

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION  
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – FEBRUARY 18, 2026**

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 1:10 p.m. on Wednesday, February 18, 2026.

**Roll Call:**

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

**Proof of Publication:**

Notice of the meeting was published in *The Daily Record* on February 11, 2026, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on February 11, 2026.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Mr. Gray moved for approval of the minutes of January 15, 2026, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 4-0.

**President/CEO Report:**

Mr. Adam Straight reported that it has been a great first month getting to know the team and developing a deeper understanding of the organization. He shared that he has “stopped counting the days” because it no longer matters, he is fully committed and here for the long run.

The Executive Leadership Team is in the process of updating the mission statement to ensure it is more inclusive and reflective of the organization’s future direction. A revised draft is currently being prepared and will be shared with the Board upon completion.

Mr. Straight commented on the significant amount of recent media coverage being received. While it has felt somewhat awkward seeing and hearing himself featured so frequently, he acknowledged that the exposure has been very positive for MECA and appears to have been well received.

Introductions have continued throughout the community, including meetings with stakeholders and community leaders. He indicated that these visits would continue, as they are beneficial for strengthening relationships and advancing MECA’s priorities. Mr. Straight noted that he has found the community to be welcoming and engaging and expressed appreciation for the warm reception.

Regarding site construction, Mr. Straight reported that he has conducted several walkthroughs and participated in numerous discussions regarding the current status of the projects. Potential opportunities are being evaluated, and he is proactively assessing capital strategies, specifically identifying elements that may be advanced rather than deferred. Additional updates related to renovation planning and future capital strategy will be provided as they become available.

## **Other Business:**

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

Ms. Denise Niebrugge reported that there are currently 117 events scheduled, accounting for 245 event days. Since the January 15 Board meeting, 9 additional events have been secured, representing 17 event days and generating over 4,000 hotel room nights; and 19 license agreements have been signed.

Ms. Niebrugge reported that Mr. Straight has been introduced to a number of clients. She noted the opportunity to host clients during the recent Eric Church concert in the suite, which provided valuable relationship-building engagement.

One particular client group currently has events scheduled in Atlanta in 2027, Nashville in 2028, Austin in 2029, and Omaha in 2030. Representatives from this group were hosted during the concert, including one individual with whom Mr. Straight has a prior professional relationship. Ms. Niebrugge indicated that the event was secured in part due to MECA's hospitality efforts.

Mr. Straight commented that being included in the same rotation of host cities alongside Atlanta, Nashville, and Austin reflects positively on MECA's positioning within the industry.

### **Operations & IT Update**

Mr. Kevin Raymond reported that the primary focus remains on events, with a high level of activity on both the convention center and arena sides of the facility. He noted the recent completion of the President's Day Volleyball event, which was well attended. This occurred concurrently with a Creighton Men's Basketball game and a Supernovas Volleyball game.

NSAA State Wrestling Championships are currently underway, with the girls' championship event scheduled for this evening and the boys' competition beginning tomorrow, concluding with the championship event on Saturday.

The Supernovas are well into their season and are experiencing strong attendance. Creighton Men's Baseball will begin in approximately two weeks. Preparations are underway at Charles Schwab Field Omaha (CSFO), including de-winterizing the facility and removing the field blankets from the outfield.

Monthly Men's College World Series (MCWS) meetings continue, and Big Ten Tournament planning meetings have also begun. A formal announcement for the Big Ten is anticipated in the coming weeks regarding a slight format change. While the adjustment may present some operational challenges for the stadium, it is expected to be beneficial for the tournament overall.

Regarding project updates, Mr. Raymond reported that the stadium field lights are substantially complete, with only minor punch list items remaining. A walkthrough is scheduled for this week, after which final items will be addressed. A demonstration is tentatively planned for the Spring Partners meeting next week to provide a preview of enhancements that will be available for this year's Series.

Renovation planning continues, with particular focus on HVAC and plumbing systems. The team is coordinating infrastructure upgrades with room renovations, allowing systems to be updated concurrently while spaces are taken offline.

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

Ms. Chris VanDorn reported that activity levels have remained high since the last meeting, with a busy January followed by an even more active February. Levy achieved the highest January revenue in building history, exceeding the previous January record set in 2016 by nearly 10% and reflecting a 30% increase over January of last year.

The team transitioned directly into a series of catering and arena events during the first week of February, including the Eric Church concert. While the event did not set an all-time building attendance record, it represented the sixth highest revenue-generating concert in building history, with Eric Church now accounting for three of the top six revenue-producing concerts. The event also set a record for the highest sales generated in the WarHorse Lounge since its opening two years ago.

Ms. VanDorn formally recognized the team for their continued hard work and dedication during an extended period of back-to-back events across the arena, convention center, and soon the stadium. Positive feedback recently received from a Supernovas fan regarding their food experience in the Lexus Club was shared with the Board.

Finally, Ms. VanDorn provided an update on sustainability efforts in partnership with Hillside Solutions related to composting and food waste reduction. Levy has been nominated for an impact award at Hillside Solutions' Annual Gala later this month. Appreciation was expressed for the recognition and Ms. VanDorn anticipates providing an update at the next Board meeting.

### **Public Relations Update**

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl reported that it has been a busy and visible month for MECA, with media coverage touching on everything from construction milestones to leadership transitions to strong event attendance across our venues.

Earlier this week, MECA celebrated the Topping Out ceremony - a really meaningful milestone in the life of this project. All three local television stations were onsite, and the story was picked up by regional affiliates, which shows there's interest in this facility well beyond Omaha and reinforces the broader significance of what's being built here.

Mr. Straight had appearances on KETV and WOWT's noon newscasts this past month, speaking about his first few weeks on the job and shared what he sees ahead for MECA. It was a great opportunity to make more formal introductions to the community, and work is being done to establish regular appearances so the public can continue hearing directly from leadership about developments across MECA's venues.

On the events side, WOWT highlighted the attendance and regional draw of the President's Day Volleyball Tournament, underscoring the continued impact of youth and amateur sports at

MECA's facilities. And both traditional and digital outlets covered Creighton Men's Pink Out basketball game, reflecting the sustained community enthusiasm around marquee events hosted at CHI Health Center Omaha.

On the digital front, MECA's social media coordinator, Angela Hutchings, has increased activity on LinkedIn, posting more consistently about events, milestones and organizational accomplishments. In just a few months, the following has grown and engagement has become noticeably more interactive, which helps extend the reach beyond traditional media and into the broader professional community.

Overall, it's been a month of steady momentum and strong visibility, with media coverage reflecting both the progress we're making and the consistent activity happening across venues.

### **Committee Updates:**

#### **Internal Governance Committee**

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met on Wednesday, February 11, 2026. In attendance were Ms. Diane Duren, Mr. Tom Kelley, Mr. Adam Straight and Ms. Diane Mills.

The Committee reviewed the December 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.

#### **Contract Approvals:**

Chairwoman Duren indicated there is one contract requiring Board approval.

##### GXC, Inc.

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and GXC, Inc. for the rental of OpenGate metal detectors for the 2026 NCAA® Men's College World Series at Charles Schwab Field Omaha, as set out on the attached summary, is hereby approved, and Adam Straight 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: 4-0

#### **Contract Recently Awarded**

- Chefs Depot / Steamers at Charles Schwab Field Omaha
- Buller Fixture / Food Prep Tables at Charles Schwab Field Omaha

### **Next Board Meeting**

The next Board of Directors Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, March 18, 2026, at 9:15 a.m. in the MECA Board Room.

### **Executive Session**

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 1:30 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 Ms. Buffett, seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 4-0.

### **Adjournment**

At 2:10 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: 4-0

Adjournment 2:10 p.m.