

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION  
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – JUNE 7, 2016**

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 8:00 a.m. on June 7, 2016, in the MECA Board Room at CenturyLink Center Omaha, 455 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, Nebraska.

**Roll Call:**

Present: Chairwoman Diane Duren, Ms. Susie Buffett, Mr. Jay Noddle, Mr. Willy Theisen, and Ms. Dana Washington.

**Proof of Publication:**

Notice of the meeting was published in *The Daily Record* on May 31, 2016, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on May 31, 2016.

A copy of the Open Meetings Law was posted on the table near the side entrance to the MECA Board Room.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Ms. Washington moved for approval of the minutes of the May 3, 2016, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Mr. Noddle.

Motion carried: 5-0.

Chairwoman Duren and the entire Board welcomed the newest member to the MECA Board of Directors, Ms. Susie Buffett.

**President/CEO Report:**

Mr. Roger Dixon reported that CenturyLink Center Omaha (CLCO) has been very busy preparing for the College World Series (CWS) and the U.S. Olympic Swim Trials that will begin on June 17 and on June 26, respectively. The family fun zone area will be set-up next week on the north lawn, which will include the Ferris wheel, various food trucks, face painting, balloons and the bungalows. Mr. Dixon encouraged the Board to take the time to walk through the new area and report their personal observations back to MECA.

The landscaping has been completed in front of the building. The project turned out very well. It makes CLCO look cleaner and almost new again.

The Big Ten Baseball Tournament started out big, slowed down due to the weather and the Nebraska baseball team losing, and then ended big again. The Big Ten was very pleased with the attendance of approximately 33,000 people. Chairwoman Duren inquired if the Board would have an opportunity to talk about the issues of long lines, etc. Mr. Dixon stated that detailed reports regarding those issues will be addressed by Ms. Chris VanDorn and Ms. Krisi Andersen in their updates to the Board.

Finally, Mr. Dixon stated that he has also been busy in his role as a Commissioner on the Nebraska Tourism Board. Things are moving forward now the way the Board feels it should.

**Other Business:**

**Convention Center Sales & Marketing Update**

Ms. Denise Niebrugge reported there are currently 171 events on the books utilizing 290 event days for this fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015. Since the May 3, 2016 Board Meeting, 5,100 hotel room nights have been added. In addition, 18 new license agreements have been signed. A team effort by the Omaha Convention & Visitor's Bureau (OCVB), Hilton Omaha and MECA has resulted in a new citywide convention (Components Manufacturing Conference) being secured for the City of Omaha next year.

Ms. Niebrugge and her team will be attending the Meeting Professionals International World Congress Conference in Atlantic City this weekend. This conference was originally scheduled to be in Philadelphia; however, when it was originally booked they were unaware of the large political conference occurring at the same time. This very successful conference attracts approximately 2,500 attendees with one-on-one appointments with meeting planners taking place.

Mr. Theisen inquired if the Marriott Hotel located next to CLCO is being booked at this time for upcoming conferences. Mr. Keith Backsen with the Omaha Convention & Visitors Bureau responded that yes, they are getting cooperation from the Marriott team. The OCVB is working on bids and the Marriott has committed about one half, or 150 rooms to be available for potential room blocks. Mr. Backsen would like to see that number increase. The exact date of opening is unknown, but it is projected for June to early fall 2017. Mr. Backsen added that the Marriott Hotel is an enhancement, but doesn't change the game plan for the City. The Omaha Hilton currently offers 450-500 room blocks for different types of groups.

**Corporate Sales and Marketing Update**

Mr. Tom O'Gorman stated that MECA is at the end of the renewal process for the Club Seats at CLCO. There are 13 accounts that have indicated they will not be renewing and 72 accounts which have renewed. There were a number of accounts that requested to relocate at renewal but were not interested in the sections that were being offered. The next step will be to move to the waiting list. Mr. O'Gorman is confident that they will be filled by the end of June.

There are six games that are still available to rent for the CWS in one of the new bungalows, which are being placed on the front apron by CLCO. Mr. O'Gorman reported that with the help of Ms. Kristi Andersen, Director of Communications, they've had success filling the daily rentals from all the media attention that she generated. The other two bungalows will be delivered on Friday and then all three will be placed on the front apron where they will remain through the CWS and U.S. Swim Trials.

Lastly, Mr. O'Gorman noted that a sponsorship was lost but his department is in the process of finalizing a new one that will put MECA back at 97% for sponsorship. He is confident these will be back on track by next week.

## **Operations and Technology Update**

Mr. Kevin Raymond took the opportunity to recognize Ms. Katie Bassett, Stadium Manager, and Mr. Dan Blank, Turf Field Manager, for their hard work in making TD Ameritrade Park Omaha perform and look its best for the Big Ten Baseball Tournament. The Big Ten Tournament has the same basic number of games as the CWS, but it's condensed into five days. Both individuals and their teams did a great job in view of the rain delays and schedule changes.

Everyone is busy preparing for the CWS. The Ferris wheel will be delivered to CLCO by Saturday and placed on the north lawn in the new family-friendly area. The fence will be taken down and the bungalows will be moved. Expect to see food trucks setting up next week. On Sunday, Mike Fahey Street between 10<sup>th</sup> Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Street will be closed in preparation for the NCAA Fan Fest area. The NCAA Fan Fest set up will start on Monday.

The press conference at CLCO on Monday was very exciting. The Omaha Fire Department was here with their fire truck and hose suspended high above the 10-lane, 50-meter-long rectangle, 9 foot deep competition pool. The water started flowing around 3:30 p.m. that day and the pool was completely filled by 4:00 a.m. the next morning. They are currently filling the warm-up pool and anticipate being finished by this afternoon.

Finally, Mr. Raymond provided updates on the numerous projects at the facilities. They are very happy with how the new planter boxes look. It will look exceptional next year when the plants have had an opportunity to mature and bloom. Two ADA drop off ramps were added last week. One is located in front of the Box Office and the second located on the north end of CLCO down by the canopy. The Arena project, which was approved at the last Board meeting, is moving along and the equipment has been ordered. Cisco will be in the suite with engineers working on the final design. This project is on track to be operational by the end of September.

## **Levy Restaurants Update**

Ms. Chris VanDorn provided a recap of Levy's operations during the Big Ten Baseball Tournament. They were prepared going in for big crowds. The food, beverage product deliveries and labor were all scheduled accordingly. Going into the Nebraska game on Wednesday, there were nine concession stands open along with two beer portables, two food carts, five subcontractors, three Club action stations, and the Club bar for a total of 99 points of sale (POS). An average concessions POS to guest ratio is 1/150. If the attendance had reached 15,000 that day, that ratio would have been reached. However, based on roughly 10,000 in attendance the POS-to-guest ratio worked out to be 1/98. Levy knew they were staffed heavy but wanted to be ready for the crowds. A 1/98 ratio is great if you are a guest, but not so good if you are trying to manage the food and beverage costs to goods and labor percentages. Guests in the park that day, based on the seating, would have seen few people in line at the three perimeter stands as most of the traffic stayed at the three main concession stands. After Nebraska's loss on Thursday a decision was made, based on attendance, to keep three main stands, one beer portable, one premium level concession stand, two Club action stations and the Club bar open for the duration of the tournament. The number of POS open for some of the slower games fluctuated based on the times of the day, however, there were 51 POS open on Sunday which would have been considered, based on that ratio, to be staffed sufficiently for about 7,500 people for Sunday's game. The issue occurred when the attendance grew to over 10,000 making the ratio closer to 1/200 resulting in long lines. Additionally, there was one volunteer group that showed up with 13 less people than they had committed to bring on Sunday. Had that not been the case, Levy would have been able to open the

additional concession stand to alleviate some of the frustration with the Iowa fans. Levy also tried to call back some of the additional staff that was initially scheduled, but with it being Memorial Day weekend, it was very difficult to do. Despite the frustration, Levy employees never had an issue with food production. Additionally, Levy had their best employees there who were friendly, and hard-working despite the frustration, and they tried to keep lines moving as quickly as possible.

Ms. VanDorn provided a basic update for Levy's staffing plan for CWS. Space has been maxed out on the concourse with about 188 POS open. If there were 24,000 fans in attendance, that would be a ratio of 1/127 POS. Outside of the POS, they are in full set-up mode for the CWS and catering has already begun for the U.S. Olympic Swim Trials.

Chairwoman Duren inquired how the beer sales were for the Big Ten Baseball Tournament. Ms. VanDorn responded that with the help of their analytics department, it was estimated that they would probably sell close to 400 glasses of beer per 1,000 people for CWS and thought this tournament would be similar. The actual number was 375 per 1,000 so it was very close. Had the weather not been a factor, Levy probably would have hit their target. Chairwoman Duren asked if there were any other issues. Ms. VanDorn responded that they are working on how to get lines flowing properly and out of the way. Mr. Dixon noted that there was no reported impact to businesses outside the stadium and no incidents related to alcohol sales within or outside of the stadium. There was still a decent tailgating crowd in parking lot B, nothing like CWS, but still exciting. Mr. Dixon said that all in all, Levy did a nice job, it was just a perfect storm. Fortunately, there was enough staff in the Box Office to open 11 of 15 windows available. They were moving crowds through as quickly as possible, selling tickets at 45 tickets per minute.

Finally, Ms. VanDorn added that after discussions with Mr. Dixon, looking ahead in two years, regardless of how the attendance falls out for the in-between games, Levy will consider the championship to be a full-staff event. At that point, the budget will be written to anticipate some extra labor and possible spoilage of food.

### **Public Relations Update**

Ms. Kristi Andersen stated that MECA has been very busy the past few weeks with the Big Ten Baseball Tournament, CWS, and U.S. Olympics Swim Trials receiving a lot of media coverage.

In regards to the Big Ten Baseball Tournament, Ms. Andersen stated that Ms. VanDorn did an excellent job of explaining it. There were a lot of complaints on social media, which happens to be instantaneous, and sometimes not very kind. MECA promptly responded to all complaints and apologized because it was a frustrating situation. As Mr. Dixon previously mentioned, Ms. Andersen pointed out that additional staff was pulled into the Box Office as quickly as possible and tickets were sold as fast as they could, but certainly the lines were long. Most people were understanding when the staffing situation was explained and how the decisions were made. MECA will make the proper adjustments and move forward.

Monday was a very large media day in the building for the Swim Trials. It is an amazing process seeing 1.7 million gallons of water being pumped into a couple of pools. The media has been invited into the arena to report throughout the whole process. A time lapse video is being created of the entire build and will be distributed accordingly. Typically, the time lapse videos get coverage from all over the country.

Ms. Andersen will be doing a number of stories in the next week as the CWS gets closer regarding parking, the 10<sup>th</sup> Street activation and other information. This will be distributed through traditional and social media. A dedicated page of all the information is being added to the MECA website. In addition, information will be included of the new fan experience being offered of behind-the-scene tours of TDAPO. These tours will be offered during the mornings of June 21, 22, 23 and 24. Fans will be able to purchase the tours at the Box Office for a reasonable rate. The annual Pre-CWS press conference will be held next Wednesday, June 15 at the stadium. All members of the Board of Directors are invited to attend. It will include interviews with CWS, Inc., Creighton University, NCAA, and the City of Omaha. After the press conference, the highly-anticipated food tasting with Levy will be held. It always includes all the new menu items that the Chef has created especially for the CWS.

Chairwoman Duren inquired about the shuttle service that is being discontinued this year. Ms. Andersen responded that she has had one person contact her concerned about the shuttle. Metro's ridership has gone down 70% in the last few years, probably due to all the different parking options, including UBER. This is yet another reason the parking press release will be so important to help people with different options. Metro is still doing the circulator shuttle which runs every 10 minutes and begins 90 minutes before first pitch and concludes 90 minutes after the last pitch. Mr. Dixon added that MECA is also promoting the use of the CLCO garage due to the loss of parking lot G and The Yard. The price will remain the same as it is today at \$12.

### **Committee Updates:**

#### **Internal Governance Committee**

Ms. Dana Washington reported the Internal Governance Committee met on Thursday, May 26, 2016, at MECA's offices. In attendance were Ms. Washington; Chairwoman Duren; Mr. Stephen Curtiss, City of Omaha Finance Director; Ms. Lea French; and Mr. Bob Freeman, who participated via telephone. The Committee reviewed the April 2016 Financial Statements. After overviews from and discussions with Ms. French, the Committee found the reports to be reasonable compared to plan and prior periods and consistent with standard MECA accounting practices. Ms. Washington noted that April 2016 was the most profitable month of April at CLCO since the opening. The Committee then discussed the audited tax return planning timeline for the year-end June 30, 2016. The issue of how often the Committee should put out a bid for auditors was raised and will be further discussed at future meetings. The arena Turn back tax was discussed and future meetings were scheduled. The Committee also reviewed the annual raise recommendations for employees. This will be discussed further in executive session today.

#### **Real Estate Committee**

Mr. Jay Noddle stated that the Lot B Study Group met yesterday for about two hours preparing for next week's design workshop. All of the consultants will be in Omaha, including HR&A, Urban Design Associates, HDR, and Walker Parking. Walker Parking is expanding their look beyond parking into traffic patterns. The Study Group had an opportunity yesterday to review the presentation that will be given to stakeholders. It will be a four day work shop and there is a long list of invitees to the events. Each group or individual will sit through the presentation detailing existing conditions, Q&A related to what they would like to see and a market analysis piece. The consultation team will make a presentation to the Committee at the final session. Mr. Noddle added that there is a common belief that we don't need as much parking as we know that we do and that he believes the week will be very productive.

## **Contract Approvals:**

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are two contracts requiring approval today.

### **MECA**

Chairwoman Duren read the following resolutions:

Donors' Trust / HR&A Advisors, Inc.

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and HR&A Advisors, Inc. to perform an analysis of Parking Lot B development issues, as more specifically set out on the attached summary, is hereby approved.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the \$70,000 payment as set forth in the attached, is hereby ratified and approved.

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

Mr. Noddle added that the Agreement with the consultants is held by Donors' Trust and there are four funding participants.

Moved by Mr. Noddle, seconded by Ms. Washington.

Motion carried: 5-0.

### **CLCO**

Voss Electric Company D/B/A Voss Lighting

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and Voss Electric Company d/b/a Voss Lighting to purchase approximately 100 light fixtures for CenturyLink 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. Theisen, seconded by Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0

### **Next Board Meeting**

The next MECA Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 12, 2016, at 10:00 a.m. in the MECA Board Room.

### **Executive Session**

Chairwoman Duren stated the time of 8:39 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 Ms. Washington, seconded by Mr. Theisen.

Motion carried: 5-0.

**Adjournment**

At 9:27 a.m. a Motion was made to come out of Executive Session and to adjourn, made by Mr. Theisen, seconded by Mr. Noddle.

Motion carried: 5-0

Adjournment (9:29 a.m.)