

Minutes: Meeting of the Metropolitan Government Board of Fair Commissioners

Date: March 9, 2021 8:00 a.m. (Electronic Meeting)

On the above referenced date, the March meeting for the Board of Fair Commissioners was held electronically. Those in attendance were Chairman Erin McAnally, Vice-Chairman Jason Bergeron, Commissioner Caleb Hemmer and Commissioner Sheri Weiner. Also present were Fairgrounds Executive Director Laura Womack, Finance and Administrative Manager Satrice Allen, and Corporate Sales Manager Scott Wallace. Metro Attorney's Alex Dickerson and Tom Cross were also in attendance. Ron Gobbell and Tim Debus with Gobbell Hays Partners (GHP) and Ed Henley with Pillars Development were present as well. Mary Cavarra with the Nashville Soccer Club (and the Ownership Group) and Dirk Melton with Market Street Enterprises were in attendance. Bill Phillips with the Mayor's Office and Mark Sturtevant with Metro Planning were present as well as Jerry Caldwell with Bristol Motor Speedway (Speedway Motorsports). Bob Sargent with Track Enterprises and Randy Dyce with DD Events were also in attendance. Chief William Swann with the Metro Fire Department was also present. And Mark Young and Clyde Masters were in attendance as well to promote a possible event at the Fairgrounds.

Chairman McAnally took attendance and then announced that the public could call in with their comments to the live call-in line and announced the live call-in line phone number. Chairman McAnally then made a motion stating, "*The proposed agenda constitutes essential business and meeting electronically is necessary to protect the health, safety, and well-being of Tennesseans in light of the COVID-19 outbreak.*" Commissioner Hemmer seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was passed. Chairman McAnally then called the meeting to order and read the legal notice. Chairman McAnally moved to the approval of the February meeting minutes. Commissioner Hemmer made a motion to approve and Vice-Chairman Bergeron seconded the motion. All were in favor and the minutes were passed. Chairman McAnally then moved to Public Comment Time.

Chairman McAnally stated that several comments had been sent via email before the meeting and added that these had all been received by the Board. There were several live comments concerning the Letter of Intent (LOI) to the city from Speedway Motorsports. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Financial Report.

Ms. Allen gave a brief financial report. She added that the FY21/22 budget had been submitted and that they would be meeting with Finance on March 31st. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Executive Director's Report on the agenda.

Director Womack thanked staff for all of their hard work addressing the issues/damage from the ice storm and rainy weather they had had lately. She reported that Commissioner Weiner had been confirmed for a new full term at the last Council Meeting. She stated that the Capital Spending Plan had been approved at the last Council Meeting which included 7 million for Phase 2 of Fair Park. She added that now that the Skanska project had been closed, they had a better idea of where they were in the budget and, with the money that they had left over, they could assess what needs they might have for things like new tables and chairs and pipe and drape and had secured quotes for these items. She reported that she had put in a new position request in the budget for a Fair Manager and added that they were working on a divisional fair and reaching out to North America Midway and other professionals in this area to get their input. She added also that there was still the issue of whether or not they would be able to have a fair this year from a Pandemic standpoint and that this decision would need to be made soon. Chairman McAnally then moved to Old Business and the Fairgrounds Improvement Project Update item on the agenda.

Mr. Henley gave his update. He reminded the Board that the 7 million that had been approved for Phase 2 of Fair Park had nothing to do with and had no relation to the original amount that was used for Phase 1 of Fair Park. He added that the almost \$220,000 remaining from the initial allocation would be at the discretion of the Fairgrounds to use. Mr. Gobbell reported that the Multi-Purpose Building Project was moving along and that they were coordinating with the other projects planned on the facility. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Stadium Update item on the agenda.

Ms. Cavarra gave a brief update on the stadium construction and presented some slides of the project. She added that an update for the Mixed-Use Project would be given at the April Board Meeting. She reported that the stadium project was on schedule both with the construction and the budget. She stated that the DBE goal was currently met and that they were very pleased about that. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Speedway Motorsports Update item on the agenda.

Chairman McAnally explained that a Letter of Intent (LOI) had been signed between the Mayor's Office and Speedway Motorsports (SM) and she then gave the floor to Bill Phillips from the Mayor's Office. Mr. Phillips explained that discussions had started with SM a year ago, but that COVID-19 had caused a delay and now, with a LOI signed by all parties, a formal discussion would begin. He stated that the Fair Board and The Administration and Metro Council (for final approval) would all be involved in this decision. He added that the public would be heard, and public input would be definite part of this process. Vice-Chairman Bergeron stated that he felt everyone was surprised by the LOI and that nothing was mentioned about the community impact in the LOI but that he was glad to hear about engagement. He asked again that there be hard limits on both races and track rentals. He also asked that there would be appropriate financial guarantees so that there would not be any pressure to generate revenue causing SM to exceed these limits. Mr. Phillips stated both sides were aware of these concerns and that the Fair Board would be heavily involved, and they would have to approve any decisions made. Commissioner Hemmer asked about a schedule/timeline for the next steps of the process and Mr. Phillips stated that they would try to get a schedule to them soon. Commissioner Weiner asked what would happen if this ambitious timeline (by the end of July) was not met and Mr. Phillips said that both parties would have to come to an agreement about what to do then since it would obviously delay the season. Chairman McAnally then gave the floor to Mr. Caldwell with Speedway Motorsports.

Mr. Caldwell stated that it was made clear by the Mayor's Office that the proposed plan must be financially sound and not impact the taxpayers and he felt they had a very strong financial model. He stated that they would be good neighbors and shared the concerns about the surrounding neighborhood and school and the impact and that there would be a lot of community engagement to address this. He added that they would address sound mitigation, that they would not be adding more events and they would make this a positive for Nashville. Chairman McAnally stated that the Board could send their input and concerns to her or Director Womack and, if needed, they could call a special meeting to address any issues. Vice-Chairman Bergeron explained that there were 3 different categories which were: 1) racing/motor sport events and concerts 2) track rentals/testing-not racing motorsports 3) CVB (Convention Visitors Bureau) events/corporate events/ Nissan events, etc. Mr. Caldwell added that they wanted to have a long-term contract so, therefore, wanted to be good neighbors and partners. Chairman McAnally then moved New Business and the Shelter Status item on the agenda.

Director Womack gave the floor to Chief Swann to give the Board an update on where things were with the shelter. Chief Swann thanked the Board and Staff and some other departments for sheltering the homeless. He stated that he understood everyone was eager to get back to normal and that the Fairgrounds was anxious to get a timeline of when the shelter would exit out. He stated that they were looking at the science and were working on the smartest and healthiest way to start scaling back so that the Fairgrounds could reopen. He added that a lot would depend on the vaccination progress and the rate of contraction. He asked the Board and Staff to "stay the course" and for patience as they try to downscale. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Events Update item on the agenda.

Director Womack reported that Staff was working on an outdoor event/Flea Market setting and with limits still on capacity for vendors and shoppers, they would be submitting their plan and requests to Public Health for feedback. She added that they were hoping for May if things worked out. She stated that they were looking at dates and trying to finalize plans on the concert series that was presented before the Board at the previous meeting and that they were also working on a Fire Fighters Benefit Concert as well. Mr. Young then gave a brief presentation of the Fire Fighting Benefit Concert. There were a few questions from the Board, and it was decided that the Board needed more details concerning their COVID protocols. Director Womack and Chief Swann both stated that they would be glad to help them with the specifics of their COVID plan. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Community Impact Discussion item on the agenda.

Director Womack stated that, while the focus today might be on the Speedway with the recent announcement, this was put on the agenda for any general discussion concerning community impact. Vice-Chairman Bergeron stated that the community engagement for the Speedway should be robust and at least the same as Soccer. He stated that things should be addressed such as speedway events limits, number of track rentals, curfews, etc. Director Womack stated that she could pull out some details with past and current speedway contracts that addressed some of these concerns. Chairman McAnally also stated that they needed to consider all the financial implications and how the community would be affected as well. Vice-Chairman Bergeron stated that the Speedway Agreement MUST contain community impact and make sure those commitments are honored. He added that there MUST also be a Community Benefits Agreement. And he stated that there MUST be a financially stable plan so there is no pressure to extend the set limits or chase events to produce revenue in case there was a gap-perhaps in the form of bonds. Chairman McAnally stated again that she would be glad to hold special meetings, if needed, to discuss these issues. Vice-Chairman Bergeron suggested that the Board Members sit in on the some of the community engagement meetings, if possible. Metro Attorney Alex Dickerson said it would be allowable for more than one Commissioner to be there as long as the Commissioners were just listening and there was no back and forth communication between them. It was decided that the Board would have a special meeting once a plan had been offered from The Administration. There was a quick discussion about where to have a special "in person" meeting since Fifty Forward would not be big enough to accommodate everyone with COVID protocols because it was too small, and Chairman McAnally said she would keep everyone updated on a location.

Commissioner Weiner then made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Hemmer seconded the motion, all were in favor and the meeting was dismissed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chairman, Erin McAnally

Executive Director, Laura Womack