

Minutes: Meeting of the Metropolitan Government Board of Fair Commissioners

Date: August 10, 2021 8:00 a.m.

On the above referenced date, the August 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 Tom Cross was also in attendance. James Weaver of Waller Lansden Dortch & Davis, LLP, attorney for Speedway Motorsports, was present. Ed Henley with Pillars Development was in attendance, as well as Ron Gobbell with Gobbell Hays Partners (GHP). Mary Cavarra with Nashville Soccer Club (and the Ownership Group) and Dirk Melton with Market Street Enterprises were present.

Chairman McAnally called the meeting to order and read the legal notice. She then moved to the approval of the July meeting minutes. Commissioner Hemmer 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 were no public comments. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Financial Report.

Ms. Allen gave a brief report. She reported that the Fairgrounds would receive \$663,292 for being an emergency shelter but that Metro Council must approve first. She added that this would go into the 2021/2022 budget. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Executive Director's Report.

Director Womack reported that they were concentrating on repairs from the shelter and warranty work on the buildings which was delayed during the pandemic and added that Skanska had been very responsive. She stated that they were doing sewer line work in Expo 1. She stated that they had received their new pipe and drape and tables. She finished by stating that they had had four events the past weekend and that all went well. Chairman McAnally then moved to Old Business and the Bristol Motor Speedway Update.

Mr. Weaver stated that they were just waiting to hear from Finance and that they hoped to have something to give to the Board soon. He reported that they were hoping to meet with the negotiating team, the Board Chair and the Executive Director that week. He stated that they were in the final stages of the signed agreements with the community benefit partners. He reported that they would be meeting with some more neighborhood groups soon. He stated that they were also in the process of setting up meetings with Market Street. He added that they had reached out to Stand Up Nashville several times, but they were still waiting to hear from them. Chairman McAnally asked about the extension on the deadline of August 30th in the Letter of Intent and Mr. Weaver stated that it was a verbal extension. Vice-Chairman Bergeron asked again for the information that Mr. Wrightson had promised concerning broader sound mapping data. Mr. Weaver stated that this would be provided. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Community Impact/Speedway Policy Discussion and Consideration item on the agenda.

Vice-Chairman Bergeron stated that he wanted to see a strong sound monitoring system in place and Commissioner Weiner agreed that this was one of her stipulations. Director Womack stated that they were definitely working on that and the issues involving sound monitoring. There was a brief discussion about the monitoring issue. Vice-Chairman Bergeron was also concerned about the number of CVB and Bristol corporate events and asked if Butch Spyridon could possibly come and give them a presentation so that the Board could understand their involvement and the impact. Chairman McAnally agreed but added that the financial structure needed to be revealed first, so they were anxious to hear about that component. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Fairgrounds Improvement Project, Stadium, Mixed Use, and Infrastructure Update item on the agenda.

Mr. Henley gave a financial report on each project. Commissioner Hemmer asked if they were keeping any extra funds for Phase 2 of Fair Park and Mr. Gobbell stated that Phase 2 would be separately funded much like Phase 1 and added that the money had already been appropriated. Mr. Gobbell then also gave a brief update on the progress of each project and Commissioner Hemmer had a couple of questions.

Ms. Cavarra gave a quick stadium update and stated that they were on schedule. She added that they had some events planned with in the future and had already had some events with some area schools.

Mr. Melton stated that they had made some progress on the Mixed Use Project and went over those updates quickly. He added that they would be doing some core drilling soon to see what was underground. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Divisional Fair Update item on the agenda.

Director Womack stated that they were working administratively on plans “behind the scenes” for the fair. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Event Update item on the agenda.

Director Womack thanked the staff for their hard work for the four events over the weekend and stated that with so much construction going on, there was a lot of coordination between staff and promoters and the construction teams to make it work. Mr. Wallace complimented all the staff and especially the parking staff on coordinating for all four events and also for parking during the SRX Race. He stated that it was very important to get good construction updates on all projects, especially once they had all three buildings open in October and since the construction was very fluid there was so much to consider in getting everyone in and out. Chairman McAnally then moved to New Business and the Aging Report – Accounting Write-off Authorization.

Director Womack explained that the write-off process allowed staff to remove any bad debts from the accounting system while still trying to collect monies. She also went over the Aging Report. She reminded the Board that they had agreed to share this information routinely to the Board a while back. Commissioner Hemmer asked about the Formosa lawsuit and Metro Attorney Tom Cross stated that the case was pending, and the litigation was ongoing. There were a few questions about the writing-off process and the policies and how staff handled repeat offenders and also about how staff collected for parking. There was a brief discussion about these issues. Chairman McAnally then moved to the Campus Safety and Security Discussion item on the agenda.

Chairman McAnally stated that she wanted to add this to the agenda because of the resurgence of COVID and with the booking of events coming up to make sure everyone was safe, but also because of so much going on within the campus to make sure there are good safety and evacuation policies when sudden bad weather happens during large events. Commissioner Hemmer agreed and stated that proper training was important and to make sure our policies were “tightened up”. Chairman McAnally suggested perhaps a quarterly meeting for a while to discuss these issues with the stakeholders, especially with the construction changing constantly. She also expressed her concerns with the pandemic numbers rising again and with events scheduled. Director Womack stated that Metro had been very proactive concerning the pandemic surge and that they did have Dr. Gill Wright with the Public Health Department that they could refer to as well as the latest CDC guidelines, Metro HR, OSHA and the Mayor’s Office. She added that they also had the support of the Metro Police Department, if needed, and had had discussions with staff on how to handle these situations for anyone who might not want to comply.

Commissioner Weiner 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