

Minutes: Meeting of the Metropolitan Government Board of Fair Commissioners

Date: August 8, 2017 8:00 a.m.

On the above referenced date the August meeting for the Board of Fair Commissioners was held in Wilson Hall. Those in attendance were Chairman Ned Horton, Vice-Chairwoman Erin McAnally, Commissioner Caleb Hemmer, and Commissioner Jason Bergeron. Commissioner Bonna Johnson was not present. Also present were Executive Director Laura Schloesser, Assistant Director Ken Sanders, Finance Officer Doug Peters and Metro Attorney Susan Jones. Councilman Colby Sledge, as well as, Larry Atema and Jonathon Schneider with Commonwealth Development Group were also in attendance.

Chairman Horton called the meeting to order and then read the Appeal Announcement. Chairman Horton then moved to the approval of the July meeting minutes. Chairwoman McAnally made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Hemmer seconded the motion, all were in favor and the minutes were passed.

Chairman Horton then moved to Public Comment Time. There were several public comments and then Chairman Horton moved to the Financial Report with Finance Officer Doug Peters.

Mr. Peters went over the financial numbers. There were a couple of comments and questions about racing concessions, RV parking, salaries, credit cards for parking and parking in general. Chairman Horton then moved to the Executive Director's Report.

Director Schloesser announced that this week Nashville was hosting the IAVM (International Association of Venue Managers) Convention at the Music City Center and stated that the Fairgrounds was a member of this association. She added that the Fairgrounds was hosting some of the events here and that she had been and would be attending this convention.

She reported that staff was struggling with the HVAC system with 17 units down at the same time, at one point. She stated that they were looking at some replacement units and were also looking at the scope of replace vs. repair. She added that they had already ordered two replacement units for the Maintenance Building and the Creative Arts Building.

She finished by stating that they had been working on the event contract for a while and were looking at penalties for events running late on night events. She added that this was more for outside events that would impact the neighborhood and would address the predictability (on event times) issue for the neighborhood. She stated that they had been looking at implementing a fixed fine or a percentage of the value of the event and asked the Board for discussion on this issue. Commissioner Bergeron asked about the variance in fees for events. Scott Wallace, Corporate Sales Manager, gave the prices for renting out the different parts of the lots on the property and the track. Chairman Horton suggested that Commissioner Bergeron help with putting together a proposal and to present it at a future meeting. Commissioner Bergeron stated that he would be glad to help but that he wanted to be sure to have a discussion about being consistent with everyone and to establish expectations now and that they shouldn't have different standards for some and not others. He added that he would get with Director Schloesser and see how other facilities were handled in Metro. Vice-Chairwoman McAnally stated that she wanted to make sure that the Fairgrounds would not be limited and while she agreed that expectations needed to be clear, they needed to make sure they could also have some variances so the Fairgrounds wouldn't lose opportunities.

Chairman Horton then suggested that the staff look into temporary HVAC units and there was a brief discussion about the HVAC units. Chairman Horton then moved to the Fairgrounds Improvement Project Update item on the agenda.

Jonathan Schneider with the Commonwealth Development Group reported that they were making good progress on the painting of the buildings on the property and that they should be completed by the end of the month. He reported that they had had their first pre-bid meeting for Fair Park and that the participation was very good which meant they should have a lot of competitive bids. He stated that they had received their letter from the Mayor's Office for the approval of the storm water variance, so now it was "official" and they could move forward.

Larry Atema with the Commonwealth Development Group reported that they had been to see the Executive Director of the Election Commission and that they knew it was coming and that General Services was looking for options for them. He added that this was part of the whole storm water agreement. Chairman Horton then moved to the Speedway RFP Update item on the agenda.

Director Schloesser stated that they were still in open procurement and still evaluating proposals so there was no update. Chairman Horton then moved to the Parks/Fairgrounds MOU item on the agenda.

Director Schloesser stated that they should have received the draft the day before and, since they had just received it, they would bring it back to the next meeting to vote on. She stated that it was a five year term and that it corresponded with the storm water management program. She briefly went over the parking and scheduling terms and stated that the Fairgrounds would be working with Parks on both. Commissioner Bergeron asked about the financial responsibility by the Fairgrounds when damage was done to the turf and asked if a budget had been set up for that since it could be unpredictable. Director Schloesser stated that they would need to be very thoughtful about when to use/not use the turf. She added that the event contract already includes a clause to cover damage caused by events but was updated to be more clear regarding turf.

Commissioner Hemmer asked about how the revenue would work with Parks and how much it would be used and Director Schloesser stated that the Fairgrounds would retain all of the revenue of the Fairground's events. Mr. Atema reminded the Board that the playing surfaces and other areas would have reinforced turf, which has more structural integrity than regular turf and that it would take a little more abuse.

Vice-Chairwoman McAnally asked if there would be procedures with the Parks or just discussion on how to book events and Director Schloesser stated that they would block everything out at the beginning of the year (and possibly even some tentative dates) and that the events team would need to communicate with Parks as much as possible, as well as the neighborhood. Chairman Horton then moved to the MLS Soccer Stadium item under New Business.

Director Schloesser stated that they did not have anything to update since the Council meeting was postponed. She stated they should have more information by the next meeting.

Chairman Horton stated that in their packets was a letter from Bo Roberts of the State Commission confirming that the Tennessee State Fair was indeed looking for other locations/options for the fair. He then gave the floor to John Rose, Chairman of the Tennessee State Fair Association (TSFA), for the State Fair update.

Mr. Rose gave a brief update on the events coming up at the fair and then stated some of his concerns about the plans at the Fairgrounds and the soccer parking areas.

Vice-Chairwoman McAnally made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Bergeron seconded the motion, all were in favor and the meeting was dismissed.

Respectfully submitted,

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Ned Horton, Chairman

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Laura Schloesser, Executive Director