

Minutes: Meeting of the Metropolitan Government Board of Fair Commissioners

Date: July 13, 2021 8:00 a.m.

On the above referenced date, the July meeting for the Board of Fair Commissioners was held in Expo 2 at the Fairgrounds. 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. Bill Phillips with the Mayor's Office was present. James Weaver of Waller Lansden Dortch & Davis, LLP, attorney for Speedway Motorsports, was in attendance, along with Bob Sargent of Nashville Fairgrounds Speedway. Ed Henley with Pillars Development was present. Ron Gobbell and Tim Debus with Gobbell Hays Partners (GHP) were in attendance as well. Candace Lafayette with Stand Up Nashville and Dirk Melton with Market Street Enterprises were present. Councilman Colby Sledge was also in attendance.

Chairman McAnally called the meeting to order and read the legal notice. She then moved to the approval of the June meeting minutes. Vice-Chairman Bergeron made a motion to approve the minutes and Commissioner Weiner seconded the motion. All were in favor and the minutes were passed. Chairman McAnally then moved to Public Comment Time.

There was one public comment about the concerns of the Speedway Motorsports proposed deal and still the lack of information and data. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Financial Report.

Ms. Allen gave a brief report. She announced that True-Up would be submitted on July 29th. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Executive Director's Report.

Director Womack reported that Expo 2 and 3 had been cleaned and sanitized and that they were still working on Expo1. She stated that they would be busy taking inventory and doing repairs for the next few weeks. She added that the shelter moved out of Expos 2 and 3 early which was good and that they were still looking at a target date of September 1st to be officially open, although they did have a few events scheduled indoors for August. She stated that the June Flea Market went well, and that the customer traffic was great even though it was hot. Chairman McAnally then moved to Old Business and the Bristol Motor Speedway Update item on the agenda.

Mr. Weaver stated that they were plowing through the issues of the agreement and had had 24 meetings (virtual and in person) with different neighborhood groups and schools around the Fairgrounds. He added that they had sent out surveys and access to the sound study through email and the mail and they had received good feedback from all of these sources. He reported that they were in the final stages of their community benefits strategy and that this, along with the lease and agreement, would be presented to the Board soon. Vice-Chairman Bergeron stated that he would like to be at all the community meetings. Mr. Weaver assured the Board that any work Bristol would do that was associated with the track could not adversely impact what was going on at the Fairgrounds property. He added that they would be working with multiple groups concerning the community benefits strategy and the Board could then decide to approve or not approve. Vice-Chairman Bergeron suggested that they talk to Stand Up Nashville also and stated his concerns also about astroturfing activities and the feedback concerning astroturfing. Chairman McAnally then gave the floor to Bill Phillips from the Mayor's Office.

Mr. Phillips stated that they were figuring out the numbers and moving forward and that meetings were scheduled for that week. He added that their goal was to bring a sound proposal to the Board that would benefit all of Nashville, to increase the value to the Fairgrounds property and to make it a destination point statewide and nationally. Commissioner Hemmer asked if there were any deadlines and Mr. Phillips stated that July 31st was the original deadline but that they might extend that to make sure they come up with a good proposal with a great emphasis on community. Chairman McAnally then gave the floor to Commissioner Weiner to go over her sound study presentation.

Commissioner Weiner started her presentation by stating that she would not offer any opinions since she was a Board Member but would only provide the facts as an audiologist and that she would stick to the basics. She then went through the power point presentation which included how sound was measured, how noise accumulated, how it was attenuated and what that meant to a listener, a review of the Bristol information, and the take-aways. There were several comments and questions. Commissioner Weiner stated that she would be glad to review what Bristol presented and felt it would be good to look at other facilities to see what best practices were. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Community Impact/Speedway Policy Discussion and Consideration item on the agenda.

Vice-Chairman Bergeron stated that he was continuing to get calls about questions not being answered and still having no details of the proposal. He stated his concerns again about curfews and the number of track rentals and races and about having a good strong sound monitoring system. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Fairgrounds Improvement Project and Infrastructure Update item on the agenda.

Mr. Henley went over the financial numbers of each project. Director Womack reported that there was an ordinance before the Council to extend the architectural contract with Adkisson since there had been a delay on the maintenance building construction but added that no additional funding would be needed. Mr. Gobbell stated that there was a lot of construction going on and things were going well and that work on the Mixed Use Project was starting up. He reported that they were also working on warranty items. Commissioner Hemmer asked how all the construction going on would impact operations and Mr. Gobbell stated that there was a lot of coordination going on between Director Womack and staff and the 3 contractors on site (soon to be 4). Director Womack added that there were a lot of adjustments being made.

Director Womack reported that they did not have much of an update on the Divisional Fair but that they were working on it and there should be more information for her to give next month. Therefore, Chairman McAnally moved to the Event Update item on the agenda.

Mr. Wallace briefly went over the events coming up in August and September. Commissioner Hemmer stated that he would like to see a promoter marketing campaign for 2022 (a launch of sorts) and perhaps more week day events scheduled, and Mr. Wallace stated that this would be great. He added that a lot of the weekends in 2022 were already full. Chairman McAnally stated that they would be working on an Open House soon too, as well. Mr. Sargent reported on the big SRX Race coming up soon and was excited for the track and the Fairgrounds to get nationally televised exposure on CBS with approximately 1.6 – 1.7 million viewers. He went over some of the details of the race. Chairman McAnally then moved to New Business and the Stand Up Nashville Presentation on Community Survey item on the agenda.

Ms. Lafayette went over the results of the survey (which included a 2 mile radius) with the Board. Commissioner Hemmer asked Ms. Lafayette if she would send the results/information to the Board and she said that she would. Vice-Chairman Bergeron and Commissioner Hemmer asked if the identities and locations of the participants had been confirmed and Tony with Stand Up Nashville confirmed that they had and explained the process that they went through. Vice-Chairman Bergeron then suggested that Stand Up Nashville and James Weaver meet since they were both at the meeting. Chairman McAnally then moved to the MarketStreet Enterprises Development Update item on the agenda.

Mr. Melton went over the power points presentation and new renderings of the Mixed Use Project. He stated that affordability for residents and sound issues were the 2 major themes. There were several comments and questions concerning MarketStreet getting with Bristol to talk about design to mitigate sound, explaining and understanding the mechanics of the work force housing, and stipulations and details concerning the housing and the block C units.

Commissioner Hemmer asked for an update on the art project and Director Womack stated that they were working on a contract now with the selected artist(s). Commissioner Hemmer also stated again, for the record, that the Board had asked many times for a Latinx appointment for the Board and that he would love to see that happen.

Commissioner Hemmer then made a motion to adjourn. Vice-Chairman Bergeron seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting was dismissed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chairman, Erin McAnally

Executive Director, Laura Womack