

Minutes: Meeting of the Metropolitan Government Board of Fair Commissioners

Date: March 10, 2020 8:00 a.m.

On the above referenced date, the March meeting for the Board of Fair Commissioners was held in Expo 3 at the Fairgrounds. Those in attendance were Chairman Ned Horton, Commissioner Caleb Hemmer and Commissioner Jason Bergeron. Vice-Chairman Erin McAnally was not present. Also present were Fairgrounds Executive Director Laura Womack and Finance and Administrative Manager Satrice Allen. Metro Attorney Alex Dickerson was also in attendance. Ron Gobbell with Gobbell Hays Partners (GHP) was present as well as Ed Henley with Pillars Development.

Chairman Horton called the meeting to order and then moved to the approval of the February meeting minutes. Commissioner Bergeron made a motion to approve and Commissioner Hemmer seconded the motion. All were in favor and the minutes were passed. Since there were no public comments, Chairman Horton moved to the Financial Report.

Director Womack introduced Satrice Allen as the new Finance Administrator and added that this was her first day. Director Womack stated that since they had been in transition, they did not have a monthly Financial Report but that they would catch up at the next Board Meeting. She reported that since it was budget season, they were working with the Mayor's Office on their operational budget, capital budget, and end of the year projections for the current year to determine if a subsidy was needed. Chairman Horton then moved to the Executive Director's Report.

Director Womack stated that staff was being watchful about the Corona Virus and they were keen to the new recommendations and went over some of the precautions they were already putting into place such as adding signage, extra training for the janitorial staff, additional cleaning of the bathrooms, etc. She reported that they did not yet have any direct cancellations but that they would be monitoring that. Commissioner Hemmer suggested that they be proactive and reach out to promoters about the Fairgrounds contingency plan soon. Director Womack stated that the Public Arts Project was proceeding forward and added that the local artist project would be coming later in the year. Commissioner Hemmer asked that any information from the arts meeting that was scheduled for the next day, which included the artist selection, be forwarded to them. She finished her report by stating that they were close to having the contract completed soon with Track Enterprises. She thanked Commissioner Bergeron for all of his help and added that Bob Sargent had been great to work with.

Commissioner Hemmer asked about the Fairgrounds policy concerning cancellations due to Corona and Director Womack stated that they would wait to hear from the Mayor's Office and Public Health to determine what steps to take next concerning restrictions or closures. Chairman Horton then moved to the Fairgrounds Improvement Project Update item on the agenda.

Mr. Henley went over the financials and updates on the improvement projects. He reported that they had reallocated funds from the expo line item back to the grandstands line item to prepare for the upcoming racing season. Commissioner Hemmer asked if these expenses were necessary since they were having ongoing discussions with NASCAR and Director Womack stated that they were since they were safety related. She stated that these expenses were for lighting and electrical and added that they were being very thoughtful about installing lighting that they could reuse. Mr. Henley went over the Fair Park project briefly and also stated that demo preparation work had started.

Mr. Gobbell reported that the Election Building was down and they were working on that area of the project. He stated that workers were on site preparing for demo but that because of the recent tornado clean up, especially with electrical lines, NES was running a little behind. He added that actual demolition should start that next week. He reported that they were working with Planning on parcel 8c and those discussions were continuing and that they were finalizing schedules with the soccer people. There were several questions from the board concerning water leaks, the service shed, soccer goals, and the public civic plaza.

Commissioner Hemmer wanted to state for the record that this whole project was right on budget and that the numbers had not changed from when they were first reported to the Board despite what may have been reported in the media. Mr. Gobbell added that the numbers had been in line and consistent all along. Chairman Horton then moved to the Curfew Policy item on the agenda.

Director Womack went over each point of the draft that was in the Board packets and explained that she was not looking for a vote today but wanted the Board to discuss and to consider these points so that they could vote at the next meeting. Commissioner Bergeron stated that they should consider the size of the event when deciding about fines for breaking the curfew. Commissioner Hemmer also suggested that the Executive Director should have discretion about when to waive those fines in case of unusual circumstances and Chairman Horton also reminded them that they could use security deposits as well for curfew violations. There was a lengthy discussion. Chairman Horton then moved to the Speedway Motorsports Inc. (SMI) Update item on the agenda.

Director Womack reported that SMI had expressed interest in advancing discussions with the Board and how to move forward. Commissioner Hemmer asked if the Mayor's Office had given staff any recommendations on how to proceed. She stated that since this was an overall campus project that all of it must be taken into consideration together and it was her desire, as well as The Administration's desire, to be involved in all of the separate discussions to bring together a whole plan for the campus, while, of course, supporting the existing uses. Commissioner Bergeron stated that they must know about the financial structure and added that he would be glad to continue discussions with SMI to bring all of the pieces together. Chairman Horton suggested that Director Womack continue dialogue with them and the Mayor's Office, who was the point contact on this issue, and keep the Board updated and perhaps bring those discussions to these board meetings and/or, if needed, they could appoint a Board Member to be the representative. Director Womack stated again that SMI was interested in doing those things as well. Chairman Horton then moved on to the 2020 Tennessee State Fair Association Contract item on the agenda.

Director Womack stated that she was looking for a Board Member to participate on working on the 2020 Fair contract. Commissioner Bergeron then made a motion stating, *"I move that the Board designate Chairman Ned Horton as the Board Member to conduct negotiations for the State Fair"*. Commissioner Hemmer seconded the motion. Commissioner Bergeron stated that he would like to see a multi-year agreement since Mr. Jones had stated at the previous meeting that he felt like they could put on a good fair here and Chairman Horton agreed. Commissioner Hemmer asked Director Womack if she could find out about the RFI that the State Commission had put out and she said that they were trying to get a meeting with them and that she would let them know. All were in favor on the motion and the motion was passed. Chairman Horton then moved to the Neighborhood Impact Advisory Committee (NIAC) item on the agenda.

Director Womack explained that the current NIAC had recently dissolved but that they were hoping to get that committee re-engaged with the help of Councilman Sledge. She hoped that they could broaden the group to include other groups that had not previously been represented. She added that with the speedway season and the summer events coming up she would like to do this soon. Commissioner Bergeron stated that they needed to make contact with each of these groups to find someone to represent them and reaching out to the council people in each district might be a good place to start.

Commissioner Hemmer 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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Chairman, Ned Horton

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Executive Director, Laura Womack