

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – APRIL 16, 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 Thursday, April 16, 2026.

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, 2026, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on April 9, 2026.

Approval of Minutes:

Ms. Buffett moved for approval of the minutes of March 18, 2026, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Mr. Gray. Mr. Noddle abstained from voting.

Motion carried: 4-0.

President/CEO Report:

Mr. Adam Straight reported that activity remains high across the organization. As budget season is underway, he noted the opportunity to observe current processes and procedures firsthand, which has proven valuable in evaluating administrative operations. He shared that, alongside any procedural adjustments, he looks forward to further development of the capital strategy and gaining clarity on organizational priorities.

The expansion project is progressing well, with the next major milestone being the installation of the building exterior, allowing the structure to begin taking shape. Renovation construction has officially begun, and he deferred to Mr. Kevin Raymond to provide additional details on those efforts, as well as other projects across the campus.

Preparations continue for postseason baseball, including the Big Ten Baseball Tournament at the end of May and the Men’s College World Series (MCWS) in June.

Mr. Straight reported that, following last month’s introduction of the Mission and Vision statements, the Executive Leadership Team has now developed Core Values and Strategic Goals. He highlighted the following and noted that detailed materials would be shared with the Board separately:

Core Values

- Community First
- Integrity and Accountability
- Empathy and Adaptability
- Partnership and Collaboration
- Innovation and Growth
- Excellence in Experience

Strategic Goals

- Position Omaha as a premier destination
- Maximize economic impact
- Invest in our people and culture
- Promote safe spaces and secure environments
- Ensure financial sustainability
- Maintain world-class facilities
- Strengthen community partnerships

Mr. Straight also reported that the announcement and on sale for Benson Boone performed very well, with fewer than 1,400 tickets remaining. Discussions are ongoing with Creighton University and the Big East Conference regarding the upcoming basketball season and potential scheduling dates. Depending on routing and final tour schedules, there is potential for two additional concert announcements within the next one to two months.

The premium seating team is preparing a survey for distribution to club and suite holders across both venues, which will be implemented annually moving forward. Mr. Straight noted that only one suite account at CHI Health Center Omaha (CHIHCO) was up for renewal this year, and it has been successfully renewed for an additional ten-year term. Club seat renewals at CHIHCO will begin in May, with 60-day notices issued to 78 accounts. At Charles Schwab Field Omaha (CSFO), all club seat renewals have been completed, with 33 individual seats currently available.

The Big Ten has also expressed interest in extending its current tournament agreement by an additional three years (2028–2030), with the agreement currently under review.

Finally, Mr. Straight shared that the High School National Baseball Championship will be held at the stadium on July 5, featuring three games scheduled at 11:00 a.m., 3:00 p.m., and 7:00 p.m.

Other Business:

Convention Center Sales & Marketing

Ms. Denise Niebrugge reported that there are currently 117 events scheduled, accounting for 245 event days. Since the March 18 Board meeting, 12 additional events have been secured, representing 31 event days and generating over 7,800 hotel room nights; and 11 license agreements have been signed.

Ms. Niebrugge was excited to announce that the team has secured its first-ever 14-day citywide conference. The event will generate approximately 4,600 hotel room nights and will utilize all existing meeting space, as well as the new expansion space. The conference is for the International Code Council, which develops building and residential codes.

Ms. Niebrugge also shared that representatives from the Hilton Omaha, Marriott Downtown, the Omaha Convention and Visitors Bureau, Levy, as well as she and Mr. Straight participated in a comprehensive presentation to the Nebraska Association of School Boards in Lincoln on March 31, in an effort to secure a new five-year contract. Mayor John Ewing contributed a video message, and Mr. Straight addressed the group in person. She expressed appreciation for the team's collaborative effort, noting that the organization has selected Omaha to host the event from 2030 through 2034.

Operations & IT Update

Mr. Kevin Raymond reported that the spring sports season is quickly winding down, with only one remaining Omaha Supernovas volleyball game and Creighton Bluejays men's baseball approximately halfway through its season.

Focus is now shifting to upcoming major events, including the Big Ten Baseball Tournament and the Men's College World Series. Planning efforts continue through bi-weekly meetings with College World Series of Omaha, Inc. and the NCAA. One notable enhancement this year is the installation of an ESPN studio set over left field, which will remain in place throughout the Series and allow for live broadcasts, providing increased exposure for both the event and the stadium.

Mr. Raymond also provided updates on seasonal maintenance projects, including window washing, activation of the irrigation system, and assessment of winter-related damage, with approximately 200 irrigation heads identified for replacement. Mulch installation is underway across the campus, and concrete repairs are expected to be completed next week.

Regarding capital projects, Mr. Raymond reported that progress continues on the convention center expansion and renovation. Restroom renovations are currently in the demolition phase, with work being carefully coordinated around ongoing events and targeted for completion by May 20. Installation of exterior metal panels has begun, while the Level 3 concrete process has encountered some challenges related to vapor and noise; however, the project remains on track. Installation of curtain wall panels is scheduled to begin in May.

Finally, the kitchen renovation has been rescheduled due to the scale of the project. Plans are being evaluated to temporarily relocate kitchen operations to Hall A for approximately three months during construction.

Levy Food & Beverage Update

Ms. Chris VanDorn reported that, with Men's College World Series less than 60 days away, Levy's operational focus is increasingly shifting toward event preparation. A travel team of 22 Levy staff members from across the country has been confirmed to support the event.

Ms. VanDorn shared that several initiatives are nearing completion, including the development of new signature food items, which will be unveiled during the media tasting scheduled for the week of the Series. The team is also finalizing logistics to introduce a third “grab-and-go” location on the concourse. These locations are designed to prioritize speed of service while offering a wide selection of beverages and snack options, building on the success of existing locations and enhancing the overall fan experience.

Guest feedback from last year’s Series identified an issue with the 32-ounce souvenir soda cups not fitting properly in stadium cup holders. Upon further review, it was determined that a minor manufacturing change had slightly increased the base width of the cups. Earlier this spring, Levy evaluated multiple replacement options, testing each across various seating sections to ensure proper fit. A new cup has been selected and will be implemented for this year’s event.

Additionally, Levy will introduce a limited quantity of refillable Men’s College World Series branded YETI cups. Fans will be able to purchase these cups and receive free fountain soda refills at participating concession stands throughout the duration of the Series. Ms. VanDorn noted that similar programs have seen strong success in other venues.

Public Relations Update:

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl reported that from sold-out arena events to national stadium recognition, MECA’s venues are generating strong momentum and keeping Omaha in the national spotlight.

Two highly attended concerts were highlighted at CHI Health Center Omaha, Hardy on March 21 and Brandon Lake on April 11, which both generated significant engagement across social media platforms. Each event surpassed 1,000 likes, with the Brandon Lake concert exceeding 2,000. She noted that, compared to typical industry engagement rates, which are often below 1% of total followers, these results indicate that MECA’s content is reaching well beyond its existing audience through shares and organic amplification.

Ms. Engdahl also shared that a LinkedIn post recognizing Diane Duren as Habitat for Humanity 2026 Power Woman of the Year generated more than 13,000 impressions, demonstrating the impact of content that highlights civic pride and accessibility.

Charles Schwab Field Omaha has been named an official nominee for USA TODAY’s 10BEST Best College Baseball Stadium, marking MECA’s second major USA TODAY recognition in recent months. A press conference announcing the nomination drew strong attendance from all major local television stations, as well as the *Omaha World-Herald*, reflecting the excitement surrounding the recognition. The team will continue to build on this momentum in the weeks ahead by encouraging community voting.

MECA also hosted a job fair at the stadium earlier this month, which received early media coverage from KETV and KMTV, helping to increase visibility and drive applicant interest.

Finally, Mr. Straight has continued his appearances on KETV’s midday program, most recently promoting the USA TODAY nomination and reminding the community that tickets are on sale for

the Big Ten Baseball Tournament and the Men's College World Series. These ongoing appearances help build familiarity with MECA's venues and leadership, strengthening community connection and visibility in ways that extend beyond traditional paid media.

Mr. Noddle inquired whether more than one local media outlet would be broadcasting live coverage of the Men's College World Series this year. Ms. Engdahl responded that KETV (Channel 7) has participated in prior coverage and is expected to return, and that Channel 6 is also anticipated to join with live coverage this year.

Mr. Ben Gray inquired about the duration of the voting period for USA TODAY's 10BEST Best College Baseball Stadium, for which Charles Schwab Field Omaha has been nominated. Mr. Straight responded that voting will conclude on May 11, with the results expected to be announced on May 20.

Committee Updates:

Internal Governance Committee

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met on Friday, April 10, 2026. In attendance were Ms. Diane Duren, Mr. Tom Kelley, Mr. Adam Straight, Mr. Bob Freeman, Ms. Diane Mills, and Mr. Stephen Curtis, City of Omaha Finance Director.

The Committee reviewed the February 2026 Financial Statements, which were strong and 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.

Real Estate Committee

Mr. Jay Noddle reported that the downtown neighborhood is experiencing a significant volume of construction activity. The City of Omaha and Public Works, along with various contractors, have held multiple coordination meetings to accelerate progress, particularly advancing utility work required before Kiewit Corporation can begin installation of streetcar rails.

Mr. Noddle shared that construction activity is expected to increase in the coming weeks as efforts are made to complete as much work as possible. He further indicated that a major phase of the project will soon see a more robust construction effort, with additional information to be shared publicly. Conditions are expected to improve noticeably in the coming weeks, as once the project transitions primarily to rail installation, progress will accelerate.

Where completion is not feasible, sites will be cleaned and supported with enhanced wayfinding signage in advance of the Berkshire Hathaway Annual Stockholder Meeting. He noted that construction will then follow the same format and ramp up again ahead of the Men's College World Series.

Mr. Noddle emphasized that the broader downtown area remains very active, with multiple developments underway or in planning, including initiatives at Creighton University, as well as projects in the Builders District and Millwork District. He also noted the potential for a mixed-use soccer development to advance in the near term. Overall, he expects downtown Omaha to remain highly active for the foreseeable future.

Annual Election of Officers

Mr. Freeman 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:

Chairman:	Diane Duren – 2 years	(May 1, 2026-April 30, 2028)
President/CEO:	Adam Straight – 1 year	(May 1, 2026-April 30, 2027)
Vice Chair:	Tom Kelley - 1 year	(May 1, 2026-April 30, 2027)
Treasurer:	Jay Noddle - 1 year	(May 1, 2026-April 30, 2027)
Secretary:	Ben Gray - 1 year	(May 1, 2026-April 30, 2027)
Assistant-Secretary	Bob Freeman – 1 year	(May 1, 2026-April 30, 2027)

Mr. Freeman Board invited Board comments and asked for a motion.

Moved by Mr. Gray seconded by Mr. Noddle.

Motion carried: 5-0

Contract Approvals:

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are two contracts requiring Board approval.

Royalty Roofing

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and Royalty Roofing for repair and recoating on the roof of Exhibit Hall C, Grand Hallway and Convention Center Entrance Awnings at CHI Health Center 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: 5-0

MityLite, Inc.

RESOLVED, that the Agreement between MECA and MityLite, Inc. for the purchase of tables

and carts for use at CHI Health Center 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 Ms. Buffett; seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0

Contract Recently Awarded

- Lanoha Nurseries / Mulch Replacement at CHI Health Center Omaha
- HD Supply / Gondolas at Charles Schwab Field Omaha

Next Board Meeting

The next Board of Directors Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, May 21, 2026, at 1:15 p.m. in the MECA Board Room.

Executive Session

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 1:40 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. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0.

Adjournment

At 2:27 p.m. a motion was made to come out of Executive Session, and to adjourn, made by Ms. Buffett, seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 4-0

Adjournment 2:27 p.m.