instrumental to the event’s success, and Levy is extremely grateful

for their commitment. Financially, this year's Series outperformed expectations. Revenues exceeded budget by 16.5% and reflected a 5.7% increase over actual sales in 2024, despite having one fewer game. Food sales accounted for 42% of the overall split, up from 39% last year, while beverage sales made up the remaining 58%, down from 61%.

When comparing department performance year over year, Concessions saw a 5.1% increase, the Club Lounge was up 1.5%, Suites rose 5.2%, In-Seat Service experienced significant growth at 18.9%, and Group Sales Catering was up 18.3%. Bottled water remained the highest-selling item overall, with over 120,000 bottles sold, representing over one-third of all beverage sales across 37 different options. In total, 249,082 food items were sold at concessions during the event. The top five food items included hot dogs (44,247), peanuts (19,108), Bavarian pretzels (16,171), cheeseburgers (13,815), and chicken tender baskets (13,316) - collectively made up 42.8% of all food items sold. Of the 27 signature items, which included returning fan favorites and new additions, a total of 41,460 units were sold, accounting for 16.7% of total food sales. Standout items included the Flyover Frank loaded hot dog, carne asada fries, cheeseburger tots, the 75th Anniversary pork tenderloin sandwich and Cubano burger, heatstreak brat, hot honey pizza, and the "You're Killing Me, S'mores" dessert nachos. The latter received national attention after being featured during ESPN's game day broadcast and garnered over 300,000 views on TikTok.

As Levy closed out the fiscal year on June 30, both venues exceeded their budgeted revenue targets. CHI Health Center Omaha finished 5.8% above budget, and Charles Schwab Field Omaha exceeded budget by an impressive 18.2%. The combined flow-through for the year came in at 71%.

Lastly, Levy is proud to share a glimpse into their continued community outreach through the partnership with Saving Grace. After each event, and particularly following the Men's College World Series, teams work closely with vendors to identify unused food that can be credited or donated. This year, all prepared food and leftover produce were donated to food pantries across the city immediately after the Series concluded. The following week, hundreds of frozen lemonades were donated, which were delivered to Boys and Girls Clubs of Omaha across the Omaha area, providing a cool, refreshing treat during the summer heat. Most recently, leftover popped popcorn was donated from the Heartland Pride event, which also went to the Boys and Girls Clubs to be enjoyed during their summer camps.

Public Relations Update

Ms. Safford announced another successful Men's College World Series brought national attention to Charles Schwab Field Omaha. In June, CSFO was mentioned 10,094 times across media platforms, reaching 56.8 billion people and generating approximately \$525 million in total value, according to the Omaha Visitors and Convention Bureau (OCVB).

MECA's new CSFO TikTok account saw remarkable engagement during its debut series, gaining nearly 2,000 followers, over 20,000 likes, and close to 160,000 views - thanks to the efforts of the Communications team.

For the second year, CSFO hosted KETV's "First News From the Field" the morning before the first MCWS games. KETV reported a 25% increase in household viewership from the previous Friday and has already requested to return again next year. A live news crew was also accommodated from WOWT that same morning.

Wrapping up the Men's College World Series coverage, numerous protests during the event remained safe and peaceful, thanks to the outstanding efforts of MECA's security and operations teams, in close coordination with the Omaha Police Department and other local law enforcement agencies.

Earlier in June, Roger's retirement story in the *Omaha World-Herald* reached over 390,000 people across print and digital platforms.

Committee Updates:

Internal Governance Committee

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met on Tuesday, July 15, 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 April and May 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.

Finally, the Committee also reviewed the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget, and the RFP (Request for Proposal) for legal service which will be discussed in executive session today.

Real Estate Committee

Mr. Jay Noddle provided an update on developments in downtown Omaha, noting continued progress on the city's truck route initiative. Also referenced was a recent press conference held by Mayor Ewing approximately two weeks ago, during which the Mayor expressed support for Omaha's Urban Core and the Streetcar project.

Mr. Noddle stated that Cordia brought their entire executive leadership team to Omaha during the Men's College World Series. Despite the busy schedule, Mr. Raymond arranged a stadium tour for the group. Many had never attended an MCWS event and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. As a result, Cordia has decided to make their land and buildings available for redevelopment and will actively be engaged in the process. Mr. Noddle thanked Mr. Raymond for his efforts in helping to facilitate this opportunity.

Contract Approvals:

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are three contracts requiring Board approval.

US Foods, Inc.

RESOLVED, that the Advertising/Sponsorship Agreement between MECA and US Foods, Inc. 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 Mr. Gray; seconded by Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0

DLR Group, Inc.

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.

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

Motion carried: 5-0

MH Equipment

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and MH Equipment for the purchase of a Falcon FS95 Lift 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 tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, September 17, 2025, at 1:15 p.m. in the MECA Board Room.

Executive Session

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 9:34 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 12:57 p.m. a motion was made to come out of Executive Session, and to adjourn, made by Mr. Kelley seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0

Adjournment 12:57 p.m.