

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – MARCH 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 9:10 a.m. on Wednesday, March 18, 2026.

Roll Call:

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

Proof of Publication:

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

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Gray moved for approval of the minutes of February 18, 2026, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 3-0.

President/CEO Report:

Mr. Adam Straight reported that operations continue to progress well, noting it has been a particularly busy month.

He shared that he and the team recently completed Mission and Vision exercises, working collaboratively with internal stakeholders to finalize and publish the organization’s future direction. The next step will be a workshop focused on defining Core Values and Strategic Objectives, with additional updates to follow.

MECA’s Mission Statement:

To develop, manage, and activate premier venues and dynamic public spaces in Omaha that enrich the community, drive economic growth, and deliver memorable experiences for residents and visitors alike through innovative partnerships and exceptional service.

MECA’s Vision Statement:

To position Omaha as a nationally recognized destination through growth and innovation of world-class entertainment venues and vibrant public spaces, thriving hubs for sport, culture, and commerce, by creating inclusive experiences, guiding evolution of the city's urban core, and standing as enduring pillars of civic pride.

Mr. Straight reported that construction is progressing well and remains on schedule and within budget. Significant effort has been dedicated to planning the logistics of ongoing renovations

while maintaining operations, noting that previously identified mechanical and infrastructure issues are being incorporated into the project plan. The team is currently working through design details and refining the schedule to ensure maximum efficiency.

A high level of activity has continued across the organization, and Mr. Straight announced that there have been only seven days this year without events in MECA facilities. He acknowledged that the Operations team, including Event Management, Facilities, and Security, have carried much of this workload, while also recognizing the contributions of the entire team throughout the campus.

Mr. Straight noted that there is no slowdown in activity anticipated, as the organization ramps up convention business and prepares the stadium for its upcoming season.

Finally, he also referenced positive media coverage surrounding MECA and invited Ms. Kristyna Engdahl to provide additional detail.

Other Business:

Convention Center Sales & Marketing

Ms. Denise Niebrugge reported that there are currently 117 events scheduled, accounting for 245 event days. Since the February 18 Board meeting, 10 additional events have been secured, representing 16 event days and generating over 11,500 hotel room nights; and 15 license agreements have been signed.

Ms. Niebrugge stated that Scooter's Coffee is currently hosting its event at CHI Health Center Omaha. Banners promoting the brand's beverages are being displayed along Capitol Avenue to Cuming Street, contributing to a strong visual presence in the area. The conference appears to be very successful, with approximately 1,600 attendees.

Operations & IT Update

Mr. Kevin Raymond reported that with the conclusion of Creighton Bluejays men's basketball season, attention is now shifting to spring sports. He noted that the Creighton Bluejays baseball season has begun, and no postponements have been necessary despite recent weather conditions.

Representatives from the Men's College World Series visited Omaha on February 26. The group toured the stadium to view recent upgrades, including new scoreboards, ribbon panels, and field lighting. MECA also hosted partners the evening before in their suite during a Creighton vs DePaul game, providing an opportunity to connect in a social setting and discuss both the upcoming event and offseason improvements.

Mr. Raymond reported that monthly planning meetings for the Men's College World Series are ongoing, with no major changes anticipated this year. Following extensive review, it was decided not to expand security around the Fan Fest perimeter; however, security staffing will continue at stadium entry points.

Planning for Berkshire Hathaway Annual Meeting is underway, including coordination of security meetings involving MECA partners such as local law enforcement and federal agencies. He emphasized the strong collaboration with these partners.

Planning for the Big Ten Baseball Tournament is progressing well. Ticket pre-sales began last week and are now open to the public. The tournament will return to a four-day format, and contingency planning is in place with Baxter Arena as a backup location in the event of weather delays.

Regarding building projects, a significant amount of time has been dedicated to evaluating HVAC and plumbing systems to identify opportunities for redesign and improvement. He noted that the upcoming kitchen renovation will be a substantial undertaking, requiring careful coordination to maintain operations during construction, and that a solid plan is in place.

Finally, the first part of the renovations will begin in the restrooms located on the southwest corner and are scheduled to take place from April 6 through May 20, with additional areas to be identified. He emphasized the importance of balancing project timelines and budgets while minimizing disruption to ongoing events.

Levy Food & Beverage Update

Ms. Chris VanDorn reported that the month of February included 48 event days across more than 30 events, with 21 events in the Exhibit Hall and Convention Center and nine in the Arena. These included the Eric Church concert, five days of State Wrestling, four Creighton University basketball games, and three Supernovas matches. This led to Levy's second-highest February for food and beverage sales in building history. Activity took place in every corner of the building, nearly back-to-back, throughout the entire month.

Levy is ahead of budgeted sales by just over 7% for fiscal year 2026 year-to-date, with the majority of that increase coming from catering food sales.

The team quickly transitioned from February into preparations for baseball, with three games on opening weekend performing stronger than anticipated due to favorable weather. There are seven additional games scheduled for the remainder of the month, and the team hopes to further capitalize on the continued nice weather.

Finally, Levy was invited to participate in the Hillside Solutions' Annual Awards Gala at the end of February. It was a great event, and the team was very pleased to attend. Ms. VanDorn was happy to share that Levy received the 2025 Impact of the Year Award for its sustainability efforts, including composting in the convention center, arena, and stadium. A video was shown during the event featuring the Levy team's composting efforts in action, including some footage from the last HDR event, which, through combined efforts, was another zero-waste event in the building.

The Board of Directors offered congratulations to Ms. VanDorn and the Levy team.

Public Relations Update:

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl reported several strong media coverage wins related to recent events at CHI Health Center Omaha (CHIHCO).

The Omaha Supernovas set a new U.S. attendance record for an indoor women's professional volleyball match on March 14, with more than 16,000 fans in attendance. This milestone highlights the growing popularity of women's professional volleyball, with the Supernovas continuing to consistently outperform other teams nationally in attendance. The event was driven primarily by a digital-first marketing strategy, utilizing social media promotion and e-blasts, which proved to be a highly effective method for reaching and engaging fans. Promotional initiatives, including dollar beer offerings, also continue to be effective in driving fan engagement and attendance.

For Disney on Ice, the team executed a multi-channel media strategy. WOWT featured a sit-down interview with cast members on its midday program. In addition, the team partnered with the production and a local influencer, providing a curated gift box in exchange for promotional content on opening night. A preview TikTok was also produced during practice ice, supported by a SEO strategy that resulted in more than 10,000 views on CHIHCO's social platforms. Ms. Engdahl noted that the measurable success of this effort provides a strong model for future campaigns.

Coverage for World of Wheels was also strong. Ginger Ten Bensel from NTV News produced six segments as part of *Ginger's Journey*, a series highlighting America's 250th birthday.

On the organizational front, Ms. Engdahl reported continued growth on LinkedIn, with impressions increasing by 73% and post reactions rising by more than 70% since the last Board meeting, indicating strong engagement and momentum.

She also shared several updates related to Charles Schwab Field Omaha. Major League Baseball (MLB) *The Show 26* was recently released and features the full Men's College World Series format, including the stadium. The team quickly leveraged this opportunity by creating and distributing related video content across social media channels and to the Board of Directors.

Ms. Engdahl further reported that KETV will once again broadcast its morning show live from the stadium ahead of the Men's College World Series. In addition, WOWT will join the broadcast this year, representing an expansion of media partnership opportunities.

Finally, she noted that a recent tour highlighting new technological upgrades at the stadium was captured in a short video presentation, which was shared with the Board. The video is scheduled to be released on social media in the coming week, with additional consideration being given to pitching the content to traditional media outlets as the Men's College World Series approaches.

Committee Updates:

Internal Governance Committee

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met on Monday, March 16, 2026. In attendance were Ms. Diane Duren, Mr. Tom Kelley, Mr. Adam Straight, Mr. Bob Freeman and Ms. Diane Mills.

The Committee reviewed the January 2026 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 is nearing completion of the 2025 Audit which will have an unqualified opinion.

Contract Approvals:

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are two contracts requiring Board approval.

INSPIRE

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and INSPIRE for audio visual services, equipment and rigging at MECA managed facilities, as more fully described 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: 3-0

Buller Fixture

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Buller Fixture for the purchase and installation of a dishwasher at Charles Schwab Field Omaha, as more fully described 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: 3-0

Contract Recently Awarded

- B&D Turf Cars, LLC / Golf Cart Rental at Charles Schwab Field Omaha

Next Board Meeting

The next Board of Directors Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, April 16, 2026, at 1:15 p.m. in the MECA Board Room.

Executive Session

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 9:30 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. Kelley, seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 3-0.

Adjournment

At 9:57 a.m. a motion was made to come out of Executive Session, and to adjourn, made by Mr. Gray, seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 3-0

Adjournment 9:57 a.m.