

Minutes: Meeting of the Metropolitan Government Board of Fair Commissioners

Date: September 14, 2021 8:00 a.m.

On the above referenced date, the September meeting for the Board of Fair Commissioners was held in Expo 2 at the Fairgrounds. Those in attendance were Vice-Chairman Jason Bergeron, Commissioner Caleb Hemmer and Commissioner Sheri Weiner. Chairman Erin McAnally was not present. Also, present were Fairgrounds Executive Director Laura Womack, Finance and Administrative Manager Satrice Allen, and Corporate Sales Manager Scott Wallace. Flea Market Manager, Mary Ann Smith, as well as Misty Reynolds and Alison Haymer were also in attendance from the Flea Market Staff. Metro Attorney's Alex Dickerson and Tom Cross were also present. Bob Sargent with Track Enterprises was in attendance. Ed Henley with Pillars Development was present, 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 in attendance. Councilman Tom Cash was also present.

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

There were no public comments. Vice-Chairman Bergeron then moved to the Financial Report.

Ms. Allen gave a brief report. She also went over the Aging Report and Mr. Wallace explained about the outstanding invoices. Vice-Chairman Bergeron then moved to the Executive Director's Report.

Director Womack explained to the Board that the HUD Funding Grant to compensate the Fairgrounds for the costs that were eligible for reimbursement for hosting the shelter during the pandemic would be going through the Metro Council to be approved/accepted soon. She added that this amount was approximately \$663,000. She then reported that Phase 1 of the Public Art Project was moving along and that the functional part of the art project (Phase 2) would be starting the procurement process soon. She added that Vice-Chairman Bergeron would be representing the Board on this project and that Melissa Smithson would be representing the community as well. Vice-Chairman Bergeron then moved to the Event Update item on the agenda.

Mr. Wallace stated that Thrillville was going well, especially considering the construction that was going on and the small layout that they had to work with, and he appreciated everyone for working together. He added that with the boxing going on and the race and Thrillville at the same time, they would be learning a lot. He reported that they would be in full swing in October and that they were ready for the challenge. Vice-Chairman Bergeron asked about the exception of the racing open practice coming up and the 3:00 – 9:00 hours and Mr. Wallace stated that they were aware and would be staying within those time periods for practice. Commissioner Weiner asked about the parking plan during the boxing/Thrillville/race weekend and Mr. Wallace gave a quick overview of the plan. Commissioner Hemmer asked about the promoters and wanted to know what he was hearing from them about getting back to normal operations. Mr. Wallace stated that they were pretty much booked from October on, and all were aware of the mask mandate and that they were excited to be having shows again. There was some discussion about the mask mandate, social distancing, possible proof of vaccinations, and public safety and how events were handling these protocols. Director Womack stated that they were in constant contact with Public Health and would continue to put safety first and added that Metro HR was studying the recent White House mandates and staff was waiting to hear from HR on those mandates. There were a couple more questions and comments from the Board. Vice-Chairman Bergeron then moved to Old Business and the Fairgrounds Improvement Project, Stadium, Mixed Use, and Infrastructure Update item on the agenda.

Ms. Cavarra gave a quick update and went through her power points presentation. She stated that the stadium project was on budget and on schedule. Mr. Henley went over the financials and updates of each project at the Fairgrounds. Commissioner Hemmer asked Mr. Henley if he would give an overview at the next meeting of what the Phase 2 of Fair Park entailed since it had been so long since they had gone over the details of the plan. Mr. Henley then gave a brief DBE Report and reminded the Board that these were not the final numbers and that they were still being tracked but that everyone had been very pleased with these numbers. Commissioner Hemmer asked Mr. Henley if he would email the DBE report for the stadium project even though it was a Sports Authority project. Mr. Gobbell stated that he did not have much to add but thanked staff and all the construction crews for working together so well. He added that the Infrastructure Project was moving along. Vice-Chairman Bergeron then moved to the Bristol Motor Speedway Update item on the agenda.

Director Womack stated that they were waiting on Metro Finance to finish up and Vice-Chairman Bergeron stated that they were still waiting on answers. He then moved on to Community Impact/Speedway Policy Discussion and Consideration item on the agenda.

Vice-Chairman Bergeron stated again, they were still waiting on financial numbers and information. He then moved to the Divisional Fair Update item on the agenda.

Director Womack stated that they were working behind the scenes on the fair and that she was working with HR on the job description and the job posting. She added that North American Midway Entertainment (NAME) was on the property with Thrillville, and that she was able to meet with the owner and that the conversation went well and NAME was excited to see the progress on the property and the fair moving forward. Vice-Chairman Bergeron then moved to the Campus Safety and Security Discussion item on the agenda.

Director Womack stated that once the stadium opened, they would be working with Nashville Soccer Club to make sure proper protocols were in place for inclement weather and that they would make sure that the promoters and dealers/vendors of Fairgrounds events were also aware of inclement weather practices in the future. She added that, concerning the pandemic, they had been in close contact with Metro Public Health and would continue to do so concerning the October Flea Market. She reported that they had invited Public Health to do COVID vaccinations and testing during the September market and that they had accepted. Vice-Chairman Bergeron then moved to New Business and the Presentation on Marketspread.

Director Womack stated that the Marketspread software has been a very long time coming and that they were so excited to have a new updated system after 35 years. She thanked the Flea Market staff, the Corporate Sales staff and Satrice Allen for all their hard work on getting this project going. She then gave the floor to the Flea Market Manager, Mary Ann Smith, to give the Board an overview of Marketspread.

Ms. Smith stated that the old system, the UV term, was very time consuming and was very limited in what they could do. She stated that the Flea Market staff, and Ms. Allen, had been working hard and that they were excited to have the new system. She then went through the power points presentation to show the changes that would be taking place. Ms. Allen went over some of the financial aspects of the new system. Ms. Reynolds went over the dealers/vendors/promoter's aspect of the system. Ms. Haymer explained the media and marketing aspect of the new software. Director Womack added that the Farmer's Market also used this same software. Ms. Smith reported that the booth rental rates were not changing since they had already raised booth rates when they moved to the new buildings. She then went over a few things that were changing and/or being added such as fees, R.V. rentals, taxes, some of their policies, online payments, etc. She also explained about the business and sales tax and how the vendors/promoters could now do that part which had been very time consuming for the Flea Market staff to do in the past. There were several questions and comments from the Board. There were specifically several questions about the fees in general (old and new) at the Flea Market and how they were decided and what they were based upon. Director Womack stated that she would like for the Board to vote on this at the next meeting. She also added that they would be having free webinars for the vendors and promoters to help them set up profiles and show them the benefits of the system.

There was also a brief discussion about the R.V. parking and fees and Director Womack stated that those spaces were dedicated to event promoters and vendors right now since there were limited spaces. Director Womack added that they hoped to be live by the October Flea Market and that the Event Management also had 2 components to this system as well. She stated that the whole system was cloud based, very user friendly and had a CRM component as well. Vice-Chairman Bergeron then moved to the Consideration of Right-of-Way Designation item on the agenda.

Metro Attorney Tom Cross stated that this was just a “housekeeping task” concerning the mixed-use/roadway development and stated that the Metro Council would have to approve this proposed resolution for public rights of way and asked that the Board make a motion to proceed. Commissioner Weiner then stated, *“I so move that the Board of Fair Commissioners approve the resolution approving the designation of public rights of way”*. Commissioner Hemmer seconded the motion. There was a brief discussion. All were in favor and the motion was passed.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Vice-Chairman, Jason Bergeron

Executive Director, Laura Womack