

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION  
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – NOVEMBER 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 1:05 p.m. on Tuesday, November 18, 2025.

**Roll Call:**

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

**Proof of Publication:**

Notice of the meeting was published in *The Daily Record* on November 12, 2025, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on November 12, 2025.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Mr. Gray moved for approval of the minutes of October 15, 2025, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0.

**President/CEO Report:**

Mr. Roger Dixon reported that it has been an interesting month as he dismantles what he has spent the past twenty-three years building in his office. He noted that he has distributed much of his sports memorabilia to staff and is in the process of organizing and reviewing desk files. Mr. Dixon thanked the Board of Directors for their participation and hard work throughout his tenure, commenting that this transition is one of the hardest things he has ever done.

The Board of Directors collectively thanked Mr. Dixon for his years of dedicated service to MECA and extended their best wishes to him on his retirement.

**Other Business:**

**Convention Center Sales & Marketing**

Ms. Denise Niebrugge reported that there are currently 112 events scheduled, accounting for 238 event days in the current fiscal year and utilizing more than 80,000 hotel room nights. Since the October 15 Board meeting, 17 additional events have been secured, representing 37 event days and generating over 11,000 hotel room nights.

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

Mr. Tom O’Gorman reported that conversations with the Big Ten regarding an extension on their baseball tournament are ongoing, and he feels close to securing an additional three-year agreement.

He noted that the ticket renewal process at Charles Schwab Field Omaha is nearly 75% complete and progressing well. Planning is underway for events scheduled from May through September 2026, and most concert events through May have already been announced.

Mr. O’Gorman added that discussions with the NCAA and Charles Schwab Field Omaha regarding the renewal of naming rights also continue. That process is maybe 35% complete, with significant work remaining.

Mr. Noddle inquired about when the naming rights agreement comes to term. Mr. O’Gorman stated that the current agreement expires in 2031.

### **Operations & IT Update**

Mr. Kevin Raymond reported that the team remains primarily focused on events and is staying very busy with a full schedule in both the convention center and the arena. He noted that discussions have begun with NSAA regarding State Wrestling, and that next month preparations will begin with the NCAA concerning the 2026 Men’s College World Series.

Mr. Raymond provided several project updates. He noted that following the Board’s approval last month of the HVAC system upgrade, all five major mechanical air units throughout the facility have now been replaced. In the coming weeks, the system server will be upgraded, enabling more precise control of heating and cooling and integrating with the expansion project.

At the stadium, testing of the new video boards is underway, and the ribbon boards are expected to be operational by Friday of this week. An official demonstration for the Board and media is anticipated in early December.

Mr. Raymond reported that the team has been working closely with Kiewit to pinpoint available windows in the event schedule to support renovation work in the existing convention center. With bookings remaining strong as 2026–2027 planning progresses, maintaining flexibility will be critical to completing the renovation by the end of 2027, ahead of the expansion coming online.

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

Ms. Chris VanDorn reported that the convention center was filled with back-to-back events throughout October. Levy hosted 11 events totaling 28 event days. The arena was also active with seven events, and together these drove food and beverage sales to more than 10% ahead of budget. Additionally, concert merchandise sales continue to exceed expectations, with October finishing nearly 55% above budget due to stronger-than-anticipated per caps.

Charles Schwab Field Omaha also experienced an exceptionally strong off-season month, hosting 12 private events. Food and beverage revenues at the stadium were up 350% to budget for October and 325% year-to-date.

An update was provided on new food items launched at the first Creighton Men's Basketball game on October 17. Early standouts include the brisket nachos (top seller) followed by smoked chicken nachos, house-made pepperoni pizza rolls, chicken parm dippers, and the brisket grilled cheese sandwich. Levy will continue evaluating performance and adjusting as necessary.

The team was invited last week to participate in a Levy pre-season planning meeting for all of Levy's soccer and baseball locations. They will be working through the identified focus items over the next several weeks.

### **Public Relations Update**

Ms. Grace Safford reported that the team is working with Monster Jam to secure media coverage for their upcoming event. This has been challenging due to the Thanksgiving holiday and the Nebraska versus Iowa football game scheduled that Friday; however, efforts are underway to push more digital content to online reporters to help boost visibility.

Planning is underway for a press conference in early December to unveil the new displays at Charles Schwab Field Omaha.

Ms. Safford noted that the communications team has been very busy issuing traffic alerts for each event and publishing updated maps and directions. With support from the Operations team, an expanded map is being developed that includes The RiverFront, which will be essential for the next few years as traffic patterns continue to shift.

Lastly, the team, with assistance from Levy, has photographed all Creighton new concession food offerings and uploaded the refreshed images to MECA's website.

### **Committee Updates:**

#### **Internal Governance Committee**

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met on Thursday, November 13, 2025. In attendance were Mr. Tom Kelley, Mr. Roger Dixon, Mr. Bob Freeman, and Ms. Diane Mills, and Mr. Stephen Curtis, City of Omaha Finance Director.

The Committee reviewed the September 2025 Financial Statements, which were in order. After overviews from and discussions with Ms. Mills, the Committee found the reports to be reasonable compared to plan and prior periods, and consistent with standard MECA accounting practices.

Finally, the Committee also reviewed funding and expenses for the expansion.

### **Real Estate Committee**

Mr. Jay Noddle reported that activity remains high throughout the neighborhood. The City's Public Works Department continues its work on the truck route, with potential construction north of the area beginning in the middle of next year. Once that phase is complete, truck traffic will be rerouted. MECA and Public Works will remain in close communication on scheduling to ensure coordination with City and their contractors when streets surrounding the campus must be utilized.

Mr. Noddle added that several projects in the surrounding area are nearing completion, while a substantial list of new projects is slated to begin in the spring. As a result, construction activity downtown will continue for some time.

Streetcar work is progressing, and much of MUD's utility work is reaching a point where certain roadways may soon be restored. He cautioned, however, that as private development projects begin, some of those efforts will also require roadway closures or restrictions.

### **Contract Approvals:**

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are four contracts requiring Board approval.

#### Prairie Flower Casino

**RESOLVED**, that the Advertising/Sponsorship Agreement between MECA and Prairie Flower Casino 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 on behalf of MECA to execute the Advertising/Sponsorship 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. Noddle.

Motion carried: 5-0

#### Kiewit Building Group, Inc.

**RESOLVED**, that Change Order No. 2 between MECA and Kiewit Building Group, Inc. for the East Expansion Project at CHI Health Center 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.

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

Motion carried: 5-0

#### TriMark Hockenbergs

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and TriMark Hockenbergs for the purchase of banquet bars for use by Levy 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. Noddle; seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0

**New President/CEO**

**RESOLVED**, that the Board hereby approves of the hiring of Adam Straight to succeed Roger Dixon as President/CEO of MECA; and,

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Board Chair Diane Duren is authorized to oversee and finalize the details of such hiring, with an expected starting date in early January 2026: and

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Board (for itself and on behalf of countless others) expresses its thanks and appreciation to Roger Dixon for his decades of service and leadership at MECA.

Chairwoman Duren invited public and Board comment and asked for a motion.

Board members expressed their gratitude and congratulations to Mr. Dixon, recognizing his 25 years of service and the lasting impact he has had on the City of Omaha. They noted that, because of his leadership and reputation, the response to the CEO candidate search was exceptionally strong.

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 Thursday, January 15, 2026, at 9:15 a.m. in the MECA Board Room.

**Executive Session**

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 1:29 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 Mr. Gray, seconded by Mr. Noddle.

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 Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0

Adjournment 1:58 p.m.